

Hello from SWE headquarters. My name is Alysoun Park and I use she/her pronouns. Thank you all for joining us today for our webinar From Backstage to Center

**Stage:** Empowering Introverts for Career Success with Nina Golder. This is our second listen and learn lecture in our Countdown to Conference series. So sessions in this series were hand-picked for the Advance Learning Center during the WE 25 call for participation process.

Just a couple practical matters before we get started, we will be taking questions at the end of the session with our speaker. So if you have a question during the session, please type it into the Q&A window at any point during the presentation and we'll get that asked for you towards the end.

We also have closed captioning available. So you can turn that on or off by clicking on the Closed Caption button that appears below and to the right of your screen. This session is recorded, and on-demand version of today's presentation will be made available in the Advance Learning Center within 48 hours.

SWE strives to create programming that suits your needs and one way we do that is with your feedback. So please take a moment afterwards to complete the feedback survey. The survey can be found towards the bottom of this events course page on the Advance Learning Center. And I will also drop the survey link in the chat. Now it is my pleasure to introduce our speaker Nina, so you can go ahead.

Thank you so much, Alysoun. Just give me one second as I get set up here and share my screen. Are you seeing my PowerPoint mode?

Yes, looks great.

All right. Well, thank you, everybody. I'm so excited to be here to speak to you today on this topic, From Backstage to

**Centerstage:** Empowering Introverts for Success.

I'm just thrilled when Alysoun reached out and asked me if I was interested in doing this talk, not having to stand up in front of a stage in front of everyone, navigate a huge conference, and doing it all from video with my notes in front of me, it's like an introvert's dream. So I'll talk a little bit about that throughout my presentation here today. But, again, just really, really excited to be here to share with you a topic that I'm passionate about.

So a little bit about me. I am today's director, going with the theme From Backstage to Centerstage. I do work for Emerson, but I think we're all more than just the company that we work for.

I am an introvert, so I'll be talking about my experiences today. I'm a mom, an executive. I was a chemical engineer. I feel like I mostly do problem-solving and coaching for my teams now today. I do write for Austin moms blog. I drive my kids around all the time. And I'm a founder of nonprofits and just starting to do a little bit of side coaching as well. So that's who I am.

I will just like to call out and make a disclaimer that all of the content in here and ideas are expressly my own, not reflective of my organizations. They are from my lived experience, my knowledge, my reading, my passion. So I'm very, very excited to share with you today.

I learned this concept of six pictures. It's a really great way to introduce yourself to audiences and let them get to know a little bit about you personally. So I'll just walk through this to give you a little bit of an idea of who I am.

The first picture there is my father. He was in the Cambodian Navy. He immigrated to the US in 1975 and escaped genocide in Cambodia. So my father is an extreme introvert. He is an engineer also. I got a lot of tough love growing up. But it also instilled in me a lot of things around resilience and survival.

The picture in the middle of my mom and her sisters. I had very, very strong female role models in my life growing up who modeled success looking very, very different. My aunts and my mom actually didn't go to college, but they're all successful in their own right and have really, really helped me be successful in my career and have just been incredible, incredible role models that have showed me a lot of things.

The next picture is my family. My joy. Everything I do, I do for my family. My children grew up with me talking a lot about what it's like to be a woman in the STEM field and the challenges that we face. And we have a lot of open dialogue and communication. We also have a lot of open dialogue and communication about being an introvert, which I'll share with you.

The bottom left picture. There is a picture of my actual nightstand. This is actually a common trait amongst introverts, but I have a big passion for knowledge and reading. I read 50 to 75 books a year. Happy to talk about book recommendations at any point in time, but love, love to read both fiction, nonfiction, and also self-improvement, business books, books of all types, really just have a huge curiosity and thirst for knowledge.

The bottom middle picture there is a picture of my yoga studio. I'll talk a little bit more about self-care through the presentation, but I think it's very, very important for everyone to find their outlet or the place where they can recharge. And I have found that through yoga. It's changed my life for the better. And I'm always asking people what they're doing to take care of themselves. And I will encourage you to do the same.

The last picture there is the picture of me doing an activity called the Leap of Faith. Every year I go on a little bit of a life planning retreat with some of my friends and do some career planning, some personal planning, but also try and stretch myself, recharge, but also look for growth opportunities.

My friend asked me to take this leap of faith with her, which involves climbing up to the top of this platform and jumping off. And they talk a little bit about your mindset beforehand and after hand-- afterwards and it just serves as a reminder for me to push myself out of my comfort zone. It reminds me that we can do hard things. But I think about this moment a lot whenever I'm in moments where I'm a little bit uncomfortable, just knowing that you can do hard things and growth comes from those uncomfortable situations.

So, again, I think the six pictures way to introduce yourself also allows you to connect a little bit with your audiences. So I'll encourage you maybe to try that in some of your meetings in the future. But now I just want to get a little bit into the heart of the presentation here and just share with you a little bit about why I'm passionate about this topic.

So this here is a picture from 2017. It's a little bit blurry. I had to pull it from the depths of my iPhone. It's a picture of a meeting that I coordinated.

We did meetings in the rounds. We had round tables. There were about 500 people in this room. And I coordinated the entire event, the content. I mean, you can see some awards there on the stage, designed the awards, even planned-- that's my boss up there at the time. He's my boss again, actually-- but planned the music timed exactly right to his speech and to his talk.

And I think about that meeting a lot, because another leader at the time asked me and they said, Nina, do you want to get on the stage and do you want to step up and talk in front of this group. And my immediate reaction was no. No, I don't. I have too much to do. I'm coordinating this whole event. I don't want to get up there.

And I think about that moment a lot, because I probably should have gotten up there and taken the opportunity. I was given the opportunity to get up on the stage and say a few words. And I'm not sure if it was nerves, confidence-- I wasn't ready yet, but it was one of those moments where, thinking back, I wish I had gotten up on that stage. So we'll come back to that story here and-- at the end. But I just want to point out this story to say, that was a very defining moment for me. And maybe some of you see yourselves in these instances where you prefer to take a step back and be a little bit more backstage or behind the scenes than on the center stage. All right, that is it for my intro.

So today's ACT, I want to go through three things with you, really to Acknowledge the introverted traits that you might have and what impact that might have on your career success. C, Captivate your audience by enhancing your communication and network skills. So just giving you a couple of tips there where we can try and enhance your communication and networking, where you might not feel as comfortable. And then the T, Transform and enhance your visibility using your authentic voice. So those are the three things that I'm going to try and cover here today. Really excited about walking through that with you all.

So we'll take a moment for a quick poll. Are you an introvert or an extrovert. I just want to get a little sense from the audience here. And I recognize that I did not define those yet, which I will.

Alysoun, we'll give it a minute. But if you could tell me how the poll's coming along, that'd be great.

Yeah, right now, I'm seeing a lot of introverts, but definitely a good amount of I'm not sure as well. I'll give it a little bit more time. Almost everyone has participated. Yeah, OK, a couple more seconds. All right. I'll end the poll now.

All right, so almost 75% introverts and then almost 20% people saying I'm not sure, and we're going to talk about that. All right.

And then the extroverts, I love that you're here. Maybe you can learn something and take away some things here. I mean there will be some things here that will give you some insights to your introvert colleagues, friends as well.

All right, so let's jump right in. I always like to start with the why in any presentation. And one of the reasons why this topic is so, so important to me is I firmly believe that all voices need to be heard.

We just did a quick poll here and, what did I say. almost 75% of this population. Of course, the topic helps-- is introverts. But I've tried to look at this statistic and it varies depending on what you look at. But Myers-Briggs is a pretty good indicator. And it says that roughly 40% of the population are introverts. Many famous writers, actors, scientists, and deep thinkers are introverts.

As an example, Marie Curie, she was the first woman to win a Nobel Prize for her studies in radiation. Introvert, scientist Bill Gates, co-founder of Microsoft, really led some of the cutting edge around technology. He is a well-known introvert.

And Meryl Streep, an actress. You don't normally think of actresses and creators as introverts, but many, many creatives are actually introverts as well. So you really can't tell. My point here is you can't tell who is an introvert or an extrovert necessarily from who they are and how they speak.

Many people tell me I'm not an introvert either. And we'll get to that here with this point that 60% of the population are likely ambiverts. So those 20% of you that answered, you're not sure. Hopefully, by the end of this presentation, you'll have a little bit more of an inclination there. But it could also be that you're an ambivert, and ambiverts can exhibit both introvert and extrovert traits, depending on the situation.

And, again, if I go back to why this is so important and a passion topic for me. If 40% to 50% of the population is quieter, and they have the quieter voices, and their ideas are dampened by louder voices, we could be missing out on so many ideas.

And as a person that is a huge advocate for problem-solving, innovation, engineering, I think those quiet voices need to be heard. And in today's society, I think a lot of the loud voices sometimes overcome those quiet voices. And so I feel like it's important-- and something that I like to do to make sure that everyone that's an introvert recognizes what their traits are, and what those strengths are, and how we can encourage those ideas and voices to be just a little bit louder in this quiet world.

All right, acknowledge your introvert traits and its impact. So common characteristics of introverts, for those of you that don't know or just as a reminder, more of that deep thinking, reflection, preparedness, research. The books that I showed you, that thirst for knowledge. Preference for one-on-one versus group settings. Are you more prolific in conversation when you can have a meaningful connection versus a group setting?

Preference for written communication. Sometimes I struggle to come up with the words that I want to say because I've got too many words in my mind to get out. But when I write them down, they come out a little bit more fluidly. That is also a common introvert trait to prefer that written communication, where you can get all of your thoughts out because you've got all of this depth and all these ideas that you're trying to get out.

Perhaps you enjoy solitude and being alone. Another introvert trait is engaged listening as well. That is a huge strength, to be a listener. There's some times when I'm in conversations and I don't talk, the other person is talking the entire time, and it's a treasure trove of information. So if you can hone in on that strength, that listening skill that you have, there's so much that can be learned and gleaned from conversations.

The calm presence. Also super important, not overreacting to anything, really being objective and being able to take things in and have that calming presence. Also a common characteristic of introverts and something in business and in work that is important.

But the most important, I think, and the delineating factor when it comes to introverts and extroverts-- and, again, I'm not trained in this, this is just from years of experience and my desire to learn, but it comes down to energy and needing time to recharge after excessive stimulation, noise, activity. And extroverts thrive more in this chaotic, loud, high activity environment. Introverts need time to recharge.

I definitely need time to recharge after I'm on. And I talk all the time at work. And then when I go home, I have no words. And my husband knows that I've been having to do too much talking and so I need some time to recharge before I get back into things.

So just a little meme for some fun here. Introverts when plans are canceled. Anybody feel me on that one. Sometimes I'm just like yes, those plans are canceled. I'm seeing a lot of things come up in the chat, so I'm just going to take a quick pause for a second. Alysoun, if there's anything that's been on these couple of slides that's worth me commenting on?

Yeah, so I saw a comment that said that someone wished that ambivert was one of the options in our poll. So I took a quick impromptu poll and typed it in the chat. If you feel like you're an ambivert, throw it in. And we got a decent amount of people. I want to say 15 to 20 folks who answered ambivert. But, yeah, that's pretty much what's coming in.

A lot of people also agree that recharge time is very important to them. Someone here commented that it can be difficult to recharge after work when you come home to kids.

Yes.

Yes, which I'm sure you can comment on. But, yeah, it's mostly people just throwing their thoughts into their-- I guess I'll take this time to emphasize that if you have a question that you would like Nina to address at the end, you can throw it into the Q&A tab and we'll get to that during the Q&A session.

Thanks, Alysoun. I don't know if this is an introvert or an extrovert trait, and not everything is one or the other. I mean, not everything is binary. But when I present, I really like engagement. So I really appreciate some of those comments there as well. OK, we'll keep going on now.

So I want you all to acknowledge your backstage powers. Again, introverts draw that energy from within. They need to recharge those batteries. But the thoughtfulness leads to intentional and thorough decisions and long-term vision-- strategy and vision.

One of the things that I get is a part of my feedback is the good decision-making quality that I have. And that's because I am very thoughtful, and I think through, and I'm prepared. And so those are strengths that we have as introverts.

And if-- in following with the theme, in the backstage of many, many success stories, introverts are often the ones that are behind the scenes and the architects. I'm just trying to pull you out from behind the curtain a little bit and make sure that people see you as a part of the strengths that you have.

And then I really want to emphasize that being an introvert or an extrovert-- they're not weaknesses. They're just the characteristics that we have that we're born with. And we just need to acknowledge them and figure out, are there situations where we need to tweak some things because they could be misinterpreted or you need to flex a little bit more in one area, perhaps, because it's needed.

So, again, not a weakness to be an introvert or an extrovert at all, so I don't want to say that. But things can be misconstrued. And so we all have to be cognizant of some of our actions and our behaviors, especially in your careers.

And introverts have this natural depth. I talked about that research, that preparedness, that depth. And that fuels a lot of authenticity and, again, that engaged listening. So authenticity is very important to me. And I think it's very important to many introvert leaders out there as well. So, again, I just want to pull out some of these characteristics that make sure that we're using those and converting those into strengths when we can.

We talked a little bit about the recharge and the social battery. I will tell you, I think there's two people-- two types of people in the world and it's not introverts and extroverts. It's those that always keep their batteries charged and those that let their batteries drain. And I am one of those people that is guilty of letting my cell phone battery deplete. And I have to remind myself of that all the time, just have a little bit more forethought around that.

But the introvert social battery is the same. It's your reserve of energy that you have for social interactions. And once that's depleted, you may need some time to recharge. And that could look different things. For many, it's alone time or solitude. But this self-care is so important for you to bring your best self that can achieve your highest potential. You can't do that when you're depleted. You can't pour from an empty cup. So, again-- and going back to the self-care, the yoga for me in my six picture story. Self-care is fundamental for you to bring your best self forward.

So I offer you a couple of tips here. Know when you need to leave and do it gracefully and professionally. You can have boundaries. It's OK. You can say it's been nice catching up. Thank you, this has been great. I talked about my daughters and how we talk a lot about-- we talk a lot about feelings in our house.

But being an introvert-- and my middle daughter, she is an extreme introvert-- and she will tell me, when she's done-- she plays on a soccer team, she's with her soccer team a lot-- they want to hang out in the hotel room after the games. I mean, it's like 12 hours of being with these people and she'll look at me and she'll say, mom, my social battery is drained or I'm peopled out. I'm ready to go. I'm ready to go and have quiet time.

And so I think it's important for you to know what your boundaries are and when you need to recharge and take breaks. A lot of my team knows that I'm an introvert and they ask me-- I was in the Philippines, we worked shift work there for the support team, and I had just come off of a plane. It was a long day. I had multiple town halls. It was like 10 o'clock at night. It was a combination of being tired, being on, being talked out, people wanting to spend time with me and talk with me all the time. And one of my colleagues looked at me and said, hey, are you good? Do you need to take a break for a few minutes before we go on?

And I really appreciated that because she knew and she had heard me talking about being an introvert before and sometimes being drained. I took a little bit of a break in a nice, dark, quiet room. And I came back out and I was able to really engage and reconnect with the teams, and the employees, and present better. And I think that was really important. So can you find some ways to take breaks? Can you take a break and take a walk if you need to?

For the person out there that commented about finding it hard to recharge when you go from a day where you're on at work all day long, perhaps to when you're on and your children and your family needs you. I think about the car ride as an opportunity to take a break, meditation. I do that a lot. Or taking a walk, maybe, before-- or before you have to do some of your things. But can you find a way to take a quick break? And sometimes-- time's a whole other thing, but maybe look for some of those ways to take breaks.

Recharging looks different for everybody. I talked about yoga. I do a little bit of meditation, quiet time, listening to music. It could be art or drawing. Feel free to share in the chat some of the things that you do to recharge and what that looks like.

And for extroverts, I will say, because we do have some extroverts out there-- extroverts get energy from other people. So, for them, recharging might look like a night out where they're hanging out and talking all the time. So recharging, again, looks different for different people.

Oh, yeah, I also do laundry helps me recharge, but it's more like laundry and Netflix, just to have a little bit of alone time. And I think it's actually just a guise for alone time from my family sometimes.

And let's talk a little bit about communication and networking. It's really, really important to know that when you are communicating with introverts or extroverts, that might look a little bit different. So if we look at this little comic here, in the middle, you can see this guy is saying, "Oh, are you coming to the party tonight." The other guy says, "No thanks. We have a nice, quiet evening planned with take-out, movie, and a bottle of wine." Sounds excellent to me. But the extrovert says, "Remember, you have to have fun sometimes." So, again, just different languages, different ways to recharge, different definitions of what a nice night looks like.

So here are some stage cues for communicating with either introverts or extroverts. So start with communicating with introverts. Slow down a little bit. I realize now I'm talking a little bit fast. I do that when I get excited, so I apologize. Slow down and give time to process and respond.

Some introverts need a little bit of time to just organize their thoughts. Plus, they're thinking about the perfect response all the time. I know there's a lot of head stuff going on with introverts where you're always trying to perfect what you say and how you say it, so make sure you give that space and that downtime for introverts to think.

I bolded this one because I use this all the time. I can tell when there are the quieter introverts on my teams and they're thinking. They have their thinking face on, but they don't say anything. But sometimes you just need to invite a response or nudge a response. I know that I needed a little bit of a nudge early on in my career. So think about that and look for that.

So, again, this is a tip for everyone. When you see that sometimes people need that invitation, or that little bit of a nudge, and give time to recharge. I shared my story about giving time to recharge.

Stage cues for communicating with extroverts. Extroverts sometimes don't have a lot of patience. They want you to get to the point quickly. They like to meet face to face. Meeting face to face is good. This one is interesting to me. Recognize that some introverts speak and process out loud while thinking. I have this one colleague that speaks and processes and thinks and uses their hands and needs space to move around, and it's like being inside their head and having a conversation with them.

But just some things to recognize. That's a part of their process. Just like for introverts, it might be a part of the process to slow down a little bit. So we have to acknowledge what some of those characteristics are and adjust a little bit. So just a couple of stage cues for communicating there.

And then networking. I talk a lot about networking. I think networking is one of the most important things that you can do. Many of the roles that I have come to have as a part of my career experiences have come through networking, but not the kind of networking where you go in and you're talking to 50 different people. They come from a meaningful connection and a meaningful conversation. So I encourage all of you to not shy away from the opportunity to network, but think about how you can network using the skills that you have and maybe with some slight adjustments that take you just a little bit out of your comfort zone.

So first and foremost, I'm going to say this to everyone, stop talking yourself out of going. I do this all the time too. And I say I'm going to go do something, and then the date comes, and I'm like, oh, but I'm so busy, and I haven't finished my presentation yet, and I haven't been here and done this and done this because I'm getting anxious, and I'm nervous about going to do this networking activity. It is a common thing that I think a lot of introverts do.

So you can see I pulled this picture from the left. "Sorry, I had to cancel last minute, but it took me forever to think of an excuse I haven't used before." Maybe some of you feel that. I know that I've done that. But I'm just going to encourage you-- if you start trying to notice that you're talking yourself out of going to something, ask yourself why. And ask yourself why you were trying to go in the first place? Those are some of the things that we can do to help ourselves.

I like to have a small goal. It's also very normal to want to go to a networking event and to talk to the people that and that's great and that's fine. But if the purpose is for networking and connection, try and talk to a few people that you don't know. Can you talk to three people that you don't know? Can you talk to five people that you don't know? Can you try and get a few more LinkedIn connections?

I like goals. I'm an engineer. And so I like to give myself some small goals to do.

I talked a little bit about this already. It's about quality over quantity. Again, it's not about getting to every person in the room. Can you make that one meaningful connection that can change your career trajectory? I think that's super important.

And it ties to the other one where I say, be yourself, listen, and ask thoughtful, curious questions. Again, common trait of introverts is that listening and that intellectual curiosity. So it is pretty easy to have the meaningful connections.

So if you take the stress off of going to a networking event and having to do all of these things. And repurpose that to having meaningful connections. I think it can change the way you approach networking events.

Come prepared. I always like to come prepared with a couple of things like it could be some recent

Books that I've read, some interesting things that are going on, come with some topics. I have some table topics that I like to use when things get a little bit quiet. If you could go on any game show, what would it be? If you had a magic wand, how would you use it? Just things to get people starting to talk and think. So some traditional icebreakers. I like to use those in networking conversations as well, just to find some sort of connection and something to ground on.



And this was a tip that I learned a long time ago. If you're walking into a room and you're trying to go meet somebody for the first time in a networking event, the best things to do are to either approach someone that's standing alone or in a group of three. If you approach a group of four, a lot of times the people are already talking to each other and it's harder to break into a group of that size. So in a group of three, you there's two people talking, there's somebody that's not talking. And if there's someone standing alone, it's also a good place to approach people. So just think about that. I like to go with groups of three because it's not quite as awkward.

And then the last one, just as a reminder, don't feel guilty about leaving early. You don't have to stay till the end. So if you start to talk yourself out of going to something, you can always say, I'm just going to stay for a little bit. And I promise you, if you get to have some of those meaningful connections, you might not even notice that you've stayed and you've had an enjoyable time. So there's been many times where I've tried to talk myself out of going to an event, and I'm like the last person to leave, and I've really had a great event and a really good opportunity.

I'll share with you just a recent example for me. A bunch of my friends had reached out and said, we're all going to this chemical engineering alumni event at this school, are you going? I wasn't going to go, but since they all said they were going and we hadn't seen each other in a long time, I said yes and I had committed to going. Then I started trying to talk myself out of going.

But I said, I'm not going to do that. I'm going to go to this event. So I go to the event and everybody had bailed. So I ended up at this event where I didn't really know anybody. And I started doing these things. I'm going to talk to a couple of people before I leave, make a couple of new connections, maybe have a meaningful conversation, but then I'm going to go. I don't need to stay the whole time at this event.

Ended up having some great conversations, reconnected with the professor, and I'm going to do a guest lecture at the university as a part of the event. But, also, I was reminded that a lot of people in the room were also introverts as well. And it was fine and it was a great event. So, again, stop trying to talk yourself out of going. Think about a couple of goals that you can do in networking events. Be yourself. Do your research. And listen and ask your thoughtful questions. And I think you can make networking events work a little bit better for you in the future.

Transform and enhance your visibility. I mentor and coach a lot of people over the years. And I think this is the one area that many engineers years, early professionals, and introverts, and women struggle with is enhancing your visibility. And there are many ways that you can do this that are small. So I will just give you a few that I've learned over the years.

One, understand the power of being the meeting note taker. You can ask the clarifying questions and craft the message. Now, in the world of AI, I think the note-taking itself is probably less powerful in and of itself, but you can still be the note taker, using AI, taking notes, modifying the notes, and adding your own actions to the end of the notes, and helping to craft the message. There is so much power in being the person that is recapping the meeting and summarizing it all together. So just know that that is something that introverts can excel at. And I did this for years, and I learned so much about the business, and was able to craft messages, assign myself some action items. So I think there's a lot of power in this one.

For those of you-- I talked a little bit about this. I suffer from this as well. I want to say everything exactly perfect. And in my head I'm like, ooh, how can I say that? How can I ask this question in a really smart way? If you're constantly doing that, sometimes you miss the opportunity to express your ideas because it's not perfect. Speak up. Speak up early. You can use something where you say, building on so-and-so's point, have we ever considered this? Just start by speaking up in meetings.

I have a new rule now. I don't go to meetings if I'm not going to speak up in the meeting. I think it's important to be engaged and a participant in meetings. So if you can find a way to speak up, you can take a little bit of pressure off of yourself. Around speaking up in the meetings. But I definitely worked at this for a long time because I sat through a lot of meetings where I didn't say a single word. And then I would have remorse and say, oh my gosh, why didn't I say this? Oh my gosh, I just thought of the perfect thing just right now. So speak up early.

It helps if you ask for an agenda ahead of time or if there's any preread so that you can be prepared so that you can make a compelling point. So, actually, one of my employees used to do this all the time because I got kind of not so great at sending out agendas. And he would say, what is the agenda for this meeting? What is the objective? And is there something that I can read prior? And I just I love that so much, so just something that you can do. And then for all of us, we can also be better about making sure that the objectives and the agenda for meetings are in our meeting invites.

Leverage asynchronous communication. Again, follow-ups that showcase follow-through, your results, what you've done super, super important. Right now, as a business leader, I really appreciate when employees tell me that they understand that this is an important part of the business strategy, and they just wanted to share x, y, and z, and we're doing this, and this is the impact. I love that.

If you can lay that out for me as a leader and I know that, I can take that and it's easy for me to then take that and make that visible. Now it's visible to me as a leader and I can make that visible to others in the organization. So just think about that. It doesn't always have to be in the meeting. It can be a follow-up from the meeting as well.

And this is another one that I think is great. Again, introverts tend to be writers. In this world of social media, and posts, and blogs, LinkedIn, you can post about things that you're doing right. You can write articles to enhance your visibility.

I see a lot of my colleagues doing this very successfully, where they're posting blogs. I do a couple of blogs, I do some writing as well. I think it enhances your visibility and your credibility in certain subject matters of expertise as well. So that's something that you can think.

Participate in speaking events. This was one of my goals that I wanted to do. And I had the opportunity now to speak at this event. But speaking events where you can prepare your content beforehand, and you're the one that's presenting, and you can present on a topic that you choose, that's a passion topic for you-- again, I talked about, introverts dream at the beginning of this, where I could be on this webinar and present to you. And I have my notes and I haven't even looked at them. They're all over my desk right now.

But I'm more comfortable in this environment. So you can think about, speaking events and ways that you might feel comfortable in sharing. You're showcasing your results, your expertise. And, again, those things enhance your visibility.

And then, lastly, make sure you share your accomplishments. There's so many of us that are so humble and shy away from sharing those accomplishments. And I'm not saying all the time, but make sure that you are recognizing your accomplishments and you're sharing them.

And then I'll just share with you another thing that's not really related to this topic, but I love keeping track of my highlight reel. So maybe something that you can all think about is what are your greatest accomplishments or your greatest hits from this year.

One is a good reminder for yourself to see all of your accomplishments out there. But I think it's always good to reflect on, what you're doing and what your accomplishments are. So the highlight reel is something that I still do. I don't always do it every quarter, but I definitely do it every year and reflect on them. And then you can build on that. And then when you're not feeling so great or not feeling so confident, you can always go back to your highlight reel and look at it.

All right, so if I go back to that first picture that I shared with you, where I was jumping off of the platform, your growth zone comes from sometimes taking a jump, taking a leap, giving yourself a little nudge to get out of your comfort zone. And I'm not asking any of you to be something that you're not.

Again, as an authentic leader, I think we can all grow a little bit out of our comfort zones, but not having to be someone that you're not. So I encourage all of you to think a little bit about how you can maybe push yourself out of your comfort zone just a little bit so that you can be in the growth zone.

I'm not going to talk about the recommended resources here, but these are all books that I've read that have helped to shape the things that I've learned about myself and then I apply. But I'll ask you now, what is one thing that you will take as a takeaway coming out of this session? And maybe write that down and commit to yourself to doing this one thing.

I like small goals. I think we can build on small goals to larger goals. But I'll just ask you to write down one thing that you're going to take away from this session that you'll do in the future. Alysoun, I'm going to ask you to share some of those just because I'm curious before I wrap here.

Yes, so-- let's see. A lot of people are saying small goals for social gatherings to push yourself. Someone said, as an extrovert, make sure introverts feel included and that their voices are considered during meetings. Someone has a goal to attend everything that they're invited to attend. Yeah, going to a lot of networking events, especially in groups of one or three. Yeah, lots of goals to attend networking events. I think especially with WE 25 coming up, which is such a big conference, I think it's on a lot of people's brains for sure.

Awesome. All right, well, thank you for sharing. I've got one last slide for all of you. In summary, acknowledge your introvert strengths. Think about how can you captivate your audience? How can you come prepared to those networking events? How can you make yourself go to those networking events, whatever that looks like for you? Thinking about your communication skills and working with people, that active listening-- all of those are things that you can use to really engage your audience and transform and enhance your visibility by doing some of these small things. It can be small and can build from there.

And all of this, again, is just a nudge, for all of you to take a step out of your comfort zone so that you can go beyond the backstage where I was at many years ago, doing all the things for all the people to allow the world to hear your voice, your ideas. If you can match your passion and your purpose, you can bring your introvert superpowers to the surface and be very loud, and visible, and passionate. Introverts have a lot of depth and a lot of things to share. And if you get introverts talking about their passion topic, I will tell you they can't shut up, like me when I'm talking about this-- got a lot of things to say about this.

So, again, I encourage you to find the spaces that light you up so that you can let your light shine through and tell your story. Embrace your story, like the theme of this event, so that you all can go from backstage to center stage as well.

And then I'll just end. This is a picture of myself presenting in front of an audience of several thousand people. Again, never thought I would do something like that on the stage with the mics, big, big audience out there. And I never thought that I could do that coming from someone that wanted to hide behind the scenes that immediately said, no, I can't do that.

You can. We all have it within us. It takes practice. So practice is a part of this and getting more comfortable with talking to others, talking on stage. But I promise you, you all have it in you. You can do it. And hopefully you learned a little bit of something in this session that you can take away. So that you can too let your light shine and be on that center stage.

And that's what I had. Please feel free to connect with me on LinkedIn or on Instagram-- @modernbossmama on Instagram. Would love to connect with you all. And now I'll open it up for a few questions.

OK. Amazing, Nina. Thank you so much for that great presentation. I'm so excited to go through some of these lovely Q&A questions that have come in. So for folks who need to hop off, please feel free to do so. Again, this session is recorded. So if you want to jump back into the Q&A session afterwards, you can totally do that.

But, yeah, let's just get started. Nina, would you mind unsharing your screen for this portion?

Yes.

All righty.

I don't know how to unshare it. Well, you can keep that up too.

I got it.

Amazing. OK, so this was kind of a popular question, which was, what's the best way to start a conversation when approaching new people at a networking event? I struggle with this part, especially when going up to a group. So do you have any tips, or example questions, or statements that you'd like to lead with.

Whoo. I think it depends on the event, but, honestly, I usually just go up to people and say, hi, I'm Nina Golder, nice to meet you. And put out my hand, and shake hands, and say, what do you do? Why are you here? And I think the wire-- what are you hoping to get out of this event? Or tell me a little bit about yourself, I love that. Tell me something about yourself is always a great one.

Yeah.

Those people can talk about themselves. And so if you ask them something about themselves, it's an easy way to start a conversation.

Yes, I agree. I found that if you throw the ball back into their court to start talking, then they provide some material that you can respond to. So, yeah, I totally agree. That's a great tip.

So another question that we had here was in the workplace or at a networking event, maybe, how do you work with extroverted people in a group setting and maybe some of those traits, where they accidentally speak over you or they act like they can't hear you. They run you over. What are some tips for putting yourself out there as an introvert in that moment?

Ooh, that's a good one. So I would encourage everybody to notice when that happens. If you notice that there's someone that's getting talked over in a meeting or in a setting. I do this all the time-- and, again, I don't know if it comes with age, or experience, or what, but I'll say, oh, so-and-so was trying to-- were you trying to say something? And so sometimes, getting an assist from someone is very helpful. So all of us should be very cognizant of that and not afraid to, again, invite the person to say something that was trying to say something.

It is a little bit uncomfortable when that happens. It still happens to me sometimes, but you just got to keep trying. Don't let that make you small. I would say think about how do you then either speak a little bit louder because maybe they really didn't hear you. That does happen to me sometimes. Happens to me a lot with my husband too. But you can say, as I was trying to say or to follow onto that right and, again, just find a little bit more confidence in your voice, a little bit more volume in your voice.

And don't be afraid to also just speak up. And I promise if you do that someone, if that happens again, someone will say something. But if you just let it go, sometimes it's not noticed and sometimes it's only you that notices, right, too. So just make sure that you're again-- I know that's uncomfortable. It's uncomfortable for me even thinking about-- I can think about several times where I've just got a little bit smaller in that situation.

Yes, definitely. And I kind of saw someone else's question that's similar to that, which is, if you're an introvert but you're feeling a little bit more extroverted, how can you support maybe someone in your group who is more introverted? And I definitely think that advocating and working together in that environment can be super helpful. Yeah.

So this one is a question about how can introverts handle those after hours socialization events-- dinner, going out to happy hour, et cetera-- which can be a source of anxiety for someone who's introverted but seems to be pretty impactful for creating those connections?

I think that's a good one. So long dinners-- oh, my gosh, that-- just thinking about long-- I have got one tomorrow night and it's with a big group of people that I haven't met before. And I was just thinking about it. I'm like, oh, my gosh, what are we going to talk about? I'm just meeting all these people for the first time. It's a lot. I mean, sometimes it is a necessary part of the role.

I would say, there are sometimes those situations where you have to have that small talk and you have to have that conversation, but think about how you can steer it to topics that, again, you're comfortable with or you have a lot of expertise in. So I think there's always a way to navigate those conversations to areas where you're a little bit more comfortable.

And the other thing I do sometimes is, again, these are Nina's thoughts and Nina's ideas. Sometimes I'll skip the dinner, especially when it's in my hometown. And I've got a lot going on as well. I'll say, hey, I can't make the dinner, but I can swing by and have a drink, or I can swing by and say hello and have an appetizer, or whatever it is. So you can also set some of those boundaries upfront, if it's appropriate.

And you can't do that all the time. And if you're in sales, you can't always not go to business dinners. So that's probably not acceptable. But there are situations where you can make a presence for a little while and then you can leave. So those are just some thoughts.

Yes, thank you so much for sharing. Our next question, are there any tips for introverts trying to build a presence or connections on LinkedIn. The platform feels very unnatural as an introvert. And based on what I see on there, I do see the potential for genuine connection. So how do you get started on LinkedIn.

Oh, gosh, I don't even know if I know how to answer that question. I feel like, first, you can connect to industries or groups. I think just finding groups and engaging. But there's a lot of really meaningful introspective thought leaders that are on LinkedIn that post really great content. So I would say maybe find some of those. I'm happy to suggest some, that I follow, and they post really great content. And you can engage in some of that content and ask questions and comments. And then it kind of starts from there.

Again, I think about small steps. So find a couple of groups. Find some thought leaders to follow. And then it builds from there.

And I've turned some of those connections coffee. I also like to do-- well, again, this is a little bit less introvert, but it goes back to the I like to set goals for myself. I like to have one lunch a month with somebody that is not in my immediate circle of people that I work with. So external people, new connections, just one lunch or one coffee a month to make sure that I'm continuing to cultivate connections. Just to stay relevant, and connected, and to know what's going on in different industries or in different groups as well.

Yes, definitely. And I think I've found it helpful even to continue to read what some people post and comment. And that way that can give you a little bit of inspiration of the ways that you can engage as well. So our next question-- and I think I'm going to do two more questions before we wrap up.

So I've been to lots of big meetings where I wanted to speak up, but was afraid I would say or ask something stupid in front of so many people. Any suggestions to deal with that?

I'm going to be really candid here. You have to let it go. I know it's hard. It's like, oh, are they going to judge me? But there is, I guarantee you, someone else in the room that is wanting to ask that same question. And when I see people do that and I'm like, ooh, yeah, I wanted to ask that question, but I didn't. It's OK.

I ask the clarifying questions I'm-- all the time. And it is OK. So I'm just going to tell everybody right now, get over that fear. Just do it. And once you start doing it, it becomes really easy to do it.

Yes, I agree. And I think that if you have a question, is it better to-- yeah, just get that question answered and have your answer, even if response is simple, at least you get to ask it and now you know. But, yeah, I've definitely had that experience too where you just have to take a deep breath, be brave, ask the question, and get it over with.

So our last question here. When you change your job, how do you mingle with a new team or how do you get started when you're an introvert, especially if you're a little bit more afraid to ask questions or you don't know who to ask?

Yeah, great, great question. I think you've got to maybe try and find someone that seems like they're connected. There are connectors out there. I happen to be one of them. I'm always introducing people to other people, but see if you can seek out a connector that can tell you like the ropes. Here's how it works. Here's who you go to for this. You can ask your boss.

If there's a buddy or somebody that you can talk to and ask-- take your questions to, so it's something that I started to do on some of the teams that I have. Whenever we have new hires, just pair them up with somebody. And if that doesn't happen for you, ask for it.

Say, hey, I'd love to have someone that you can connect me with that, can answer my questions for me, at least in the short-term. But I would say, don't be afraid to ask. And maybe find some of those people that are the connectors that can connect you with different groups or different teams and give you a lay of the land.

And then, as a leader, I will say leadership can be lonely. People don't always come right out and invite you in and say hey. So if you're going into a new leadership role, I think you start with your team. And you've got to establish trust and credibility with your team and work on connecting with them and getting to know them.

Yes, definitely. I especially love your point about advocating for yourself. Even if there's not a system in place, like a buddy system, then you can always ask for it. And people are always willing to assist, I find, especially supervisors or managers.

So that's going to be our last question for today. If there are any unanswered questions, we will get to that. I can post a little Q&A one sheet after as well. I'm just going to go over a couple more housekeeping notes.

Just for people who are curious about how to access on-demand presentation. so the on-demand version of this presentation will be made available in the Advance Learning Center within 48 hours and so you can access it exactly where you found this link. If you learn from and enjoy this web session, you can find more professional development content at [advancelearning.swe.org](http://advancelearning.swe.org).

I'd like to thank you all so much for tuning in and attending this presentation, engaging in the chat, giving us such good Q&A questions. And a big thank you goes out to Nina, our wonderful speaker. Thank you so much for such an interesting and informative presentation.

And so, remember, you can always reach out to us and email [learning@swe.org](mailto:learning@swe.org). If you have questions for our speaker or need support for this presentation, we will have another Countdown to Conference webinar coming up soon in November, so you can find more information about that in the Advance Learning Center as well.

But, yeah, I'd like to wish everyone a wonderful rest of your day. And thank you so much, again, for joining us.

Thanks, everyone.

Goodbye.