

6.2 Pitching Yourself without Shrinking Yourself Workshop Content Summary

Purpose of this summary

This summary accompanies the existing workshop brochure and provides an accessible overview of the workshop content to support colleagues delivering or adapting the session. It complements rather than repeats the workshop aims, schedule or overview contained in Section 6.2. The summary focuses on the concepts, facilitation methods and participant activities rather than individual presentation slides.

Workshop flow

The workshop opens by establishing psychological safety, participation principles and expectations. The facilitator introduces the theme of communicating confidently without diminishing personal strengths, followed by personal storytelling to model openness. Participants explore how stress responses can influence communication, leadership and self-presentation. The session then moves from awareness of common behavioural patterns into practical communication strategies, before concluding with reflection, group discussion and action planning.

Key concepts explored

Core concepts include the influence of nervous system responses on communication under pressure; recognising fight, flight, freeze and fawn responses as adaptive rather than fixed characteristics; using behavioural archetypes as reflective tools rather than labels; reframing unhelpful thinking patterns; empathy, inclusive communication and psychological safety; verbal and non-verbal communication including body language, structured voice and framing messages; and practical strategies such as breathing, grounding, mirroring, micro-affirmations and pre-commitment techniques to support confident professional communication.

Interactive learning activities

Learning is highly participative. Activities include individual reflection, paired storytelling, facilitated whole-group discussion, self-assessment of behavioural tendencies, practice applying communication techniques, and a small-group exercise in which participants identify strategies for responding constructively in

challenging professional situations. Participants are encouraged to relate concepts to interviews, networking, presentations and workplace interactions.

Facilitation approach

The workshop uses an inclusive coaching style that combines brief facilitator input with regular participant interaction. Personal examples are used to normalise challenge and encourage reflection. Facilitators should emphasise that behavioural responses are context-dependent and changeable, avoiding deterministic interpretations of archetypes. Discussions should be managed sensitively, recognising that topics relating to confidence, stress and belonging may resonate differently across participants. Encourage multiple perspectives, invite voluntary participation and avoid requiring disclosure of personal experiences.

Reflection and key takeaways

The session concludes with structured reflection on individual learning, identifying practical actions participants can apply immediately in academic and professional contexts. Participants should leave with greater awareness of how physiological responses influence communication, increased confidence in adapting communication style to different contexts.

Resources and suggested adaptations

When adapting the workshop, facilitators may substitute alternative examples, case studies or institution-specific employability scenarios while preserving the reflective and skills-based emphasis. Activities can be shortened or expanded according to available time, and accessibility can be enhanced through verbal description of visual materials, advance provision of handouts, varied participation methods and opportunities for individual reflection before group discussion. Local careers, employability and wellbeing resources may be signposted where appropriate.

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