# Auckland GWN Seminar Series *Own Your Message and Speak with Confidence* with Brenda Ratcliff Co-hosted by Leadership Development Centre (LDC)

### Joanne Hacking (Auckland GWN Working Group member):

Tēnā koutou, tēnā kotuou, tēnā koutou katoa. Talofa lava. Welcome everybody. We will start with a karakia.

Kia tau ngā manaakitanga a te mea ngaro  
ki runga ki tēnā, ki tēnā o tatou  
Kia mahea te hua mākihikihi  
kia toi te kupu, toi te mana, toi te aroha, toi te Reo Māori  
kia tūturu, ka whakamaua kia tīna! Tīna!  
Hui e, Tāiki e!

Let the strength and life force of our ancestors   
Be with each and every one of us  
Freeing our path from obstruction  
So that our words, spiritual power, love and language are upheld,   
Permanently fixed, established and understood!  
Forward together.

Kia ora koutou. Ko Joanne Hacking toko ingoa. No te Hīkina Whakatutuki ahau. Kia ora, my name is Joanne Hacking. I am the chair for the seminar today and I’m from MBIE. Great to see some of my MBIE colleagues here on the call and great to see too some familiar faces and names from previous seminars and events with Te aka Wāhine Tamaki.

Thank you very much for all of you joining us today. We’re very pleased to have Brenda Ratcliff back with us sponsored by LDC. Thank you very much. It’s great to have you back here after the wonderful seminar that we had on resilience from you at the end of 2019 and really enjoyed the seminar series last year. So, really pleased that we were able to come back to you all with the first seminar for 2020.

It is rather nerve wrecking shifting to this digital platform but we’ve had two dry runs. We’ve got a great team there but fingers crossed everything will go well today because we know that Brenda’s got some fantastic material to share with you that we’ve had a bit of a sneak preview of but Brenda’s such a brave that we’re very confident she can pull this off whatever happens.

So, I will ask you all to please bear with us though if there are any blips and we’ll try and replicate some of the feeling of being in the room because it’s a bit sad not being able to connect with you all personally today, but it’s great to be able to open up the seminar to many more people than we would have been if we’d had to count the chairs and not having that many invitations. So, we’ve got forty-five people in the room at the moment and many people still joining us and a good spread of agencies as well.

So, one of the advantages of being online, of course, is that we can record the presentation. So we will be doing that today, and assuming that all works, we are going to be putting that on the GWN website along with Brenda’s slides and material after the event. So, we will be able to make that available to an even wider audience and we will also be checking in with you to see how your experience has been so we can look at how we do these things in the future. So, I will hand over now to Kate from LDC to talk about how this will all work in its the new virtual format and then she’ll introduce Brenda. So, over to you Kate.

### Kate Wakeline (LDC event facilitator):

Thank you, Jo. Hi everyone, my name is Kate and I work at the LDC, the Leadership Development Centre and we’re really pleased to be working in collaboration with GWN and Brenda Ratcliff today to deliver you this learning lab. Before I hand over to Brenda, I want to cover off some housekeeping for effective virtual learning. So, we ask that you please keep yourself on mute. You can check this by making sure that there is a line through your microphone icon at the bottom left hand of your screen.

We recommend changing your view from gallery view to speaker view, so you’ll be able to see Brenda throughout. If you find that your internet bandwidth is not able to accommodate having your video on, please feel free to switch it off, and as we will move into breakout rooms, just switch it back on. We also ask that you open up the chat bar. You can do this from the bottom bar of your screen. I’ll be managing the chat throughout Brenda’s session today so, if you have any questions, comments or ideas that you’d like to share with the group, please feel free to put them in there. Thanks everyone and over to you, Brenda.

### Brenda Ratcliff (presenter):

Tēnā koutou katoa. Talofa lava. Bula vinaka. Kia orana, Ni hao. Namaste. I’m Brenda Ratcliff from Mindmeld and what an adventure today is! And thank you so much for inviting me to share some tools with you today on communication. So, welcome to Speaking with Confidence or, as I like to call it, Shine Like the Supernova We Know You Are. So, here’s a little bit about me.

I’m a coach and trainer in the communication space helping people show themselves and their message to advantage in a way that’s right for them. I’m part of Mindmeld Coaching and our vision is a world where everybody feels they are on purpose, contributing and joyful at work every day. And our mission is, we sprinkle glitter on people’s lives through coaching, facilitation and training. I love vintage fashion. I also love rituals and ceremonies, sequins, science fiction and disco dancing, all combined together if possible.

I’ve been working at home for a while so I have a home office because this is our business and our home office is affectionately called ‘the Tardis.’ So, it is decorated and themed from Doctor Who and Winston – who you might have seen walk across the floor– our big white fluffy cat is in charge of social media because nobody is interested in anything I say, they only like it when the cat’s on.

So, I tell you all of this as a bit of background. Not because I am perfect. I am always learning and I’m always trying to be authentic and my true self. I try to be more caring, more compassionate and more courageous using the tools that I will show you today. So, why we’re here is to help you achieve your goal of communicating in a way that is right for you and letting go of the need for Powerpoint, being able to do it on the spot and also avoid feeling nervous or a little silly.

So, what we’ll do is I’ll show you some tools to help you do that and then how we will roll is that you will have a chance to practice the tools and then… if you have some questions, we’ll have questions after the practice. So, there will be questions and comments through the chat which I will address at certain points in the workshop. And you will know when they are because you will have had a chance to breakout into a room, have a practice and come back. So, take notes if you want but you don’t have to. You can just relax and enjoy yourself and there’s a handout which has been up on the website and looks like this and that has everything you need to know about today. So, are we good? So, we good? Great!

Ooh, one last thing, prizes! So, there is a prize today. I’ll give you a sneak peek… It’s in this box. What could be in the box? What do you think could be in the box? Well, the criteria for the prize is really very simple. You have to love Auckland GWN and GWN generally because they are fabulous. So, you have to love them. You have to love the tool today and promise to give your plan a bit of a go and wear the item in the box. So that’s it. Yeah, that’s it. So, just enjoy being curious about today and being curious about what could possibly be the prize in the box. So, are we good?

Yeah, so we’re going to have a little warm-up now and the warm-up is super simple. The warm-up is, we’re going to watch a short TEDTalk by someone called Rita Pierson. And in her TEDTalk she speaks unscripted and from the heart. So, as you watch this clip, please go right ahead and enjoy Rita being Rita and think about how she owns her message and how she owns her confidence. So, Kate, can we roll with the clip.

[Transcript from video]

Rita Pierson:

I have spent my entire life either at the schoolhouse, on the way to the schoolhouse or talking about what happens in the schoolhouse. Both my parents were educators, my maternal grandparents were educators and for the past forty years I’ve done the same thing and so needless to say over those years, I’ve had a chance to look at education reforms from a lot of perspectives. Some of those reforms have been good, some of them have been not so good and we know why kids drop out. We know why kids don’t learn. Its either poverty, low attendance, negative peer influences. We know why.

But one of the things that we never discuss, or we rarely discuss is the value and importance of human connection, relationships. James Comer says that no significant learning can occur without a significant relationship. George Washington Carver says all learning is understanding relationships. Everyone in this room has been affected by a teacher or an adult. For years I have watched people teach, I have looked at the best and I have looked at some of the worst.

A colleague said to me one time, they don’t pay me to like the kids. They pay me to teach a lesson, the kids should learn it, I should teach it, they should learn it, case closed. Well, I said to her, you know kids don’t learn from people they don’t like. She said that’s just a bunch a whooee and I said to her, well your year is going to be long and arduous dear. Needless to say, it was. Some people think that you either have it in you to build a relationship or you don’t.

I think Steven Covey had the right idea. He said you ought to just throw in a few simple things. Like seeking first to understand as opposed to being understood. Simple things like apologising. You ever thought about that? Tell the kids you are sorry they’re in shock. I taught a lesson once on ratios. I’m not real good with math but I was working on it and I got back and looked at that teacher edition, I taught the whole lesson wrong. So, I came back to class the next day and I said, look guys I need to apologise, I taught the whole lesson wrong, I’m so sorry and they said, that’s ok, Miss Pierson, you were so excited we just let you go.

I have had classes that were so low, so academically deficient that I cried. I wondered how am I going to take this group in 9 months, from where they are to where they need to be and it was difficult. It was, it was awfully hard. How do I raise the self-esteem of a child and his academic achievement at the same time. One year I came up with a bright idea, I told all my students, you were chosen to be in my class because I am the best teacher and you are the best students. They put us all together so we could show everybody else how to do it. One of the students said, really? I said, really. We have to show the other classes how to do it. So, when we walk down the hall, people will notice us. So you can’t make noise, you just have to strut and I gave them a saying to say I am somebody, I was somebody when I came and I’ll be a better somebody when I leave. I am powerful and I am strong. I deserve the education that I get here. I have things to do, people to impress and places to go and they said, yeah!

You say it long enough it starts to be a part of you and so, I gave a quiz, twenty questions. Student missed eighteen. I put a plus two on his paper and a big smiley face. He said, Miss Pierson is this an F? I said yeah. He said then why did you put the smiley face? I said coz you on a roll. You got two right you didn’t miss the mark. I said and when we review this won’t you do better? He said, yes ma’am I can do better. You see, minus eighteen sucks all the life out of you but plus two says it isn't all bad.

Four years I watched my mother take the time at recess to review, go on home visits in the afternoon, buy combs and brushes and peanut butter and crackers to put in her desk drawer for kids that needed to eat and a washcloth and some soap for the kids who didn’t smell so good. See, it’s hard to teach kids who stink and kids can be cruel and so she kept those things in her desk and years later after she retired, I watched some of those same kids come through and say to her, you know, Miss Walker, you made a difference in my life. You made it work for me. You made me feel like I was somebody when I knew at the bottom I wasn’t and I want you to just see what I’ve become.

When my mama died two years ago at ninety-two, there were so many former students at her funeral it brought tears to my eyes, not because she was gone but because she left a legacy of relationships that could never disappear.

Can we stand to have more relationships? Absolutely. Will you like all your children? Of course not, and you know your toughest kids are never absent. Never. You won’t like them all and the tough ones show up for a reason. It’s the connection, it’s the relationship and while you won’t like them all, the key is they can never, ever know it.

So, teachers become great actors and great actresses and we come to work when we don’t feel like it and we listen to policy that doesn’t make sense and we teach anyway. We teach anyway because that’s what we do. Teaching and learning should bring joy. How powerful would our world be if we had kids who, who were not afraid to take risks, who were not afraid to think and who had a champion. Every child deserves a champion an adult who will never give up on them. Who understands the power of connection and insists that they become the best that they could possibly be. Is this job tough? You betcha oh god, you betcha but it is not impossible. We can do this, we’re educators. We’re born to make a difference. Thank you so much.

### Brenda:

Thank you, Kate. Isn’t that a fantastic feel-good start to the day? So, in a moment we’re going to invite you to join some breakout rooms to discuss some questions. And thank you Rebecca. We are going to be in little groups of three. So, in a moment you will find yourself in a room with two other lovely humans.

So, step one, say hello and introduce yourself if you haven’t met before along with step two and then have a quick chat what do you think Rita Pierson did to own her message and speak with confidence. And what might be one thing that would help you own your message and speak with confidence.

So, we’re going to have about four to five luscious minutes for this conversation. So, may I invite you now to firstly, just take a little snap of the screen so that you can remember what the questions were when you break out into your little rooms. Ok, so, Kerri, are we good to go?

### Kerri (from GWN):

We are good to go, Brenda. Just about to create the rooms. Just want to make sure that everybody had a chance to take a picture of the screen and then we will send everybody to rooms.

### Brenda:

Great. Everyone bear with, and you’ll find yourself in a room…

So… just as we wait for everyone to come back, how did you find that clip?

### Bridget:

Hi, my name is Bridget, I’m from Wellington. Sorry… I’ll put on my video back on. I was just was meeting with, I think it was Leslie from Christchurch, and we were just saying one of the things that we really liked from the speaker was that her message was very humorous which was obviously her true personality so that made what she was saying kind of more credible because she was being really authentic to who she was.

### Brenda:

Yeah, yeah, that’s true, yeah that’s true. And thank you, Jerry, for your chat – that was the one where you said, “That was so cool,” as well. So, other people just over the chat, or feel free just to pop up and give us a little clip about what do you think she did and what might also help you own your own confidence. We’ve got a couple of minutes for a debrief.

Oh… “She told her story,” thank you Anita. Yeah… Yes, “She set out her credentials.” “Gorgeous.” Yes. “I love the weaving of stories.” Yes, and she was warm, wasn’t she? Really, really warm and just herself. She also kept it really simple. Ah… “Spoke what she was passionate about.” And in the group I was in, we talked about… she didn’t try to talk about education, sort of legislation or anything. She just talked about one thing, you know, the value of relationships. So, clear, essential message. Hmm, yes, and, “She took us all back to the classroom.” So ,she made a link between us, you know, and our experiences and her experiences. “Fantastic and passionate and honest.” Wow. “She owned it.” So true, she owned it. Ok, Rebecca, may I have the next slide up just to build on Rita’s talk.

Here’s this whole workshop in one minute. So, in this workshop, in a little bit we’ll look at some tools, some of which will be familiar to you and some of them will be new. And so, I invite you as we work through the tools to choose what is right for you because only you know your life. But here is the workshop in one minute:

If you want to shine like Rita Pierson, you need a structure in your mind to organise your thoughts so the words come out of your mouth. You also need a way to speak to the audience motivation and what they care about to get their nod – and you would have seen the audience nodding along with Rita. You also need to be *you* with your special gifts and talents. The world needs you just as you are. And also practice.

So, here’s an example from my own life. A few years ago, I had a policy role in a large government agency and I had about ten or eleven people reporting to me and my job was to bring government agencies together with community agencies and talk about issues of joint importance. Boy, were those meetings feisty. Sometimes Ministers would also come along to these meetings – even feistier!

And I discovered that I flat out loved bringing people together for important conversations and so, I thought I should learn some tools to get better at it. And then I thought, ‘I’d love to do this full time.’ How could I offer this skill that I have? So, in our wider group I started offering facilitating just little team building paths of wider days. That took about six months to get asked to be a ‘go-to’ person for that. Then I ended up facilitating other teams in our government agencies – their whole days away. Then I was asked to present and work on the engagement survey. So, you know you probably have engagement surveys out too, and I had to talk about it to different parts of the business to ensure that we had a higher response rate. And I met with the IT team and they said, ‘Oh no, this is not for us, engagement survey, not for us…’ And I thought, well, you know, if I want to present who I am and my own material and work and motivate them, you know, what do I have that might be in common with them?

Then I realised, it’s science fiction. And so, I did them some engagement posters, science fiction-themed, and I even had a well-known science fiction starship captain going, “Engaged!” They got one of the highest engagement response rates in the survey. I ended up facilitating leaders’ forums after that and I joined an external agency. Nek minnit, I own my own business, branching out into facilitating weddings – because I love ceremonies, doing science fiction weddings and Game of Thrones weddings.

So that whole, you know, period is about six years or so. But the more I discovered the power of communication tools – being able to organise thoughts, speak to what people care about, a little bit of my authentic self through – the more joyful and on purpose my life felt. And it helped me be in control of my own narrative and what people knew about me. So, is this something you would be keen to learn about? I think the answer is, ‘Oh yeah baby!’

Ok, so next slide please Rebecca. So, here is a structure to organise your thoughts and this is an accelerated learning model. It comes from the work of Bernice McCarthy and she was an educational researcher back in the 1980s. And she was interested in the States and in how children learned so that she could report to government on how they should structure the curriculum and whether children could be taught based on the questions they asked.

So, she followed them around to find out the sorts of questions kids asked and these children seemed to fall into essentially four categories. There were the children who asked ‘why,’ – ‘Why is the sky blue, why is this happening, why is that happening?’ Then there were the children who asked, ‘What is this about?’ They wanted to know facts, so, ‘What is this about?’ And then there were children who wanted a practical experience – ‘How does this happen, how does this work?’ Then there were the children who enjoyed experimenting – ‘What if this happens, what if that?’ So, they would take the information and then they would experiment and make it their own.

Now, she recommended that the curriculum was structured, or the organisation of the teaching was structured, so all the ‘why-referenced’ children were grouped together, and they were only given answers to the ‘why’ question. All the ‘what’ children were grouped together and given facts, and all the ‘how’ got the practical experience, and all the ‘what if’ got to experiment. They divided up into these four groups and taught them this way. How successful do you think it was? It was a big fat failure because she discovered that what the children needed is – they needed to move through this learning model to achieve mastery.

So, they thought they needed to learn why something was important to them, learn the facts and evidence about why it was so, have a practical go and then experiment to achieve mastery in their own world. And so, it became a model that children rotated these different four learning styles. So, bear with… she followed up these children 20 or so years later and discovered that they had retained their same preferences for taking on information as adults. And so, this accelerated learning model became grabbed as a presentation structure.

But just before we do that, have a little think to yourself and think if you work with people who always go, ‘Why are we doing this?’ You know, you might be in a meeting talking in full flow about something, people are just going to go, ‘Why are we doing this?’ ‘Why, why, why?’ Or, you might have people who really enjoy facts and evidence and they go, ‘What is this about?’ Or you might just see people who sa,y’Walk me through it, how can this work practically?’ We might have people who really enjoy going, ‘What if this happens?’ ‘What if that happens?’ and you can be halfway through talking about something important and they go ‘What if this, what if that?’ and you feel you haven’t even got there yet. Hmm...interesting to notice. And in fact, when you are with a large group of women.

Bernice McCarthy’s research shows that 25% of women have a strong ‘why’ preference and 32% of women have a strong ‘what if’ and… hey, Bridget… you say you’re a ‘how,’ so that’s cool, practical. And some people you know, have other preferences. So, I’m a ‘what’ person, so my background is in research and statistics back in the dim, dark past. I love ‘what’ and I know that to learn something well, I have to move through all styles.

So, for example, in the lockdown, I thought that I would like to learn yoga. Haven’t ever really done yoga. And so, what I would do was… I do I want to learn yoga because it will make me more flexible. What is it? And so, you know, my normal style would be to download some videos and watch them. But I need to move to the ‘how’ to actually do the practice to get any of the results. So, what if I can learn the different styles that might be useful to me? So, while we are looking at an accelerated learning model, you can use this to organise your thoughts in terms of presentation because you can present your material using this model. And it can be a four-sentence model: why it's important to someone, what it's about, how it goes, and what if you want to do this for yourself? So, it can be a four-sentence model. It can be eight sentences, it can be sixteen… so, its elastic.

But the most important thing to get right is the ‘why.’ Because you know that if you don’t get the ‘why’ right people cannot connect with the message that you have. And it might not be your ‘why.’ It is why something is important to your audience, rather than to you. So, it’s why it’s important to the audience. And I think we might try a little experiment now, to have a look at the ‘why,’ because that speaks to motivation. And I can see on the chat that a couple of people are identifying themselves as ‘why’ or ‘how.’ Good on you. Let’s have a look now at the different forms of motivation. And this is looking to see your ‘why.’ So, it’s why you should do something.

So, I’m going to invite you to imagine something. Use your beautiful imaginations. Imagine that we are all in the same room and it’s a large room and all of you are at one end, against a wall at one end, in a beautiful line, and I’m at the other end far back. And you each have a plank of wood that stretches from you to me, to my side of the room. Plank of wood is about, you know, maybe a foot wide. So, just imagine now that you walk, you can strut, you can dance from your end of the room to my end. Hello! And you walk back again. That’s good, can you do that in your minds, yes, over the chat: yup, you did that okay? From your end to my end?

Now, this time I am going to invite you to imagine that you are all at the top of a 20-storey building and I am at the top of another 20-storey building across the street. And your plank of wood exists from your building to mine across the street. And you’ve done it before, right, you’ve done it before, so you should be able to do it again. But this time, of course, you are at the top of a 20-storey building and I am at the top of another 20-storey building. So, okay everyone, who’s going to come over to me on my side of the building? If you’re going to come over, please write, “I will” in the chat. So, who’s coming over to me on my side of the building, or on my building? You will? Great, on your way! Excellent, excellent. So, some of you maybe not. Some of you will come and some of you won’t. You walked beautifully across your plank of wood from your building. Yeah, the wood is very strong, Carol, you’re all right. No, you’ve just got your own bit of wood, Tina, this is just how it is. So, you are just walking across and you’ve over. So, I can see that some of you have come. Welcome to my building. And some people are still on their own building.

Now, Rebecca, do you think that we could lure them with some kind of incentive to come towards us? What shall we lure them with? What have you got for us? Oh, ok. So, Rebecca and everyone on our building, we have a Chanel handbag with $10,000. Who’s going to come over for the Chanel handbag and the ten thousand dollars? Who is going to come? No, huh? “I’m crawling on my plank,”… good on you, Bridget. Is someone going to come for… Alrighty, some people are coming. Brilliant. Okay Rebecca, shall we just… shall we just have a go now, shall we have a go now? What have we got next? The Louis Vuitton, $100,000. Who’s coming from their building to our building for the Louis Vuitton? “Definitely.” Nope. Some people still not coming. We’ve still got to lure a bit more. Rebecca, what’s the last handbag that we have? The Birkin – four year waiting list, but I’ve got one for you with $1,000,000 inside. “Yes, I will try.” Okay. So, we have most people who’ve come towards us on our building from their building across the planks of wood for the gorgeous handbags. But I think some people might still be on their building. We would love to have you on our building.

So, this time, just please imagine now that unfortunately, your building is on fire and, yeah, all the fire officers are out on call and there’s no way down. And we really want you to come. Will you come away from the flames towards, yes, yeah that’s right. Come, come away from the flames towards us. Towards us, away from the flames. Yes, so have we got everyone? We’ve got everyone now on our building. Woohoo! Woohoo fantastic! Yup, now you’re moving. No, okay, we still got somebody who will be on their building. Ok, so how about this time then, how about this time, think about that *your* building is not on fire but *our* building is and on the building is Winston or the things that you treasure most in the world. So, you need to, you know, save them. Would you come now? Would you come now? Whoo! Okay.

Right. So, this is just a fun illustration. Everybody relaxed now back in the safety of your gorgeous spots where you are. Thank you for experimenting with me. There are two types of motivation. This next slide shows the two different types of motivation. So, the motivation we remember is the ‘why’ from the accelerated learning model and the two types are ‘towards.’ So towards motivation is goal orientation. So, people who are strongly motivated ‘towards’ who just came across the plank, the piece of wood straight away. Did not have to lure with a handbag full of cash. People who are head towards motivation came in the next wave of the Chanel, the Louis Vuitton or the Birkin. And ‘towards’ motivation people, you know, are interested in goals, interested in achieving goals and talk about what they want.

And just as importantly, there’s ‘away from’ motivation which is also very valuable. So, ‘away from’ motivation is moving away from problems. I like to think of it as rocket fuel in that it gives you that boost to move away from what you don’t want. And ‘away from’ motivation is characterised by the people who came across at the end to move away from their building, to move away from their building that was not in a good state. So, what is useful to know is that some people are ‘toward’ motivation and some people are ‘away’ and some are in the middle. Some are in the middle and it’s situation-specific. So, ‘towards’ and ‘away.’ So, if you get anything out of this workshop today... ‘Why’ equals motivation equals ‘towards’ goals and ‘away from’ problems.

So, let’s have a look at ah the next slide, please, Rebecca. Cool! And, of course you know, you never know who you are going to be in front of. So, this helps you speak off the cuff. And so, if you only remember the why, this will get most of the people because everyone is on a continuum of ‘towards’ and ‘away from.’

So, I ask myself, ‘What are people yearning for with regard to your topic?’ And I ask that on the inside to myself. What might they be yearning for? And then I think of the ‘towards’… what do they want? And often what people want can be acceptance, recognition or achievable. Then I think about what do they not want. What is it that they don’t want? And often what people don’t want is a particular problem or they want safety and security. So, you have a group of people in front of you. You want to speak to them, so the magic sentence is, ‘What is required here, towards and away from?” Why this is important? Is that it will help you achieve your goals? And then you say what you think their goals are and prevent or solve these problems.

And at the beginning you heard me say, ‘this will help you achieve your goals of speaking your prop, speaking with confidence and prevent problems of not knowing what to say or feeling silly.’ And that will capture everyone in the room. The why, so it’s the most important part of the accelerated learning model. And if you get that right, people will nod and you’ll be on your way. So, Kerri, how about we begin to break out into breakout rooms and Rebecca, we have the next slide for instructions. Oh, sorry about that, chief. I’m ahead of myself. So, here’s how you organise your thoughts with an accelerated learning model. You say, ‘here’s why this is important’ and you use the magic sentence. This will help you achieve your goals and prevent or solve these problems. And you keep saying towards and away from motivation until they nod. In fact, you can even ask for it: “Does this make sense?” And then here’s what it is about, and you can actually name some facts. Here’s how I think it could work. I offer these ideas and then you just stop there. What questions do you have? And this allows the ‘what if’ thinkers to ask their questions.

So, that’s essentially, you know the accelerated learning model, ‘why,’ ‘what,’ ‘how’ and ‘what if.’ ‘Why’ – the magic sentence. ‘What’ – couple of facts, here’s ‘how’ I think it could work and the ‘what if.’ So, this time, Kerri, shall we have a little bit of practice. In a moment, you’re going to be back again with your other lovely humans in your breakout room. Remember to take a photo of this slide and then just have a go at nailing the why, as if you had your audience there towards and away from. And if you’re trying to remember what the magic sentence is, it’s on the first page of your handout. And if you have time, one sentence on the facts, yes how it could work and what questions do you have. And we have, you know, a solid luscious five minutes for this breakout session and then we’ll have a quick debrief. Thanks, Kerri, over to you.

So… welcome back. Some people asked who Winston was. They must have missed him at the beginning. So, yeah, there he is. He’s a reluctant, the reluctant Mindmeld member. How did that go, thinking about the why? Anyway, just while we wait for everyone to join, how did that go? Yep, good, Jennifer. Yes, excellent

Kate: We’ve got it, “It felt enlightening and empowering,” Brenda  
Brenda: Aww thank you.  
Kate: “It took a wee while to figure out what was being asked.”  
Brenda: All right  
Kate: “It required a mindset shift.” Yeah. Yep it can do.

Brenda: So… “It was a bit confusing in the beginning, but we went through the model and found it was quite a useful tool.” Yeah. So…”You may not know all their motivation but you’re running on assumptions.” Yes, so good points So, the why is the most important thing to get right and the what is just, you know, research and the how and facts and the how is how it could roll. It's true you are running on assumptions. And I guess we are all the time. But the trick is to think about what are they yearning for, what do they care about, what might be their goals towards and what might be their fears away from. And then have a go. And if they’re looking at you with a sturdy face, then you need to just add some more why in terms of towards in a way to get the nod and when you get the nod, that means that they have understood you, and they’re ready for more. They may or may not agree but they’ve understood you. So, it’s a cool tool. So, just to think about the why, towards and away.

You guys rock. You guys rock. So…. Just, ‘towards and away.’

Okay, so let’s have a little think now about how to talk to the why and use why, what, how and what if with your special talents and gifts. So, Rebecca if we are able to, thank you, have the next slide. And I think the main things here is you are enough, be yourself. There’s no need to be perfect or be anything other than who you are. So, this section, I offer it to you because my coaching clients, especially introverts find it a relief that they don’t have to reinvent themselves as someone like you, like, you know, like an extrovert or someone new. For people like me who are book nerds, and research nerds, a bit geeky, it’s the same. It’s a relief to be who you are.

So, for you to be you with your special talents and gifts, you just need to decide a couple of things. What is your work niche? So, what is your area of expertise that you can shine. Is it a technical skill or is it some other skill you offer? Are you creative? Are you a fantastic proofer? Do you love to proof-read and spell check documents? So, what is your work niche? It can be technical or it can be another skill or strength. What is your quirk? And by quirk I mean something that peaks curiosity in you, and makes you memorable. And this can be something outside of work, such as a hobby or a passion. And the last part is to do with your delivery, which is eye contact, short sentences, because short sentences help you sound authoritative and you can remember where you are, and also, a straight spine. So, a straight spine helps you feel confident.

Now, if you think, ‘Hmm this is a little confronting,’ think of it this way: just try thinking that this helps you be in control of your own narrative. Now, in a moment I’m going to invite Kate to show a clip of Jessi Arrington, who has done a short TEDTalk. She is working her quirk, so much so that her TEDTalk is about her quirk. And so Kate, would we be able to see this TEDTalk from Jessi Arrington, it’s called, ‘Wearing nothing new.’

### [Transcript from video]

### Jessi Arrington:

Hi, I’m Jessi and this is my suitcase. But before I show you what I’ve got inside, I’m going to make a very public confession, and that is, I’m outfit obsessed. I love finding, wearing and more recently, photographing and blogging a different colourful crazy outfit for every single occasion. But I don’t buy anything new, I get all my clothes second-hand from flea markets and thrift stores. Aww, thank you. Second-hand shopping allows me to reduce the impact my wardrobe has on the environment and on my wallet. I get to meet all kinds of great people, my dollars usually go to a good cause, I look pretty unique and it makes shopping like my own personal treasure hunt.

I mean, what am I going to find today? Is it going to be my size? Will I like the colour? Will it be under twenty dollars? If all the answers are yes, I feel as though I’ve won. I want to get back to my suitcase and tell you what I packed for this exciting week here at TED. I mean, what does somebody with all these outfits bring with her? So, I’m going to show you exactly what I brought. I brought seven pairs of underpants and that’s it. Exactly one week’s worth of undies is all I put in my suitcase. I was betting that I would be able to find everything else I could possibly want to wear once I got here to Palm Springs.

And since you don’t know me as the woman walking around TED in her underwear that means I found a few things. And I’d really love to show you my weeks’ worth of outfits right now. Does that sound good? So, as I do this, I’m just going to, I’m also going to tell you a few of the life lessons, that believe it or not, that I have picked up in these adventures wearing nothing new.

So let’s start with Sunday. I call this ‘Shiny tiger.’ You do not have to spend a lot of money to look great. You can almost always look phenomenal for under fifty dollars. This whole outfit, including the jacket, cost me fifty-five and it was the most expensive thing that I wore the entire week.

Monday: colour is powerful. It is almost physiologically impossible to be in a bad mood when you’re wearing bright red pants. If you are happy, you are going to attract other happy people to you.

Tuesday: fitting in is way overrated. I’ve spent a whole lot of my life trying to be myself and at the same time fit in. Just be who you are. If you are surrounding yourself with the right people, they will not only get it, they will appreciate it.

Wednesday: embrace your inner child. Sometimes people tell me that I look like I’m playing dress-up, or that I remind them of their seven-year-old. I like to smile and say, “Thank you.”

Thursday: confidence is key. If you think you look good in something, you almost certainly do and if you don’t think you look good in something, you’re also probably right.

I grew up with a mum who taught me this day in and day out. But it wasn’t until I turned thirty that I really got what this meant. And I’m going to break it down for you for just a second. If you believe you’re a beautiful person inside and out, there is no look that you can’t pull off. So, there is no excuse for any of us here in this audience. We should be able to rock anything we want to rock. Thank you.

Friday: a universal truth, five words for you, gold sequins go with everything.

And finally, Saturday: developing your own unique personal style is a really great way to tell the world something about you without having to say a word. It’s been proven to me time and time again as people have walked up to me this week simply because of what I’m wearing and we’ve had great conversations. So, obviously this is not all going to fit back in my tiny suitcase. So, before I go home to Brooklyn, I’m going to donate everything back. Because the lesson I’m trying to learn myself this week is that it’s okay to let go. I don’t need to get emotionally attached to these things because around the corner, there is always going to be another crazy, colourful, shiny outfit just waiting for me, if I put a little love in my heart and look. Thank you very much. Thank you.

### Brenda:

Thank you, Kate. Gosh, that is just a fantastic clip of somebody being exactly who they are and rocking their quirks. So much so, they are asked to come and speak at TED about it. But what does this actually mean for us here today? What could that mean for us here today? Well, Jessi Arrington said confidence is key, colour is powerful and good for your mood. She said fitting in is overrated. So, what is your quirk that you can stand out just the right amount that peaks people’s curiosity in you. She said gold sequins go with everything and it’s okay to let go. So, now we’re going to put all of this together and see what ‘towards and away from’ means with your quirk to develop your plan to shine.

So, let’s have a look at the next slide. So, this is on your handout and coaching clients ask me over and over again, ‘How can I develop my career so I get noticed? How can I enjoy my life? How can I feel on purpose that what I love to do and what I’m good for, you know, good at doing, is useful for the organisation?’ And so, we develop these plans for them to shine. And I notice that after a while that they contain the same kinds of steps. So, I’ve put together these steps for you.

So, here’s the first one. Decide what is interesting about you and you are comfortable with others at work knowing about you. So, this is your quirk. Decide your quirk. This will help you be in charge of your narrative. And examples that people have told me that they are comfortable knowing is, you know, they are interested in running. So, they have a history of entering running races, or doing trail running. They are also a clarinetist. So, they have, they play in a band or a music group. So, something that they do in their private lives that they are okay with others knowing about at work. And then they just let a little bit of that out at work informally. So, they talk about it. Or they go for a run at work and people see them come back, you know, come back from their physical activity. So, they think consciously about their work, their quirk and how they can let that out at work.

Then, decide your work niche. What is your area of expertise that you can offer that other people find incredibly valuable, incredibly valuable? And if you’ve wondering what your work niche is, what do people ask you over and over to do? What do they just go, ‘Please can you help me with this?’ That seems to be, in short, your gift and talent.

Next bit might require putting on of the big girl pants. Convene a short seminar to present on your niche topic. ‘This is how I do what I do.’ And give it a quirk-flavoured title. So, a quirk-flavoured title is something where you have the serious title and you give it a bit of a quirk. So, at the beginning, you know, when we were talking about speaking with confidence and owning your message and I said shining like the supernova we know you are. Yeah? Cause I’m interested in shiny things. Put up flyers and advertise, and invite some key people who are well-networked in your agency. And people that you feel, you know, comfortable with. And in your flyer, use your magic sentence to say why your topic is important to them. ‘Come along, you’ll learn some tools to help you achieve your goals and prevent or solve these problems.’

Begin your seminar with a short story about your quirk. Make the link from your niche topic, from your quirk to your niche topic by saying, “…And this story reminds me of…”. So, if you are into running, I went for a run this morning and I ran up the hill and I noticed that I was about to trip over some, you know. some roots here on Mount Victoria, roots from the trees. And that made me think about today because often we have to make sure that we avoid things that could trip us up in presentations. You know, something really that little. And then use format, the accelerated learning model and say again why your topic is important to them.

Lather-rinse-repeat, and do more seminars every couple of months. And this will just build up your credibility as somebody who is very helpful, the go-to person, interesting with expertise. And then once in a while, think about convening a brainstorming topic, a brainstorming session for a gnarly topic and invite people who are well-networked and also have a good dollop of high personal brand. Now, you know who those people are. I like to think of them as evil geniuses. They think differently, they would enjoy a brainstorming session and they are great to actually help you solve problems or achieve a goal. And keep it short and fun.

And I’ve been helping coaching clients with plans like this. Honestly, it only takes them maybe four to five months till they are feeling so more fulfilled, getting more responsibility and enjoying their jobs more. So that is the plan to shine. And I thought that we would actually spend some time now as a whole large group just having a bit of a question and answer about a plan to shine. So, if you look at this plan now for you, what would you need to do to take a first step?

And Kate, let's look at some questions over the chat. What would you need? What would you need to enact your plan to shine?

Kate: Courage  
Brenda: Courage, fantastic, thank you  
Kate: Gold sequins  
Brenda: Gold sequins, yes. So, Nicole – “I need to identify my quirk.” Yeah, fantastic. So, thinking about that, what is my quirk? I know that coaching clients often find this the hardest thing and it’s combined with courage. And why is it tricky for people is because sometimes they say, ‘Hmm if I let my quirk out, you know, what will people think?’ Actually, people will adore it. Yes, it helps you become more known and be in control of your narrative. So, if you want to find out your quirk, you can actually think of three or four trusted people at work and say, ‘I went to this fabulous Auckland GWN seminar and they were asking us to think about our quirk that would help people be curious and know a bit more about me. I know, I know a little bit of things that I love to do. What do you think might be okay for me to show more of at work? What might be okay for me to show more of at work?’ And you know, just let people comment on that. Okay, so… “orange obsession.” I’m seeing that. Kate, what else are we seeing?

Kate: We’ve got supporter in a safe space

Brenda: Yep, lovely, and in fact, needing supporter and a safe space, definitely. So, you start your plan by inviting people to your first little seminar. You know, people who are your fans, who get you, who will cheerlead for you. It might be someone here today, in a safe space to do that. Yeah. So…”My quirk is chocolate.” Not bad, that is excellent. I do, yeah, I do like that and chocolate is a great metaphor for anything. So that would have, allow you to, chocolate releases endorphins you can talk about the different types of chocolate that you get and what they do for you and how it’s good for you. There’s lots of potential there. So… “orange.” So, Corrin…”My quirk is my orange obsession. Everyone at work knows it, it’s such a great conversation starter.” So, very powerful quirk. Probably wear a lot of orange, you have a lot of orange, yeah, around? And that’s just fantastic. So, absolutely work that. And Tracey, you’re right. Your quirk helps you make connections with others. Hmm, that is, yeah. That is, that is true.

One time I worked with someone who collected Coca Cola memorabilia. I know. And they collected a lot of it. So, when they found out I was going to Atlanta, they asked me to go to the Coke museum and buy them some Coca Cola memorabilia, which I did on their behalf and the person who asked me to do this was so happy that I had done it. And at that time, I was working in an agency with a strong enforcements arm and I was in policy and they were in enforcement. And it was like I had a best friend for life. Yeah. Because I had recognised his quirk that he had let out at work. Okay, so do we have any other comments about quirks hmm and how you could let that out at work? Yeah, “I love garage sales and op shops.” Okay, fantastic. Yeah, so you would have really enjoyed the TEDTalk.

“Yeah, I have my quirks covered but I am struggling with my strengths and go-to stuff.” Right. Okay, so think about what do people ask for your help with at work? So, what do they ask you for? Is it, could you help me brainstorm? I need to think differently about this. Can you go through this paper and see if I’ve presented it correctly? Can you give me your technical know how about whether this would work? And if you’ve not sure, you could keep a diary just for a couple of weeks of the questions people ask you. Of the questions people ask and go, okay so I think that is my strength. Well, maybe I could help them, develop this for themselves or they could bring all their issues they normally ask for and I’ll run a seminar on it and I’ll help them with it.

Okay. Okay. “Yes, I ran through lockdown and it taught me a lot about resilience that work and yes, which at times it was trying and putting one foot in front of the other.” Yeah, I know that’s just absolutely, absolutely gorgeous. Okay, so you can ask a friend to think about your quirks and what they might be. You can keep a diary to identify what your work niche is and that will be based on the questions people ask. You can put your big girl pants on and convene a short seminar to talk about your niche topic and use your magic sentence. And in fact, your magic sentence will stand you in good stead for practically any presentation you do. If you’re talking informally in a meeting or formally. And then you know, just repeat the odd little seminar now and again keeping it informal. And then also, along the line convene a brainstorming session for a gnarly topic. And enjoy yourself, this is your life. You’re meant to enjoy it.

So, thinking about gorgeous timing. We have the chance for one or two questions and I bet I know what one of the two questions might be. So, what questions do you have over the chat? What questions do you have over the chat? “What’s in the box?” What’s in the box yes, this is of course, the question… what is in the box? Surprise is still in the box. Okay, so who wins the prize of what’s in the box? Now, the criteria were that you love Auckland GWN and GWN generally because they are fabulous, you love the tools today and you will enact your plan to shine and you will wear what is in this box. But I also… Marama, asking for feedback. Okay Marama I will catch up with you after this session on asking for feedback. So, Kerri. All right. Okay, prize people… I’m just going to deal with these questions. You’re going to just have to feel the anticipation of it for another moment.

Okay. “Any tips for asking for feedback in work place in work settings”. Marama, the tips for that is to find someone you really trust and ask them to say what should I keep doing that’s working well? You know, what could I start to do that’s new and what can I stop? So, just. So, keep ‘start stop model’. So that people have some boundaries and ask them to give you feedback you know, with love. Like a special, special precious gift.

Ah and Kerri, “advice for introverts differently to extroverts”. Okay, so this plan works really well for introverts. Convene a group of people for your seminar that you also feel comfortable with and think carefully about your work niche as a way to offer your skills and think carefully about your quirk as a way to be in control of your narrative. And when you do that, you’ll find that you can be more of who you are and you can be quiet and you can be gorgeous just as you are. And in fact, the more you try this plan, the easier it is for you to shine. It’s a very straight forward plan for introverts. Just think carefully about your quirk and what you’re comfortable sharing and find a group of people who will support you. And you say, ah, great questions. Thank you Marama and Kerri.

So, we good? We good? Shall we go back to this? Okay, I’m excited. I’m excited about what is in the box. So, the criteria was you love Auckland GWN and GWN. You enact your plan to shine and you will wear what is in the box. So, I super hope that the people who are about to be interested in this are size thirty-nine or forty of shoes. So, what is in the box…. is a pair of Anna Swede vintage shoes and so, how you can win them is just to, over the chat, say, “Yes please, me. I promise I will definitely do that.” So, the words are: Yes, please, me. I promise I will definitely do that. And then, I will post these to you and because, gals, we love a good sale, I stalked these shoes for about a year. Oh… Gwen, good on you. Yes, you will. You definitely will. That was seven hundred dollars. I could not afford that, and it came down to a hundred and thirty-five. Awesome. So, okay. So, Corrine, this looks like that you are the first person, that you promise you will. Now, Anita! I see you’re the second person. I see you are the second person who said that you absolutely will. Luckily, I have back up Anna Swede shoes. Back up Anna Swede shoes, lightly worn. So, Corrine and Anita, congratulations! If you email me as per the handout then I will make sure that I send you these to you.

All right so, gorgeous people. I am now going to hand it back to Auckland GWN and Jo to thank everyone and to close out this session.

### Jo Hacking:

Thank you so much, Brenda. That’s been an actually phenomenal session today. So, its full of compassion for all of us and with precious gifts of taonga. Was all to take away and especially with that permission to be ourselves and to work our quirks. And it’s great to see people starting to put that into practice in the chat. Great comments coming from all there and the breakout rooms as well. Great work. So, thank you particularly to the Leadership Development Council Centre for making this happen and for walking together with us into this brave new world of technology. So, Brenda and Kate, thank you so much and the team as well, who have been working so hard behind the scenes, Kerri, Sofaia and Virginia of course. Thank you so much for making it happen today. It has been so sleek, so professional. It's been wonderful. And I hope the experience that everybody else had has been similar. And we will be coming out and checking you after today to find out how that’s gone at your end of the Zoom.

We are planning more seminars for the rest of the year, the Gender Pay Gap Action Plan Taskforce will hopefully be coming to talk to us with a progress report, to talk to us about flexible working in a post Covid world and how do we keep the best lockdown and make it possible for everybody to work as they wish. We are also looking for a te reo workshop and te reo for everyday use in the office. And we’ll be inviting the Auckland Career Board to come and tell us about what they offer for leadership development in Tamaki Makaurau. So we’ll ask you about the virtual format but we hope that it will give us the opportunity to be a lot more accessible to people. You don’t have to battle the traffic and you don’t have to take the extra time of the day to actually turn up. But obviously we value the face-to-face. So we will be continuing with that as soon as we can as well.

So, thank you again to Brenda and thank you to Kate for making it happen. And we will now close with a karakia. Great feedback coming from people. That’s lovely. All right, so, okay so if you’ll just join with me to hear the karakia as we move into our days.

Kia whakairia te tapu, kia wātea ai te ara  
Kia turuki whakataha ai, kia turuki whakataha ai  
Haumi e. Hui e. Taiki e!

Restrictions are moved aside so the pathway is clear  
To return to everyday activities.

I wish you all a wonderful day and look forward to hearing how you put your plan into action to shine like the supernova. Thank you so much everybody and ka kite ano.

### Brenda:

Ka kite thank you. Thank you so much.