

MI-ACE Annual Conference

ElevatED: Ascend and Transform Your World

Handout: Beyond the Bio | The Participant Roadmap

Session: Ascend from the Sidelines: The Confidence Code for ElevatED Communication

I. The “Inside-Out” Reflection

The most powerful stories aren’t found in your resume; they are found in your resilience. Use this space to bridge your past with your future leadership.

- Identify Your “Sideline”: What is one professional space, committee, or conversation where you have been playing it safe or staying on the sidelines?

○ Write it here: _____

- The “Plot Twist”: Briefly describe one personal challenge or “plot twist” you’ve overcome. How did that moment specifically prepare you to lead in the situation you listed above?

○ Core Strength Gained: _____

II. The Confidence Code: Empathetic Assertiveness Scripts

Use these “Power Move” scripts to pivot conversations and maintain your professional authority while staying true to your authentic voice.

1. The “Visibility” Pivot

- When to use: When your contribution is overlooked or credited to someone else.
- **The Script:** “I’m glad we’re circling back to that point. As I mentioned earlier, the core of this strategy relies on [X]. Let’s look at how we can implement that specifically.”

2. The “Empathetic Boundary”

- When to use: When you are asked to take on “office housework” or a task that doesn’t align with your trajectory.
- **The Script:** “I appreciate you thinking of me for this. However, to ensure I can give [Current High-Impact Project] the leadership it requires, I won’t be able to take this on right now. I’m happy to recommend a resource to help get it started.”

3. The “Inclusion” Interruption

- When to use: To regain the floor or bring another woman’s voice back into the room.
- **The Script:** “Hold that thought for just a second—I want to make sure we finish exploring the point [Name] was making, as it’s vital to our next steps.”

III. The “Ascension” Affirmation

Transformation begins with how you name yourself before you ever enter the room.

- Draft your Ascension Sentence: * “I am a leader who transforms [X Environment] by using my story of [Y Strength] to achieve [Z Result].”

Next Steps & Connection

- Action Item: Choose one “Confidence Code” script to use in a meeting within the next 48 hours.
- Connect: [Insert Lotus & Sage Consulting Website/LinkedIn]

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The Storytelling Framework (The “Hook, Pivot, Resolve” Method)

Use this three-part structure to transform any professional update into a compelling leadership narrative.

1. The Hook (The Challenge)

Don't start with the data; start with the stakes. What was the “disruption” or the problem?

- Ask yourself: What was the specific obstacle we faced?
- The “Ascend” Shift: “Instead of saying ‘We had a budget issue,’ say: ‘We were at a crossroads where our resources didn't match our vision...’”

2. The Pivot (The Strategy)

This is where you introduce your unique leadership approach or “Plot Twist.”

- Ask yourself: What did I see that others missed? What bold action did we take?
- The “Ascend” Shift: “I recognized that if we didn't change our narrative, we wouldn't gain the support we needed. Here is how I pivoted our outreach...”

3. The Resolution (The Transformation)

What was the outcome, and what did it teach us for the future?

- Ask yourself: What is the “new normal” now that we've overcome the challenge?
- The “Ascend” Shift: “The result wasn't just a balanced budget; it was a 20% increase in engagement and a blueprint for how we handle future transitions.”

Quick Tips for ElevatED Storytelling

- Be the Guide, Not the Hero: In professional stories, your audience (or your team) should be the hero. You are the guide who provides the wisdom and the map.
- The Rule of Specificity: Use one sensory detail. Instead of saying “it was a busy day,” say “it was the kind of morning where the coffee was cold before I could take the first sip.” It makes you human and relatable.
- End with an Invitation: Always tie your story back to the listener. “I'm sharing this because I know many of you are facing similar crossroads right now...”

The “Data-to-Story” Conversion Table

Numbers tell us what is happening; stories tell us why it matters. Use this table to translate your metrics into momentum.

Dry Data (The “What”)	The Human Centered Story (The “Why”)	The ElevatED Impact
"Our enrollment increased by 15% this semester."	"This semester, we opened the doors for 200 more first-generation students who previously saw college as an 'impossible' dream."	Shifts focus from growth to access and opportunity .
"The project is 3 months behind schedule due to staffing."	"We've encountered a 'plot twist' that requires us to slow down and fortify our team so we can finish with the excellence this mission deserves."	Shifts focus from failure to integrity and quality .
"Our survey shows a 4.2 out of 5 satisfaction rate."	"Four out of five participants told us they finally feel a sense of 'belonging'—that is the heartbeat behind these numbers."	Shifts focus from statistics to belonging and culture .

Final Pro-Tip

"Data gets you the budget, but stories get you the buy-in."