

CHAMELEONS & PEACOCKS

How to Stand Out at Work

Workshop Handbook



This handbook is your reference guide for everything covered in today's workshop. Use it to implement what you learned, refresh your memory before a key conversation, and go deeper on topics we touched on but couldn't fully explore in the room.

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Section 1

TheFramework:Chameleons & Peacocks

The Core Idea

Influence and opportunity require visibility. But being visible at work is not about becoming louder or more polished. It's about knowing when to blend in, when to stand out, and how to communicate your unique value in both moments.

This is a common challenge for professionals whose work often goes unnoticed when everything runs smoothly. The framework gives you a practical way to create a workplace visibility strategy that leads to real influence and opportunity.

The Three Pillars

1

Blend In vs. Stand Out

Balance blending in with standing out. Blending in the right way does not mean changing who you are or dimming your light. Standing out the right way is not about being the loudest person in the room. The balance looks different for each of us.

2

Redefine Your Value

Value is not transaction-based. It is not your tasks, your deliverables, or your hours logged. Your actual value is the repeatable way you create outcomes -- what you do that others cannot replicate, the capability behind the result.

3

Invest in Relationships

Professional advancement is not transactional. People do business with those they know, like, and trust. The more different you are from the people in the room, the more important this becomes.

"Your best work is invisible when it works. When the plan holds, the team's aligned, and the deadline gets hit, nobody notices what you did to make that happen. This framework helps you fix that."

Section 2

Find Your Value: The Visibility Assessment

What Value Actually Is

NOT Your Value	Your Actual Value
Tasks completed	The repeatable way you create outcomes
Deliverables produced	What you do that others can't replicate
Hours logged	The capability behind the result
Productivity metrics	Your ability to produce outcomes consistently

Visibility = Knowing your unique value, and making sure others know it too. Peacocking without the value is just being showy.

The Visibility Assessment Results

You already know your top visibility signal and the four that support it.

These signals name the patterns you already live out every day, the ones you might not consciously notice because they feel like just how you operate. Once you can name them, you can use them: in your bio, on LinkedIn, in a networking introduction, in an interview, in a performance conversation.

Knowing your signals isn't the finish line. Using them intentionally and visibly is.

Add your assessment results below:

#1

Three Questions Worth Answering

After completing your assessment, reflect on these questions with your top signal and its four supporting signals in mind.

1. What is a time when one of these was really visible in how I handled something?

2. Are any of these actively ignored, or underused, at work?

3. Which ones do I want to make more obvious?

Section 3

Build Your Introduction

The Purpose of an Introduction

So people know what you can do for them. Not who you are, not where you work -- what you can do **for them**.

The Progression: From Forgettable to Memorable

#1 The Default Title + Company

"I'm a Leadership Consultant at Move Your Mountain Advisory."

#2 The Overcorrection Title + Company + Life Story + Everything I Do

"I'm Barb Monson, founder of Move Your Mountain Advisory, and I've spent 26 years in corporate finance working my way up from clerk to CFO, mostly in manufacturing which is very male-dominated, and along the way I realized that talented people were being overlooked not because they weren't good at their jobs but because they didn't know how to make their work visible, so now I work with professionals on visibility and personal branding and LinkedIn and that kind of thing."

#3 Getting Closer Outcome + Title as Context

"I'm Barb Monson, founder of Move Your Mountain Advisory. I work with professionals and leaders on visibility and personal branding -- helping people who are doing great work actually get recognized for it. Most people don't know how to talk about their own value, and that's the gap I close."

#4 The One That Works Outcome + Who It's For + What Makes It Different

"I'm Barb Monson and I help people with their professional visibility so they can get more influence, opportunity, and money -- without having to change who they are."

Two Secrets of a Great Introduction

1

Think sound bite, not data dump.

Your title, your company, your years of experience -- none of that is your introduction. One clear idea is more memorable than six accurate ones.

2

Lead with what you deliver -- let your title provide context, not substance.

The person listening is always asking "why does this matter to me?" Answer that question first. Your title tells them where you sit. It doesn't tell them why they should care.

The Formula

Quick Title (who
you are)

+

Who/How You Help (who +
what you do)

+

The Outcome (what
changes for them)

PM Examples:

"As a Project Manager, I get people who don't report to me pointed in the same direction, so problems are solved while they're still cheap to fix."

"I'm a Project Manager, and I specialize in turning scattered priorities into a plan people actually follow, so teams stop reacting and start executing."

"As a Senior Project Manager, I work with executives to make sure ambitious timelines survive contact with reality, because a strategy that ignores capacity is just a wish."

Remember: keep it short, repeatable, and memorable!

Write your version here:

Section 4

The Interview Version: Tell Me About Yourself

This section was introduced as a teaching moment in the workshop -- not a live exercise. Use this as your reference when preparing for interviews. The structure below is a proven framework for answering the most common opening question in any interview.

The Four-Part Structure

This is not a script. It is a structure. Say it conversationally -- not from memory. Target: a natural 30 seconds or less.

1

Who You Are

Start with your networking introduction -- outcome first, title as context.

"As a Project Manager, I get people who don't report to me pointed in the same direction, so problems are solved while they're still cheap to fix."

2

What You've Done

One or two specific accomplishments that prove what you just claimed. Be specific -- vague examples kill credibility.

"In my last project, I flagged a scope conflict between two teams three weeks before launch, before it turned into a two-month delay. We renegotiated the plan together and still hit the due date."

3

What You're Known For

The repeatable strength colleagues count on you for. This is where your superpowers show up explicitly.

"I ask the questions nobody else thinks to ask yet, without making anyone defensive, in a way that surfaces a conflict while there's still time to fix it."

4

Where You're Headed

Connect your value to the opportunity. No reason for leaving required. Stay forward-focused.

"I'm drawn to roles where I'm coordinating across teams that don't naturally align, because that's where the stakes and the payoff are both real."

What about your values??

Your values (or visibility signals) don't appear literally in your introduction, but they are the reason your introduction will sound like you and nobody else.

For example: our Project Manager has this networking introduction:

"As a Project Manager, I get people who don't report to me pointed in the same direction, so problems are solved while they're still cheap to fix."

These are the visibility signals behind it:

1. Connecting the Dots
2. Creating Alliances
3. Managing the Details
4. Prioritizing Under Pressure
5. Anticipating What's Next

Every word of the introduction is informed by the 5 values, or signals. They are the engine behind your language, not the language itself.

Keep in mind:

These values go beyond your introduction. As you prepare to interview, notice how your value has shown up in your career. Be ready to give examples to interview questions that illustrate what you most want to be known for.

An Important Note on "Reason for Leaving"

Do not volunteer why you left a position in your introduction. That is an answer to a direct question -- not part of your opening statement.

When the interviewer asks why you are leaving (or have already left) your last role, they are testing you.

- Do not, under any circumstances, give a negative or critical response. You will fail their test.
- Speak in truthful but neutral terms.
 - "My entire department was downsized in the latest restructuring."
 - "My current role has been a great learning experience, but I'm at a point where I'm eager to expand my skillset further."
- The differentiator: be forward looking! You're grateful you learned/experienced XYZ and now you're excited about the possibility of <<fill in the blank>> for this opportunity.

This entire response should be under 10 seconds.

Section 5

Your Positioning Language

LinkedIn Headline & Resume Headline

Your headline is the first thing people read on LinkedIn before they click your profile, and on a resume before they read a single bullet. Most people default to their job title. That's a missed opportunity.

A strong headline does three things:

- Tells people what you do and who you care about
- Signals the value you bring -- not just the role you hold
- Makes someone want to keep reading

LinkedIn Headline	Resume Headline
Up to 220 characters	One clean line below your name and contact info, above your summary
Can be longer and more layered	Same value -- tighter packaging
Combine title, specialty, and a value phrase	Keep your strongest identifier and most compelling value phrase
Personality welcome	Cut the rest

Three Approaches – No Single Right Answer

Your LinkedIn headline should tell people what you do, who you help, and why it matters, in one line. Here are three structures that work:

Outcome-Led	Lead with the result you create. Title comes second as context <i>"I keep ambitious timelines honest. I'm a Project Manager who turns scattered priorities into plans people actually follow."</i>
Pipe Separator Style	Three equal parts: title, specialty, value phrase. Reads like a layered identity <i>"Senior Project Manager Cross-Team Alignment Catching Problems While They're Still Cheap to Fix"</i>

**Aspirational /
Forward-Looking**

Bridges current expertise with where you're headed. Good when you want to signal growth.

"From Managing Tasks to Managing Trust | A Project Manager Getting People Who Don't Report to Me Moving Together"

The “Shorten-It” Rule for Resumes

Keep your strongest identifier and your most compelling value phrase. Cut the rest.

LinkedIn: Senior Project Manager | Cross-Team Alignment | Catching Problems While They're Still Cheap to Fix

Resume: Senior Project Manager | Catching Problems While They're Still Cheap to Fix

Write your LinkedIn and Resume headlines here:

Section 6

Your Language in the Room: Three Situations

You have the language. Now the question is how to use it naturally, in context, without it sounding rehearsed. The same value shows up differently depending on where you are and what you need.

The people who struggle most in Structured conversations (the raise, the promotion, the high-stakes pitch) are almost always the ones who never do the other two. Casual is the foundation. You cannot harvest what you never planted.

Frequency at a Glance

Casual	Intentional	Structured
Every week or two	Monthly or quarterly	A few times a year
The foundation	The long game	The harvest
If you are not doing this, the other two will feel forced and unnatural	Build the relationship before you need it -- makes Structured conversations land	This only works well when Casual and Intentional are already in place

Structured: When You Have a Specific Outcome in Mind

Situations	The Move
• Raise or promotion conversation • Performance review • Job interview • Project pitch or high-stakes presentation	• Prepare your language in advance • Position for where you're going, not just where you are • Leave the conversation having clearly named what you bring and what you want next

How It Sounds (Performance Review / Promotion Conversation):

I've been: focusing on how to reduce rework by catching misalignments earlier in the process.

That's where I thrive: I consistently bring the most value when I can close the gap before it costs the team time.

As we review my responsibilities: I'd like to take on more of the stakeholder alignment work upstream.

Because: that's where I save the organization the most and where I want to keep growing.

Casual: Building a Narrative Over Time

Situations	The Move
• Team meetings • Weekly 1:1s with your manager • Slack updates • Project check-ins	• Plant seeds consistently • People develop a clear picture of your value over time, without you ever making a formal pitch • Drop value breadcrumbs - mention your strength linked to daily work, natural and casual

How It Sounds:

"Since I focus on catching misalignments early, I've been testing a new way to frame requirements reviews -- it's already saving us back-and-forth."

"I wanted to flag this before it becomes a bigger issue -- that's usually where I add the most value, catching things upstream."

"I put together a one-page summary so we're all working from the same picture. Happy to walk through it if it's helpful."

Key distinction: "I'm a problem solver" is an announcement. "I caught this before it became a problem" is a demonstration. Casual breadcrumbs are demonstrations, not announcements.

Intentional: Creating Demand Before You Need Anything

Situations	The Move
• Networking events and conferences • Hallway conversations with senior leaders • Board member introductions • Cross-functional relationship building	• Be known before you need anything • Lead with what you want to be known for - no ask attached • Build familiarity and credibility (Know, Like, Trust) before the ask ever comes

How It Sounds:

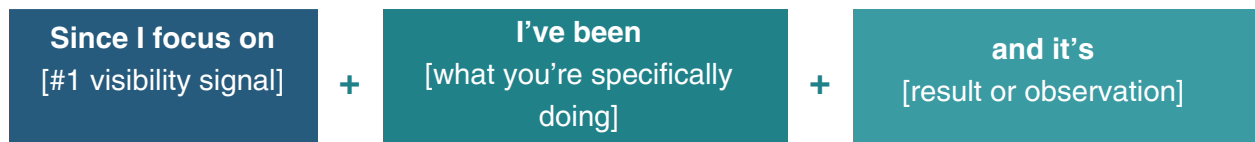
"I get called in when projects stop making sense. I find the assumptions buried in the work before they cost anything."

"I'm working on something I think could change how this team handles requirements. I'd love five minutes to get your perspective on it."

"I wanted to share a quick result from our last project that might be relevant to what you're planning next quarter."

The hardest room is usually the one you never practice. Write a Casual breadcrumb you could say this week. Not hypothetical, this is attached to real work you are doing now and sounds like something you would say naturally.

The Formula



Example: "Since I focus on catching misalignments early, I've been adding a quick assumptions check to my kickoff meetings, and it's already cut our rework in half."

Same Message. Different Room.

Your positioning language doesn't change: your value is your value. But how you open, how much detail you give, and what you lead with does change based on who's in the room.

The full Office Dynamics Cheat Sheet -- including how to handle being talked over, ignored, or dismissed -- is in the Bonus section at the back of this handbook.

Section 7

Visibility Beyond Your Desk

Networking Is Not a Crisis Response

What Most People Do	What Works
Ignore your network until you need it	Treat relationships as infrastructure -- not emergency repair
Then scramble to reconnect under pressure	Small, consistent investment over time
Skip it entirely and hope good work is enough	Build it before you need it so it works when you do

The Three Visibility Circles

Inside Your Team	Colleagues, your manager, direct reports. These people see your work daily but may not see your value. This is where Casual breadcrumbs do the most work.
Across Your Org	Stakeholders, other departments, senior leaders. These people influence opportunities you may not even know about. This is where Intentional visibility pays off.
Outside Your Company	LinkedIn connections, professional associations, industry peers. Your external reputation is a career asset that compounds over time.

Mini-Asks: Visibility Without Self-Promotion

A mini-ask is a small request that shows the value you bring. It turns visibility into action and highlights you without uncomfortable self-promotion.

"Could I ____ so that ____?"

Mini-asks are NOT: asking for a promotion, volunteering for random work outside your lane, or announcing your brand with no action attached. They should reinforce your brand by operating inside it.

Examples:

- "Could I put together a one-page summary so we're all working from the same priorities?"
- "Could I sync with the other team so we avoid duplicate work and I can flag any gaps?"
- "Would it be helpful if I turned this technical update into a version leadership can act on?"

LinkedIn Networking Strategies

Connecting at an event or meeting:

- Share your QR code, but don't accept requests during the event itself.
- If someone shares their code first, connect back, don't just "follow" them.
- If someone follows you, send a connection request.
- Wait until you're home. Then accept each connection one at a time, and as soon as you connect, send a short message: "It was great meeting you at [event name]." Reference something memorable, or use a go-to line like "What are you working on right now that you're excited about?"

**The goal is to keep the conversation going.
Some will stay online. Some will move to in-person.**

Reconnecting With Existing Connections (Monthly):

- Download your LinkedIn data: click your profile photo, then Settings & Privacy, then Data Privacy, then Download Your Data.
- Filter for three things: who you've connected with in the past 3, 6, or 12 months that you haven't followed up with; who you worked with 2, 5, or 10+ years ago that you've lost touch with; and who has the title or company of your ideal client.
- Reach out with a private message, following the same protocol above.

Section 8

Your Career File & Visibility Checklist

This is not a job search conversation. It is a don't-get-caught-flat-footed conversation. Layoffs. Reorgs. Promotions. Pivots. Burnout. Opportunities that arrive without warning. The people who navigate transitions best are not the most talented. They are the most prepared.

Your Career File

A private folder (off your company computer) where you keep all evidence of your impact. Updated quarterly. Tie it to your performance review cycle and use it to feed your self-review.

What goes in it:

- Everything in the Visibility Checklist below
- Your current resume (updated)
- Your positioning language and LinkedIn headline draft
- Your introduction (written out)
- Any portfolio items -- project summaries, presentations, samples of your work

The Visibility Checklist

Gather this now, while you have access to it. Some of it disappears the moment your employment ends.

Performance Reviews

- Pull your last 2-3 complete review cycles
- Read for the exact language others use to describe you -- that is your brand in the wild
- Note specific phrases that appear more than once -- those are signals
- Save them as PDFs or screenshots to a folder you own (not just your work system)

Project Outcomes

- Your specific contribution -- not the team's. What did you personally do, decide, catch, or fix?
- Projects where you played a key role from start to finish
- Projects where you stepped in mid-stream and changed the outcome
- Any initiative you led or co-led, even informally

Metrics

- Before/after numbers: time saved, cost reduced, error rate improved, speed increased
- Scope of impact: how many people, teams, or systems were affected
- Budget: projects you managed or contributed to with dollar figures
- Stakeholder satisfaction: any survey data, NPS scores, or formal feedback on your work

Written Feedback

- Emails where someone praised your work -- screenshot them now
- Slack or Teams messages with specific commendations
- Survey comments that mention you by name or describe your contribution
- Any formal commendations, awards, or recognition
- LinkedIn recommendations or endorsements

Skills & Certifications

- All certifications earned in the last 2 years
- Training programs completed (internal and external)
- Tools you have become proficient in that are marketable
- Methodologies you have applied: Agile, SAFe, Waterfall, Design Thinking
- Soft skills you have developed with evidence -- facilitation, stakeholder management

References

- Who would go to bat for you today -- not just who you've worked with
- Have you maintained those relationships, or would the call feel awkward?
- Aim for at least 3 strong references across different contexts: manager, peer, stakeholder
- Schedule a brief check-in with each one annually -- maintain the relationship before you need it

Update your career file quarterly -- minimum. The best time is right after your performance review while the details are fresh. Set a calendar reminder.

Section 9

Your Visibility Strategy

You started building it today. You maintain and deepen it over time. This is not a one-time exercise -- it is how visible professionals operate.

Your Asset Base	What It Powers
Career file (evidence of your impact -- updated quarterly)	Everyday influence -- recognition for work that would otherwise go unnoticed
Positioning language (introduction, conversation types, written headline)	Performance reviews that write themselves
Online presence (LinkedIn headline, full profile, resume header)	Promotion and raise conversations you're ready for
Mini-asks (small moves that reinforce your brand in real work)	Salary negotiations backed by documented value
Strategic relationships (the three circles -- inside, across, outside)	A reputation that precedes you in rooms you haven't entered yet

Your 30-Day Visibility Plan

Choose ONE. Write the specifics: a name, a date, or both. Vague is not a plan.

LinkedIn	Update my LinkedIn headline	<i>by</i> _____
Casual	Drop two Casual breadcrumbs	<i>to</i> _____ <i>and</i> _____ <i>by</i> _____
Mini-Ask	Make one mini-ask in my next project meeting	<i>"Could I</i> _____ <i>so that</i> _____ <i>?"</i>
Intentional	Have one Intentional conversation	<i>with</i> _____ <i>before</i> _____
Structured	Schedule my Structured conversation	<i>with</i> _____ <i>for</i> _____

NEXT STEPS

You know your top signal and the four that support it. Knowing your signals and even trying these exercises doesn't always fix the specific situation you're stuck in. Maybe it's a boss who doesn't see your work. Maybe it's a promotion you should have gotten already. Maybe it's a job search where you can't explain your value without sounding like everyone else's resume.

A 90-minute 1:1 with me starts with your actual situation, not a generic script. We work through what's really going on, and build a strategy that fits it. Whatever it is, you leave with something built for your situation, not a template.

\$347. Bring your signals, a resume, and the situation you want to work through.

[Book your session here] → <https://calendly.com/barb-monson/visibility-strategy-session-pmi>

Thank you!

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Bonus Section

OfficeDynamics Cheat Sheet

Use the cheat sheets on the following pages to adapt your positioning language before any high-stakes conversation. Identify the room dynamic, apply the strategy, and use the power move to open.



Office Dynamics Cheat Sheet

When You Want More INFLUENCE:

ROOM DYNAMICS	STRATEGY	POWER MOVE
Fast-moving – quick, interruptive, wants to keep things brisk.	Lead with your main point, only giving details if asked. Match their pace without rushing into mistakes.	Open with: <i>“In one point, here’s what you need to know...”</i> – then deliver it confidently.
Detail-oriented – zeroes in on specifics, facts, and numbers.	Bring data, examples, or documentation. Anticipate questions and have clear answers ready.	Hand them a one-page fact sheet before speaking. It shows respect for their style and saves time.
Idea-driven – loves brainstorming and possibilities.	Build on their ideas using “what if” or “imagine if.” Keep your message flexible.	Connect your point to <i>their</i> favorite idea from earlier. They’ll see it as a natural extension.
Dominant or Strong-willed, often blunt or tends to control the floor.	Be concise. Wait for natural pauses or use a bridge phrase to enter. Don’t take bluntness personally.	Use: <i>“Bottom line – here’s what will move us forward...”</i> or <i>“Can I build on that?”</i>
Even-keel – calm, steady, doesn’t show much emotion.	Use logic, structured talking points, and steady tone.	Summarize with: “Here’s the practical next step I recommend.” Makes it easy for them to act.
Collaborative – likes to involve everyone, seeks consensus and harmony.	Show how your idea benefits the group and invite input to strengthen it.	Ask: <i>“What would make this even better for the team?”</i> or <i>“We both want X.”</i>



Office Dynamics Cheat Sheet

When You Have No VOICE:

CHALLENGE	STRATEGY	POWER MOVE
You're talked over or interrupted	Stay calm, don't rush to talk over others or raise your voice. Reclaim your space with authority.	"Hold on, I'd like to finish that thought." or "That connects directly to what I was saying... here's how."
Your ideas get ignored until someone else repeats them.	Create ownership and allies for your ideas.	"Building on what I shared earlier..." or ask an ally in advance to back you up.
You're not getting called on or included in discussions.	Step in with value, not permission.	"I'd like to add a quick perspective on that." or "Here's one thing that has worked for me in the past."
Your ideas is dismissed or shot down quickly.	Don't argue or defend right away. Ask a question that keeps the idea alive and invites re-evaluation.	"Can you tell me what concerns you the most about my approach?" or "What would make it more workable from your perspective?"
You're not in the room where decisions happen.	Build visibility outside the meeting so your voice is known before decisions are made.	Share insights or wins through brief updates, recap emails, or 1:1 meetings. "I wanted to share a quick result from our project that might help with upcoming planning."