

Security **LeadHER**

Advance. Connect. Empower.



Presented
By



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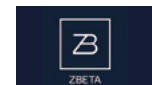
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“Visibility is not a personality trait—it’s a practice.”

—Kathy Sizemore, CEO, A-Bell Alarms Company

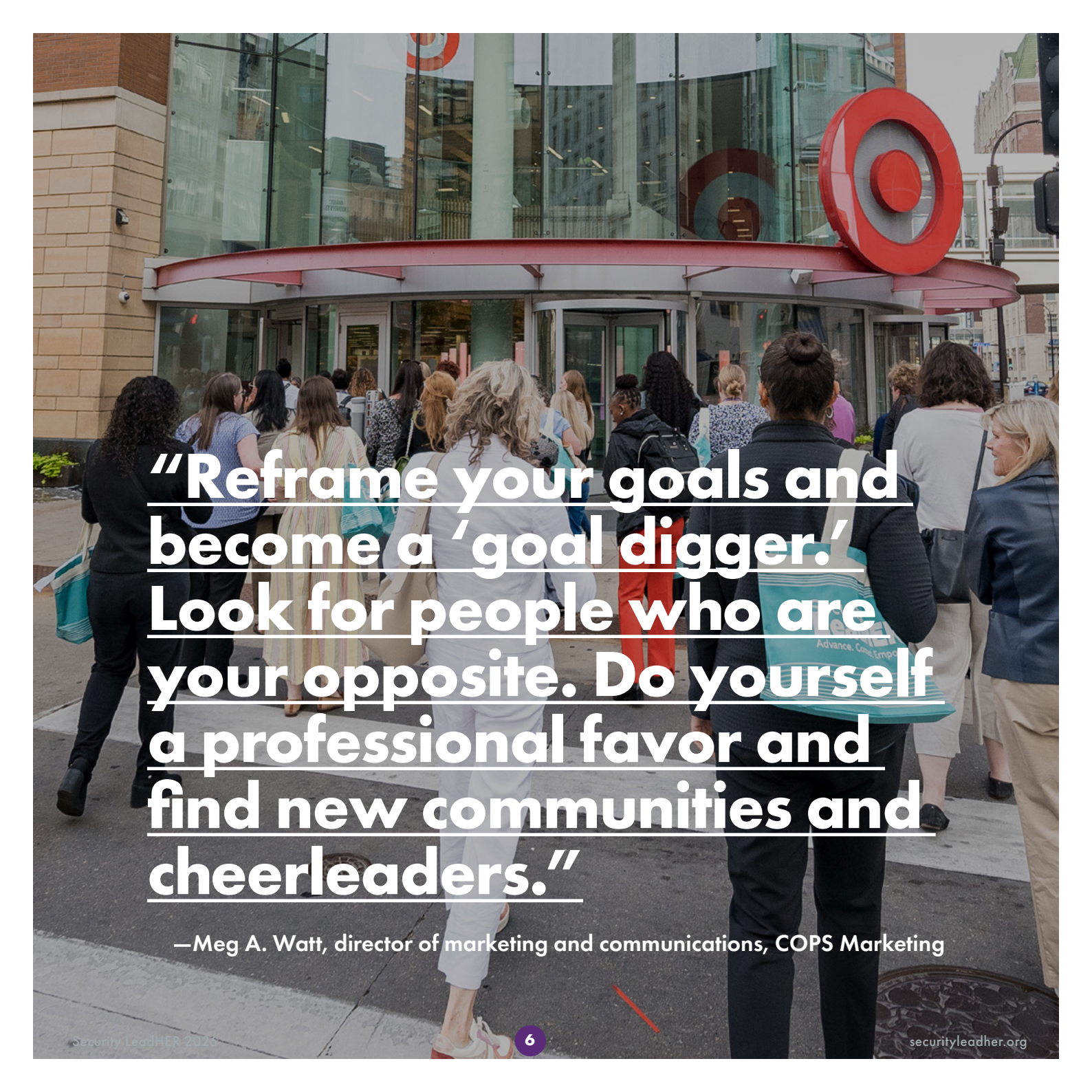
Advance

Stop Being the Best-Kept Secret: Grow Your Visibility in the Workplace

You're excellent at your job, and you know it, but the people making decisions might not know your name. Don't let someone with half your experience and twice your visibility land the promotion, the project, the seat at the table! To be more seen in your company and in the security industry, focus on building your visibility trifecta:

- 1) Strategic networking:** Become known in rooms that matter. Identify five people who should know your name and your work and don't yet, whether they're decision-makers, committee chairs, editors, peers and/or conference speakers you admire. Reach out to them and lead with what you can offer.
- 2) Thought leadership:** Start where you are and build from there. Look for opportunities for thought leadership on any level. This could include participating in a local chamber of commerce workshop, speaking at a regional industry event or national conference or writing an article.
- 3) Industry involvement:** Become part of the infrastructure. Join a committee, standards board or association, and participate in industry conferences.





**“Reframe your goals and
become a ‘goal digger.’
Look for people who are
your opposite. Do yourself
a professional favor and
find new communities and
cheerleaders.”**

—Meg A. Watt, director of marketing and communications, COPS Marketing

Think Like a Marketer

Leverage Personal Branding for Career Growth

Your personal brand is already doing work in rooms you're not in—the question is whether it's saying what you want it to say. Consider this framework for personal branding to help you reach your next level of growth:

- **Understand your brand today:** What are three words that describe your professional brand right now? Be honest, not aspirational. Think about where you show up consistently (e.g., LinkedIn, online meetings, in person at conferences) and where you disappear. What is your expertise? What are you good at or known for?
- **Define your brand voice with a marketer's mindset:** Strong brands hold a clear position in people's minds—your personal brand is no difference. What do you want your brand voice to say about you? How can you consistently show up and enforce that brand? What stories support your brand positioning?
- **Build your brand with intention:** Challenge yourself to identify at least one thing you will immediately change about how you show up. Create 30-day visibility goals for how you will make your expertise more visible, create consistency and leverage storytelling. Measure whenever possible.



"Personal branding is about more than your online presence—it's about how you show up every day in meetings, with your colleagues, with your customers and out in the world. Building that brand is one of the most important things you can do to solidify the growth of your career and your network."

—Jenna Hardie, director of marketing and PR, HiveWatch



“Positioning is the catalyst of impression and perception.”

—Jessica Johnson-Cope, CEO, Johnson Security Bureau

Command the Room Without Apology Through Executive Presence

Executive presence is essential for advancement. In male-dominated environments, a strong presence helps women establish credibility and ensures they aren't overlooked for leadership opportunities.

- **Authority must be actively claimed.** The framework Claim it–Own it–Use it underscores the importance of recognizing your value and asserting it with intention.
- **Perception is shaped by positioning.** How you present yourself—your voice, posture, clarity and confidence—directly influences how others interpret your capability.
- **Ground your message in a clear context,** or your presence can feel performative rather than authentic.

Sorry, Not Sorry: Intentional Language for Confident Leaders

People—especially women—apologize in situations where an apology is often not necessary. It's critical to break this habit because being overly apologetic makes you appear less sincere and less confident. Here are key tips for using intentional language for confident leadership in the security industry:



Women are often taught from a young age to respond to success by saying "I got lucky" and downplay your achievements to cushion how others feel. **Speak actively, confidently and unapologetically** about your achievements!



Work to minimize use of "confidence killers" in your verbal and body language such as qualifiers ("kind of," "basically," "I think," "essentially") and hedging ("I might be wrong," "just a thought," "I'm not sure") language and slumping to make yourself physically smaller.



Practice confidence in your body language. Sit up, keep your shoulders back and keep your hands visible. People who have their hands visible are seen by others as being more trustworthy.



Avoid apologizing in your language unless you actually did something wrong that you need to take responsibility for. Use more concise language, state your perspective clearly and directly, eliminate upward inflection and claim your right to be in the conversation.

—Angela Conley, senior customer success manager, OpenEye/Alarm.com

5 Tools for Mastering Public Speaking

To be an effective public speaker, you need to get people to listen to you. As a woman in the security industry, you can strengthen your public speaking skills—to influence leadership and drive change—through the physics of presence and using your body and voice. Here are five tools to help you:



- **Rate:** Speaking too quickly or slowly can make people tune out. Vary your rate of speed while talking so people pay attention.
- **Volume:** Volume is associated with confidence—talking too softly can make people think you're insecure, and talking too loudly can make people think you are intense and aggressive. Be as big as the room.
- **Tonality:** Don't just plainly report information—bring emotion into your message to connect with others.
- **Pause:** Pausing your speech helps create authority and gives you time to think and prepare your next remarks. The more comfortable you are with moments of silence, the more you'll reduce the number of filler words you use—conveying confidence.
- **Body language:** Be mindful of your:
 - **Posture:** Keep your back straight, your chest open, your shoulders open and your hands visible. Make eye contact.
 - **Grounding:** Place your feet hip-width apart. Move intentionally. Avoid fast pacing or swaying—it is distracting for your audience.
 - **Power sphere:** Your power sphere is the portion of your body from your belly button to your eyes. Turn this portion of your body toward your audience.

—Keren Amaya, regional safety and security advisor, British Council





"What am I missing in this situation?"
"What risks should I consider?"
"How would a larger competitor solve this?"
"Where is this process inefficient?"
"If (?) retires tomorrow, what breaks?"

"AI is about removing repetitive tasks—it is not about removing [or] replacing people."

—Sabrina A. Wilson, founder,
Spill the T Consulting

From Tasks to Talent: Use AI as a Leadership Advantage

Artificial intelligence (AI) is the biggest innovation in our lifetimes, and women leaders must lean in to harness its power in the workplace.

- **Consider using AI as a brainstorming partner**, to transcribe meetings and create summaries, as a review tool and to address problematic workflows by using enterprise AI tools that are sanctioned by your company.
- **Security practitioners can use AI to assist with project delivery** by summarizing client requests, drafting project kickoff notes and comparing site requirements to deployment steps. They can also use AI to assess risk, monitor incident response and escalation and assist with training and onboarding.
- **With AI, people are moving from being the doers to being the deciders.** Companies need humans' decision-making capabilities that bring experience, emotional intelligence, empathy and ethics to the table.

When thinking about AI, consider the SHIFT framework:

- **Start with yourself:** Use AI as a thought partner.
- **Hunt for friction:** AI works best where frustration already exists.
- **Improve one workflow:** Small wins create momentum.
- **Free your team for higher-value work:** The goal is not fewer people—it's better use of people and their expertise.
- **Transfer knowledge:** Your greatest risk may be undocumented expertise.

Are You Ready for Senior Leadership?

Vicky Lowe, CEO of Eastern DataComm, shared how she went from security industry revenue driver to CEO and discussed how to build influence, credibility and results. For seasoned professionals considering whether they are ready for a CEO role, Lowe shared this checklist:

- Do I understand how my company makes money?
- Can I explain our margin structure?
- Do I understand cash flow levers?
- Can I connect sales activity to earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization (EBITDA)?
- Have I led cross-functional initiatives?
- Have I improved systems, not just outcomes?

If most answers are yes, you are building executive equity!

If you are not quite CEO ready, here are some calls to action to help you get there:

- Own one metric that matters to the business.
- Volunteer for a cross-functional project.
- Learn your company's capital story (i.e., how it raises, uses and reports money).
- Present with confidence and clarity.
- Mentor another woman in the industry.



"Executive influence is earned when you improve outcomes beyond your own lane."

—Vicky Lowe, CEO, Eastern DataComm

Connect

The Science of Winning the Status Game

Because most people don't understand status, they fail to manage theirs effectively, which can lead women especially to struggle to be seen as both competent and likeable, get less credit than men for the same accomplishments and remain underpaid and underrepresented.

Alison Fragale, Ph.D., organizational psychologist, UNC Chapel Hill professor and expert on status, power and negotiation, unpacked the science of status to demonstrate that it is critical for both life satisfaction and career success. Here are three simple things you can do to project both warmth and competence as a "likeable badass":



TELL A STRONG STORY ABOUT YOURSELF.

So much of what people know about us comes from us, so self-promote! Be mindful about everything you put out—emails, social media and more—and what they say about you. Warmly accept, rather than rejecting, compliments. Praise yourself and other people to show you're both caring and confident.



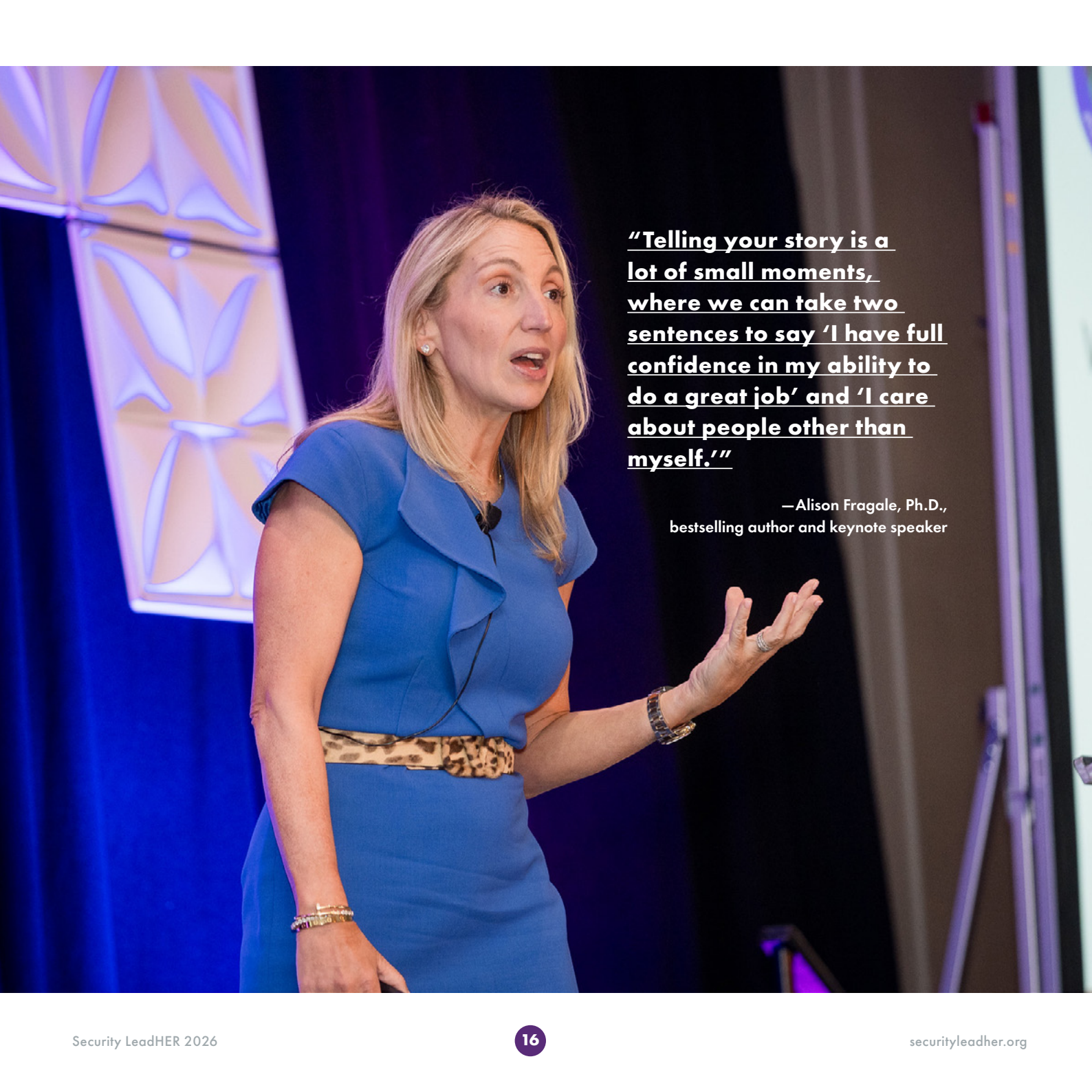
MAKE SMALL DEPOSITS.

Small deposits are like pennies in a piggybank—things you won't miss that will make an impact. Think about things you're good at that you really enjoy, and offer to use them to help others. Once people see what you can do to be helpful, they see the value you bring and how you can make their lives better.



GET PEOPLE TO TALK ABOUT YOU!

Build your promoter network by taking more chances, introducing yourself and getting to know lots of people. Ask people to talk you up if you want them to—you might be surprised at how eager they are to do something meaningful to help you. And do the same for others—when you think something nice about someone, share it with them and with others.

A woman with blonde hair, wearing a blue dress with a ruffled collar and a leopard-print belt, is speaking on a stage. She is gesturing with her right hand. The background is dark with some stage lighting.

"Telling your story is a lot of small moments, where we can take two sentences to say 'I have full confidence in my ability to do a great job' and 'I care about people other than myself.'"

—Alison Fragale, Ph.D.,
bestselling author and keynote speaker

The New Work Is in Your Network:

The Proactive Networking Formula

Strategic networking can be honed and used as a career accelerator in global security. Use this proactive networking formula to level up:



Personalize your message to your target to increase impact.



Assume people will give you 30 minutes maximum for a planned networking meeting.



Share a brief introduction—highlighting key skills, major accomplishments and future goals.



Identify three facts to tell your contact relevant to their interests.



Identify three targeted questions to ask your contact to elicit the information you want.



Request a referral—ask who to speak to next, and ask them to make the introduction.

—Pamela Ex, career coach; Ewa Urbanowicz, strategic account manager, GardaWorld

Psychological Safety:

A Female Leadership Advantage in High-Performing Security Teams



Women leaders can leverage their strengths in communication, relationship awareness and inclusive leadership to build high-trust environments. Here are some ways we can increase psychological safety—and build environments where people feel comfortable saying what they really think—in our teams:

- **Create a safe space for all voices.** Actively invite quieter team members to share their perspectives, and establish meeting norms that prevent interruptions.
- **Build intentional dissent into decision making.** Establish special sessions for red teaming—simulating real-world attacks on your organization’s systems, networks or processes—and ask team members to ask questions, challenge assumptions and identify risks or weaknesses in plans.
- **Demonstrate that speaking up is valued** by responding constructively to concerns, mistakes and differing opinions.
- **Have the courage to speak up** about issues that matter, while being intentional about picking your battles to protect your energy and prevent burnout.

“Women leaders may have an advantage over their male counterparts in fostering psychological safety due to their lived experiences and socialized leadership styles. Still, psychological safety is ultimately built through behaviors that can be learned and developed by all leaders.”

—Barbara Okumu, people and culture executive





Wait...Do I Really Have to Say That?

Tips for Mastering Hard Conversations at Work

Hard conversations are a critical leadership capability, yet women leaders in security often face unique challenges when delivering difficult messages. Navigating perceptions of being “too direct,” “not direct enough” or responsible for maintaining team cohesion can complicate already high-stakes interactions. **Dganit Abramoff, Lianne Kennedy-Boudali** and **Roslyn Warren** of Control Risks shared a repeatable framework for approaching hard conversations across a range of scenarios—whether managing up, down or around.





Phase 1: Prep It

- **Know your listeners.** Consider who will be in the conversation and what they may hope to take away from it.
- **Frame the discussion.** Outline the agenda or intent right at the start.
- **Structure your points.** Pin down the result you want and the main takeaways, map out possible scenarios and jot down helpful notes.
- **Pick the right setting.** Select a time and location that suit the moment.
- **Try a quick rehearsal.** Practice the conversation with a colleague or friend you trust.



Phase 2: Chat It

- **Outline your goal or expectations** for the conversation.
- **Actively listen** and be present.
- **Show up with good intent.** Elevate the positive wins alongside the challenging issues to tackle.
- **Manage your tells.** Be mindful of your facial or body language indicators.
- **Create the space.** Hold enough time for the meeting.
- **Press pause.** End the discussion if it isn't going well.



Phase 3: Nail It

- **Create alignment.** Summarize takeaways and next steps.
- **Spur momentum.** Set up the next meeting with the action steps outlined as you conclude the current meeting.
- **Generate accountability.** Send a follow-up email with a summary of what was discussed or decided.
- **Decide how much you should own.** Then deliver on your contributions.



Empower

The Seven Trust Languages for a Better Workplace

Keynote speaker and bestselling author **Minda Harts** shared her Seven Trust Languages framework to help women in security strengthen trust, communicate their value with confidence and navigate high-stakes moments at work with clarity.



- **Security:** Providing physical, intellectual and emotional safety
- **Transparency:** Clarity and honesty in communication
- **Feedback:** Giving meaningful and consistent insight
- **Acknowledgement:** Valuing people and their work
- **Sensitivity:** Being mindful of the impact of your words and actions on others
- **Demonstration:** Aligning actions with stated values (e.g., promoting from within if you say you value internal growth)
- **Follow-through:** Keep your word and do things by the time you say you will do them in the workplace.

Everyone has a primary trust language, so it's important to think about what's most important to you and also to others and work to maintain that trust.



Chase Purpose, Not Paychecks

- **Clarity about what drives you** creates a foundation for authentic leadership.
- **Success is not static.** Traditional career paths discourage gaps or pivots, but modern success evolves with your life stage, priorities and opportunities.
- **Stability often keeps people in place.** Many people stay in roles for security rather than fulfillment, highlighting the need to regularly reassess alignment.
- **Defining your purpose shifts** as your skills, circumstances and ambitions change.

“Purpose and alignment lead to leadership and growth ... You must identify and continually redefine what success looks like for you as you grow through life and career.”

—Nicole Malarney, director of operations, AT-RISK International

Lead With Purpose and Clarity Through Strategic Calm



High-pressure situations create noise that distorts leadership, leading to tunnel vision, rushed decisions and unclear communication—all of which can erode trust. The CALM framework of leadership is not passive; it's a disciplined practice of leading with purpose, clarity and consistency during uncertainty.

- **Centering values:** Leaders must anchor decisions and communications in core values to align teams and maintain focus—this is about not just reciting a mission statement but actively using values such as empathy, transparency and compassion to guide behavior.
- **Acknowledging reality:** It's okay to say "I don't know." Honesty builds credibility, and admitting what you don't know is a strength, not a weakness.
- **Leading with clarity:** In times of uncertainty, people need clear direction, even if full answers are not available. Assign specific tasks, set clear expectations and create psychological safety and stability.
- **Modeling consistency:** Trust is built through repeated, aligned actions, not through one-time messages. Leaders must show up consistently—delivering the same messages, demonstrating the same values and maintaining transparency.

"Leadership is not defined by the absence of uncertainty. It's defined by how leaders respond to it."

—Jacqueline Maguire, founder and principal, Sunday Strategies

Let Them, Then Decide for Strategic Career Navigation

Women in the security profession are often encouraged to demonstrate resilience, adaptability and persistence as pathways to career advancement, yet many operate in organizational environments where leadership support is inconsistent, psychological safety is limited and speaking up carries professional risk. Women can reframe the popular “Let Them” concept as a strategic, evidence-informed framework for career navigation rather than disengagement or indifference.

- **Intentionality is a leadership skill.** Recognizing patterns, conserving your energy and choosing when to respond creates more influence than reacting automatically.
- **Not every situation warrants intervention;** stepping back is often strategic and reveals more about people, dynamics and opportunities.
- **Purpose guides direction.** Knowing what you believe in and where you add value helps you set boundaries and make aligned choices.
- **Always consider proximity, timing and energy.** Who you stay close to matters, not everything needs a response and what you invest your energy in professionally shapes your direction.



“You cannot influence how others show up, but you can create boundaries and control how you respond.”

—Samantha Steenkamp-Farrell,
senior security specialist, World Bank



Find Your People

The Power of Mentorship, Sponsorship and Allyship in the Workplace

Security industry connections can provide meaningful support and elevation for a moment, a season or a lifetime. Security LeadHER speakers emphasized the importance of both finding and being mentors, sponsors and allies for other women in the industry.

- **Mentorship:** Mentors foster personal and professional growth through providing guidance, solace and feedback based on personal experience. They act as a sounding board, help their mentees navigate challenges and assist in skill development. Mentors talk **WITH** you.
- **Allyship:** Allies foster equity by supporting and standing up for inclusion. They challenge biases, create inclusive environments and actively listen and learn. Allies stand **BESIDE** you.
- **Sponsorship:** Sponsors foster career growth and visibility by using their power, influence and political capital to advance others' careers. They can recommend you for high-visibility projects, promotions and key opportunities. Sponsors talk **ABOUT** you (in rooms you aren't in).

“

What's a better ally than
a person who tells you
when you're wrong?"

—Kim Fearn, regional vice president, Convergent



"We need to be not just mentoring, but
sponsoring women. That's putting them
up for the jobs they might not think
they're ready for, telling them to write
the article they think no one's going to
read, to go on that podcast, to present
that project. That's what we need to do
for the next generation."

—Rachael Paskvan, founder, Femme Force



"Find those who will speak well about you when you're not in the room."

—Amber Jarvis-Wilson, end-user consultant, dormakaba



"Look for people who are your opposite and complement what you do because they can make you better."

—Jon Harris, founder/leadership and performance coach, Apex Performance



Heard at the Conference



"Relationships are critical for influence, and they must be genuine."

—Aday Adetosoye, CEO and leadership strategist, 1099 Impact Street



"Our best work days are still ahead if we use our voice and advocate for what we want."

—Minda Harts, speaker and bestselling author



"This industry is big, but small. If you're looking for something or some kind of relationship in the industry, in a few conversations you can find it."

—Karen Frank, managing director and head of firm safety and security services, KPMG US





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