



BPOC

NEW ORLEANS



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Conquer Impostor Syndrome and Lead from Where You Are!

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Raise your hand if...

You've ever struggled to get leadership to understand the value of proposal management



Raise your hand if...

You ever submitted a proposal with pieces from contributors in adjacent roles that you didn't think were "up to quality"



Introductions



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Agenda



Impostor syndrome: What is it and why does it matter?



Toolkit: Know your value



Build relationships: Tailor interactions to maximize impact



IMPOSTOR SYNDROME

"An internal experience of intellectual phoniness"



Clance, P. R., & Imes, S. A. (1978). The imposter phenomenon in high achieving women: Dynamics and therapeutic intervention. *Psychotherapy: Theory, Research & Practice*, 15(3), 241-247. <https://doi.org/10.1037/h0086006>



80%
**Of people have experienced
impostor feelings**

Cokley, K. (2024). It's Time to Reconceptualize What "Imposter Syndrome" Means for People of Color. Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2024/03/its-time-to-reconceptualize-what-imposter-syndrome-means-for-people-of-color>



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WHY DOES IT MATTER?



 Impaired job performance

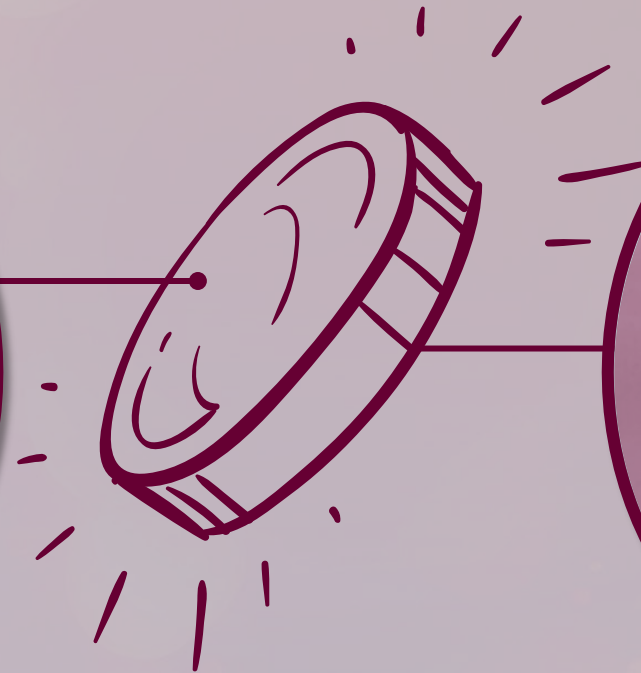
 Decreased job satisfaction

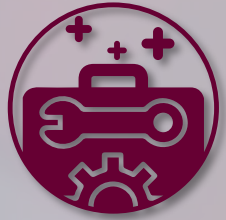
 Burnout

Bravata DM, Watts SA, Keefer AL, Madhusudhan DK, Taylor KT, Clark DM, Nelson RS, Cokley KO, Hagg HK. Prevalence, Predictors, and Treatment of Impostor Syndrome: a Systematic Review. J Gen Intern Med. 2020 Apr;35(4):1252-1275. doi: 10.1007/s11606-019-05364-1. Epub 2019 Dec 17. PMID: 31848865; PMCID: PMC7174434



TWO SIDES OF THE COIN

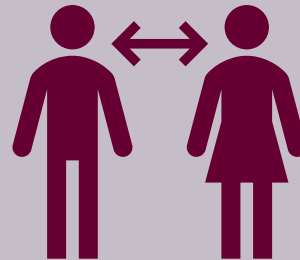




TOOLKIT: KNOW YOUR VALUE



**Know your
stats**



**Ask
others**



**Embrace
your style**



KNOW YOUR STATS

of proposals submitted

\$ in to the organization

Success rate

Return on investment

Down-select rate

Focus on what matters to your organization





ASK OTHERS

“Hot Wash” after a major proposal effort

Ask for advice (instead of feedback)

Utilize resource/affinity groups



EMBRACE YOUR STYLE

Tools to identify strengths

Borrow language to describe strengths you know have

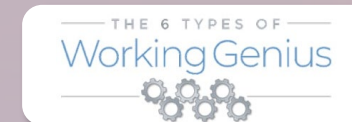
Define working conditions that lead to success



.... **Strengths Finder**



.... **Myers Briggs**



.... **Working Genius**



.... **PRINT**



.... **Social Styles**



You used your toolkit to
know your value,
NOW WHAT?

What are your proposal management pain points?

- Limited time to interface with leadership
- Unclear roles and responsibilities
- Territorial peers in adjacent roles
- Interpersonal tension among teams
- Not respecting agreed upon boundaries
- Throwing out the agreed upon "game plan"
- Need to "trust but verify" proposal deliverables from adjacent roles
- Communication challenges with virtual/distributed teams
- Team members who don't respect deadlines
- Differing experience levels on a team
- Peers who "know it all" and aren't open to new ideas
- Colleagues who need lots of coaching/handholding
- Team members who provide criticism but not solutions
- Lack of honesty about opinions and expectations
- Reactive bid decisions not aligned with strategy
- Lack of bid/no-bid criteria
- Inadequate institutional support for proposal effort
- Bureaucratic red tape
- Different visions for what the team is trying to accomplish
- Overuse of jargon



BUILD RELATIONSHIPS

Tailor interactions to maximize impact



Be your own **advocate**

Model **authenticity** and **empathy**

Be **dependable** and **consistent**





Be your own **advocate**

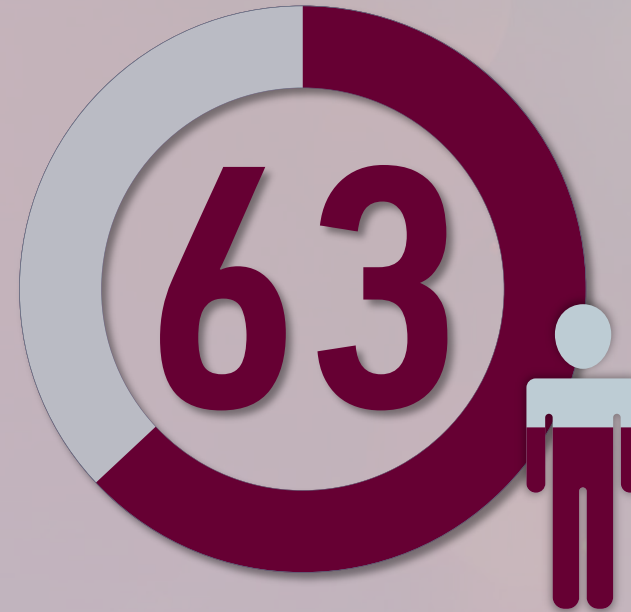
Model **authenticity** and
empathy

Be **dependable** and
consistent





**5% remember
statistics**



**63% remember
stories**

Stories are more memorable than facts

Heath, C., & Heath, D. (2008). Made to Stick. Arrow Books



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THE STAR STRUCTURE

1

SITUATION

30-45 seconds of background + context

TASK

15 seconds that describes problem

2

4

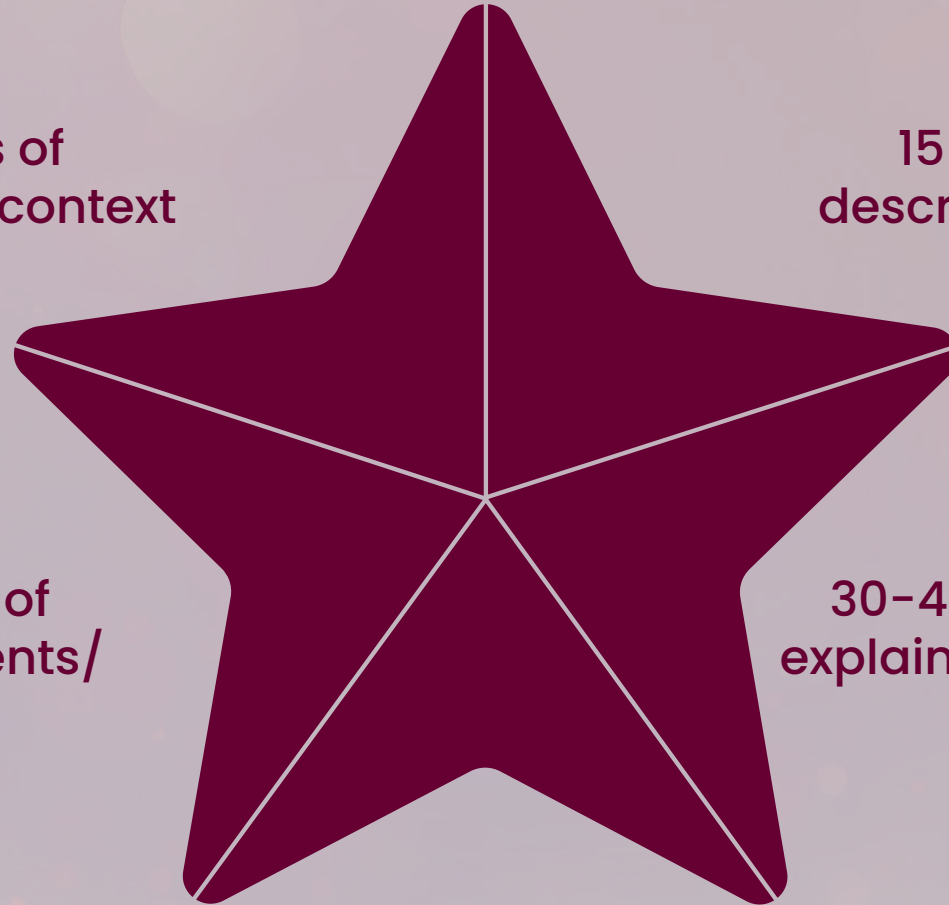
RESULT

15-30 seconds of accomplishments/ impact

ACTION

30-45 seconds that explains what you did

3



Use stories to persuade – Example

A new manager in your organization is pushing back on the proposal schedule you developed for a high-effort, must-win RFP

How do you convince leadership to follow your proposed approach?

Desired Outcome: Commit to following proposed RFP schedule

SITUATION

Short timeline to submission with proposal reliant on SME input

TASK

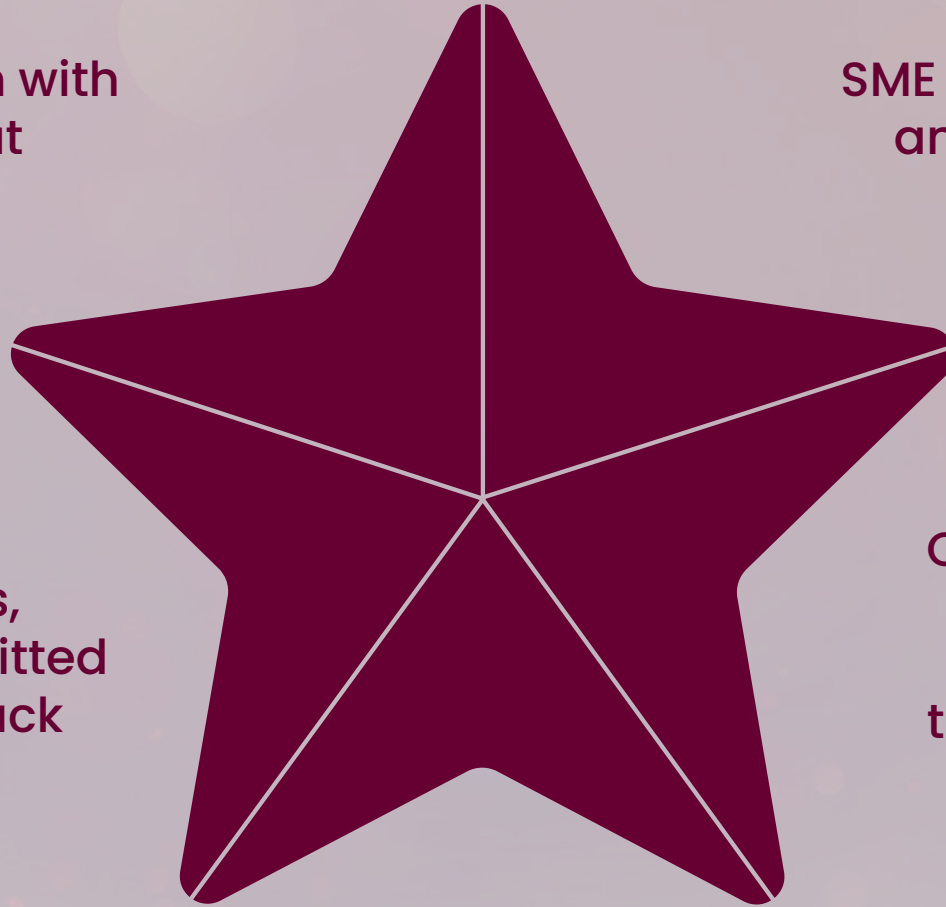
SME felt like a rigid schedule was an extra burden on top of their busy schedule

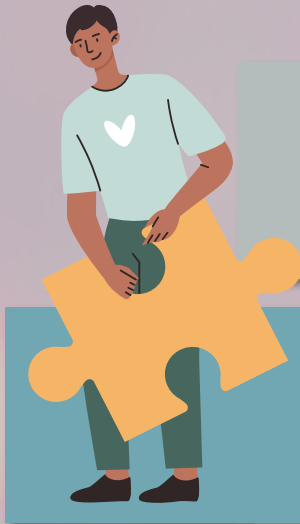
RESULT

Despite submission IT issues, proposal successfully submitted on time with positive feedback from SME

ACTION

Customized the schedule to meet SME needs while retaining enough time to at the end to address surprises





Be your own **advocate**

Model **authenticity**
and **empathy**

Be **dependable** and
consistent

Be dependable and consistent



Personal User Manual

Working hours

- *Protective of nights and weekends, if extra hours are expected let me know in advance*
- *Frequently work evenings and send deliverables outside of business hours, but no expectation that others will do the same*

Ways to give me feedback

- *Face to face, early and often*
- *Written in e-mail, so I have time to process*

Common pitfalls/challenges

- *Very detail oriented, if I'm getting caught in the weeds, call me out!*
- *Tend to focus on big picture, feel free to direct me towards action*

Priorities outside work

- *Responsible for kid pick up and drop off every day (include times)*
- *Planned vacation (include dates)*
- *In the middle of a move*

Energizing tasks

- *Skilled at facilitation- happy to run meetings*
- *Enjoy technical editing and document review*

Preferred communication

- *IM vs. phone for urgent questions*
- *E-mail for requests that require action*





Credibility is
assessed within
the first 7 seconds



EYES

Connect with audiences' eyes. Make your point, move on to next set of eyes

FACE

Use appropriate facial expressions + smile

GESTURES

Use naturally & appropriately. Drop to neutral when not using

VOICE

Increased volume = increased animation. Use pauses to pace talk

POSTURE

Balanced stance. All movement has a purpose

IMAGE

Professional & appropriate for cultural setting



LANGUAGE MATTERS



I Guess...

I Think...

Kinda

I Feel...

I Just

Sorta

Might

Don't you think?

Right?

Basically





Be your own **advocate**

Model **authenticity** and **empathy**

Be **dependable**
and **consistent**



You know what to do!



Be your own advocate
Model authenticity and empathy

**Be dependable
and consistent**



WRAPPING UP

Feeling like an **impostor** is very common, but reframe and remind yourself that you are **impressive**

Leverage your tool kit to **recognize your strengths** and become a valuable addition to any team

Build relationships to make an impact and **lead from where you are!**

SHARE YOUR FEEDBACK

