

"I think Neena hit a home run with this book, and I hope you will enjoy looking through her 'new lens.'"

- Colleen Barrett, *President Emeritus, Southwest Airlines Co.*

**SHOW UP.  
STEP UP.  
STEP OUT.**

**Leadership  
Through  
a New  
Lens**



**Neena Newberry**

## Table of Contents

### Foreword

### Preface

#### Section I - Show Up (*How Are You Presenting Yourself?*)

The Power of Simply Noticing

Investing In Yourself

##### **Is Your Communication Style Undermining Your Credibility?**

What Leadership Levers Do You Need to Pull?

Do You Know What Really Differentiates You?

What Is Your Risk Taking Profile?

How to Disagree without Being Disagreeable

Is Self-Care Really Selfish?

How Are You Getting In Your Own Way?

What Kind of Leader Are You?

Making Change Stick

Put More Power Into Your Communication Style

Presentation Pearls of Wisdom

##### **Do You Provide “Strategic Snapshots” of Your Performance?**

What’s Getting in the Way of Your Success?

Are Your Headlines Getting Lost in the Details?

How Are Your Blind Spots Getting in Your Way?

Tackling Important Issues Head On

#### Section II - Step Up (*How Are You Taking Your Leadership Up a Notch?*)

Staying Focused on the Big Picture

Creating the Outcome You Want

How to Keep Your Good Idea from Being Shot Down

The Impact of the Company You Keep

Tiny Traps that Reduce Your Effectiveness

Three Important Questions to Ask Yourself

##### **Do You Recognize the Impact of Your Strengths?**

##### **Do You Use Self-Promotion as a Leadership Tool?**

The Value of Being “Speechless”

How Well Do You Manage Your Energy?

How to Stop Working All the Time

## Table of Contents (Continued)

You Don't Need a Clone – Just Make the Most of Your Time  
Being in the Moment  
Life Lessons from the Grand Canyon  
Look for the Opportunities Right in Front of You  
Networking for Results  
Are You Keeping Your Gold Mine of Ideas to Yourself?  
The Power of Letting Go  
What is "Sitting on the Fence" Costing You?  
Can You Really Afford Not to Ask for Help?  
Put Your Network to Work  
Is Fear Holding You Back?

### **Section III - Step Out** (*How Are You Using Your Leadership to Get Results and Develop Others?*)

Being Strategic About Performance Feedback  
Put Your Wisdom to Work  
Are You Being Strategic About Relationships?  
Strategies to Create a High Performing Team  
Three Key Questions from David Novak  
What's Your Impact?  
What Guides Your Leadership?  
Keep Your Passion Front and Center  
Connecting the Dots for Others  
Are You Missing the Two Most Important Steps in Giving Feedback?  
Learning the Unwritten Rules  
**When Someone Plays Hardball**  
Do You Have Mentors or Sponsors?  
Five Practices of Exemplary Leaders  
The Fine Art of Influence  
Setting Yourself Up for Success in a Negotiation  
Is the Glass Really Half Empty?  
Lessons from Hall of Famers Aikman and Staubach

### **About the Author**

## Foreword

### Show Up. Step Up. Step Out. Leadership Through A New Lens

I've always thought if one could "teach" common sense, he/she would be a billionaire. Accepting my aforementioned theory and having now read *Show Up. Step Up. Step Out. – Leadership Through A New Lens*, I predict that Neena will shortly become a billionaire.

Neena is a soft-spoken Servant Leader, but she has a giant Servant's Heart and a gigantic Winning Spirit that causes people to gravitate toward her for her advice and guidance regarding their personal growth/development journeys. Even a cursory review of her resume and accomplishments will tell you that she seldom disappoints these clients. She articulates her thoughts in an energetic, enthusiastic, and painstakingly simple way and she shares those same personality characteristics when she gives spot-on feedback to her clients after she has observed their "walks" versus their "talks." In addition, she is open and honest with them about what she actually "hears" as well as what she doesn't hear because she knows that each is equally important. She is quick to earn her clients' trust—not an easy task for any consultant.

Neena doesn't purport that the simple but thought-provoking nuggets offered in this book are the only way to achieve success in taking your performance and career to the next level, but I am comfortable in assuring you that if you will take the time to read and reflect upon the thoughts expressed in this enjoyable and quick read offering, you will walk away with numerous valuable common sense approaches which will produce positive results for you in your personal development and growth.

I think Neena hit a home run with this book and I hope you will enjoy looking through her "new lens" ☺.

Colleen Barrett  
President Emeritus  
Southwest Airlines Co.

## Preface

When I started writing weekly management and leadership articles, I wanted to give leaders practical advice and information that could really help them get results. From my personal experience as a leader working in demanding, high pressure work environments, I knew that whatever I wrote had to be relevant or no one would ever read it.

Inspired by the real-world business challenges of my clients, I set out to provide thought-provoking content to help leaders take their performance and careers to the next level without taking a lot of their time. So, after almost five years of writing, I am excited to report that my readers consistently say: "I get so many articles but I always read yours. They're short enough to read quickly but they always get me thinking. And I walk away with something that I can take action on right away."

From my twenty-plus years in the corporate world, I have noticed that people may not always see the opportunities right in front of them, fully put what they know into play, or consistently focus on what *really* gets results. So, when a friend encouraged me to create a collection of my articles to serve as a valuable resource for leaders, I took it seriously. The end result is this book.

It is full of simple but thought-provoking nuggets. In less than five minutes, you can read an article and identify a strategy to help you get better results right now. Divided into three sections; Show Up, Step Up, and Step Out; this book includes ideas and easy-to-implement strategies that can make a huge difference in the short and long term.

Show Up is all about clarifying what you want others to understand about your leadership and where you can have the biggest impact on the business. Step Up focuses on uncovering blind spots, getting past roadblocks, and implementing strategies to improve your effectiveness. Finally, Step Out is about recognizing your own power and influence, building a strong network of support, and helping others step up.

This book will give you a new lens to help you see the valuable opportunities right in front of you, and simple, impactful strategies to make the most of them.

**Show Up.**  
**Step Up.**  
**Step Out.**

## Is Your Communication Style Undermining Your Credibility?

Every day you shape how others view your leadership, through how you communicate. You send messages directly and indirectly all the time. Although this sounds really obvious, most people don't take time to think about how their communication style affects their credibility.

The biggest opportunities to improve how we communicate typically exist when we know exactly what we mean and are laser focused on our message, because this is when we may forget to provide important context. We can leave people confused or making incorrect assumptions about our intentions.



So, here are three important questions to ask yourself before you engage someone, or to have your team think through before they approach you:

### 1. What do I want the other person to do with the information?

When you approach someone with information, the first thing they typically wonder is, "Why are you telling me this?"

- Do you want me to take action? Help you problem-solve?
- Are you just giving me an update?
- Are you venting? Do you just need me to listen?

Remember to Connect the Dots for others to help them understand how the information impacts them and what you expect from them.

### 2. How important is this?

Next, ask yourself what level of priority the topic really warrants. Remember that by having a conversation focused on a single topic you may inadvertently give it more emphasis than you intended. Even the method of communication, face-to-face vs. phone or email, can convey relative importance.

Given the level of priority (high, medium or low) what method and timing make sense? Should this topic be bundled with others? Can it wait to be discussed at a meeting you already have scheduled on another topic? Each approach communicates a different level of priority.

### 3. How can I connect this to the bigger picture?

Finally, consider the strategic significance of the information you want to share. If you are like most people, you have a bigger issue or business priority in mind even when you are “in the weeds.” How consistently do you make that connection for others in how you frame your message?

If you are in a leader’s office frequently talking about what seem like minor things at a surface level, it can undermine your credibility over time. Ensure they understand how each item relates to a bigger picture.

This week, I want to challenge you to think about these three questions as you communicate. Where do the biggest opportunities lie for you? What one step can you take to build your credibility through your communication style? Don’t forget that small steps can lead to big results.



## Do You Provide “Strategic Snapshots” of Your Performance?

If you’re like most people, you have a sense of what you want to accomplish when each day begins—and then the day “happens.” You may get diverted by unplanned issues and be left wondering, “What the heck happened?!”



No matter what is going on in your day, I urge you to think about the countless opportunities you have to showcase what you’re doing to add value and make a difference. I like to call this providing “strategic snapshots” of your performance. In my signature presentation “Getting the Visibility You Want” (aka, “Tastefully Tooting Your Own Horn”) and in my coaching, I offer a range of strategies on how to do this in a way that works for you.

Before I dive into giving you my tips, I want you to consider the following points as important context.

- **We are all busy—usually too busy to notice how others are adding value and contributing on a day-to-day basis.**

It’s not that we don’t want to notice; it’s just that our attention is divided. And your boss is probably no different from you in this respect. So, *you* have to help your boss notice how you’re making a difference. I’d like to say a mid-year or year-end discussion as part of your formal performance management process is enough—but it just isn’t. When I led Performance Management & Career Planning at Deloitte, I came to fully appreciate how often people are out of synch with their boss’s view of their performance.

- **This isn’t about bragging.**

At the end of the day, this is about sharing important information that can add value to your company and shape the direction of your career. Remember that as someone who has a personal stake in your performance and development, your boss needs to know how and what you’re doing. And others in the company can benefit from learning about how you overcame specific challenges and what led to your success.

So, here are three suggestions on how to provide “strategic snapshots” of your performance:

**1. Be clear about what you want to be known for.**

Your desired brand/reputation serves as important context and a filter for what to share with others. So, take the time to get clear about the 2-3 things you want people to think of when they think of you. This isn't about trying to be someone you're not. It's about helping others understand what differentiates you and why that matters.

**2. Notice the opportunities in front of you.**

Before you go into a meeting, have a call with someone, or write an email, ask yourself, "How can I demonstrate how I'm adding value, or reinforce my desired brand in this interaction?" Every interaction may not afford this opportunity, but asking yourself this question will lead you to provide "strategic snapshots" of your performance more often.

**3. Find an approach that fits your style.**

As you know, some people have no problem telling others how they are adding value while others struggle because they don't want to come across as arrogant, or self-promotion doesn't fit with their cultural norms. So, don't just adopt someone else's approach. Take the time to think about what fits your personal style.

As a first step, think about a couple of accomplishments you'd like to share and how and why they have relevance and value to others. By going through this thought process you will present the information differently—less like bragging and more like information that others really need to know.

Remember that it's up to you to consistently share and reinforce what you want others to know about your contributions (i.e., provide "strategic snapshots" of your performance) no matter how your day unfolds. And it doesn't have to involve a huge effort or time commitment. You should know my mantra by now: "Small steps can lead to big results."

**Show Up.**  
**Step Up.**  
**Step Out.**

## Do You Recognize the Impact of Your Strengths?

After facilitating a couple of workshops based on the book, *Stand Out* by Marcus Buckingham, I continue to notice that high performers often take their own strengths, or the impact of their strengths, for granted. If you consider your strengths as a mere reflection of “who you are” rather than something that truly sets you apart, read on.

Unlike *Now, Discover Your Strengths*, which focuses on individual strengths, *Strategically Standing Out* talks about Strengths Roles. Buckingham has identified nine roles that reflect a combination of your talents and skills and describe how you instinctively provide value. The roles are derived from a timed assessment that asks how you would respond in a variety of situations.



As we all know, identifying your top Strengths Roles is just the beginning. *To really put them into play you have to understand what they really mean for you—their **impact**.* Whether or not you decide to take the assessment, try this simple exercise.

1. Identify your top three strengths, or top two Strengths Roles (if you take the assessment).
2. For each, describe what you say and do when you are playing to that strength or Strengths Role.
3. Identify the impact.

Let me bring this to life with an example of a client, who we'll call Susan.

### ***Strengths Role:***

Susan is a Connector, someone who brings ideas, things, or people together to make something bigger and better (refer to *Strategically Standing Out* for more details on being a Connector).

### ***What she says and does when she's playing to this strength/Strengths Role:***

Susan listens, asks thought-provoking and targeted questions, absorbs information, eliminates the “noise,” and sees linkages that others don't see. She also consistently introduces people who would benefit from meeting each other.

*The impact:*

Susan has insights that others don't have. She helps the team focus on the core issues buried within the information they have, which helps them make faster decisions with her involvement.

She has strong relationships and a solid network of support, which helps her get things done faster given her access to valuable information, people, and resources. Susan initiates collaboration where none would otherwise have existed.

Remember, it's much harder to help others understand how to leverage your strengths (or for you to integrate your strengths into your leadership brand) if you don't understand them yourself. If you believe that success comes more from playing to your strengths, rather than focusing most of your efforts on improving your development areas, consider reading *Strategically Standing Out*.

If nothing else, try the simple exercise above this week and discuss it with someone who knows you well. You might be surprised at the impact you are having—on others and results.

## Do You Use Self-Promotion as a Leadership Tool?

I speak on the topic of tasteful self-promotion all the time. I have to say that this is truly a timeless topic because most women and some men struggle with how to do it. I even have an entire module dedicated to it my [WOW! Women On the Way to Peak Performance Program<sup>SM</sup>](#).



As one of the faculty for the George W. Bush Presidential Center's inaugural Women's Initiative Fellowship Program, I had a chance to teach fourteen women from Egypt how to do this. Although they debated with me about whether self-promotion was something they could do in a way that fit with their culture and was aligned with their personal styles and values, the women successfully developed and implemented strategies that worked for them during their four weeks in the United States. So, I'm here to tell you that if fourteen women from Egypt can do it, so can you!

Here's a quick self-assessment you can take to help you determine where you might have some opportunities to be more effective. Rate yourself on the following eight statements using the scale below:

1 = Not at all; 2 = Very little; 3 = Neutral; 4 = To a moderate extent; 5 = To a great extent

1. I view self-promotion in a positive light.
2. I am comfortable self-promoting.
3. I know who needs to know about my accomplishments and results.
4. The "right" people know how I add value.
5. I notice and track my accomplishments.
6. I am armed with quick stories I can tell.
7. I have a 30-60 second elevator speech.
8. I spend at least five minutes/week to toot my own horn.

As you can see from the statements above, it all starts with your mindset. Most people view tooting their own horns as bragging, self-centered, or just plain obnoxious. And I would agree that the most memorable examples of self-promotion tend to be negative. However, there are many people who do use self-promotion as an effective tool to demonstrate their leadership.

Rather than taking a negative view, I urge you to reframe self-promotion as a valuable way to inform others and to help them learn from what you have accomplished. When you view it this way, it becomes less about you and more about providing something relevant and useful to others.

Next, think about how you want to “show up” in a conversation where you do tell others about your accomplishments and results. How do you want to be viewed? What is important to you? Answering these questions will help you frame your achievements in a way that works for you and choose the right words, which will make it much easier for you to tastefully self-promote.

Finally, take a look at your responses to the assessment above. What did you notice, and what action do you want to take? You could start by clarifying what stops you from self-promoting, identifying who needs to know about your accomplishments, or simply jotting down examples of your achievements and results.

I challenge you to identify one small step to get the ball rolling this week. You know I’m a firm believer that small steps can lead to big results.

**Show Up.  
Step Up.  
Step Out.**



## When Someone Plays Hardball

I had a conversation with a talented leader who has achieved tremendous success in her career. She is currently in a tough political situation that has thrown her for a loop. A fellow leader at her company clearly wants to expand his span of responsibility and is blatantly playing hardball to make it happen. The situation has affected this woman's ability to stay level-headed, focused on what she needs to get done, and ultimately sustain her performance. And, because she carries her work frustration home, her personal life has suffered as well.



As someone who has worked with many large companies across industries, I have seen ugly politics time and again—and have personally experienced them myself. It's never fun, but you can navigate through it.

So, here are three ideas that can help you:

### 1. Identify your triggers.

We all have “buttons” and some know how to push them better than others. Yes, you know what I'm talking about. It could be a person who comes across as self-serving (e.g., blatantly schmoozing, taking all the credit, etc.) or does something equally frustrating.

When you have a strong reaction (i.e., one that you keep replaying in your head or can't let go of), you need to identify what triggered it for you. **Usually it's not just about what that person said or did. Rather, at the core it has to do with something that *you* really value, that has been violated.**

Sometimes it's hard to figure this one out by yourself because your emotions can cloud your judgment and ability to work through it. So, you may need to talk to a coach, colleague or confidant who can help you get to the heart of what's going on.

### 2. Leverage the “Power of the Pause.”

If nothing else, the next time you let yourself get triggered by this person just pause. **Remember that no one can make you feel or react a certain way unless *you* let them. Do you really want to give them that much power over you?** That may sound counterintuitive because you may want to blame the

other person for the whole situation—“Of course it’s their fault that I’m so stressed and frustrated!”

**Do not underestimate the power you have.** You know that you cannot control the other person, but you can control yourself—with deliberate focus and practice. I fully recognize this is much easier said than done, which is why people often need help to make the shift.

So start by taking a small step. Practice pausing when you get triggered. Even 2-3 seconds can give you just enough time to choose a different response.

### 3. Make a different choice.

Ok, this last step may sound like a statement of the obvious, but I can’t tell you how much value people get from seeing it in black and white or hearing it. **Doing more of the same will *never* get you a different result. Period!**

The person who triggers your frustration can probably predict how you’re going to respond. So, once you can make yourself pause, you will start to notice that you can make a different choice in the moment.

**By choosing a different response, you can break the unproductive cycle.** This will help you focus much more on what will serve you best in that situation and less on reacting to the other person’s behavior.

So, let me end this article with a couple of final thoughts. First, don’t underestimate what you can do in tough political situations to drive the outcome you want. Second, leverage the power *you* have when someone plays hardball. If nothing else, identify your triggers in the situation because doing that will help you get to a better outcome faster.

## About the Author



President, Newberry Executive Solutions (certified WBE/HUB)

14902 Preston Rd Suite 404-118, Dallas, TX 75254

Phone: 713-822-3032

Email: [neena@newberrysolutions.com](mailto:neena@newberrysolutions.com)

Website: [www.newberrysolutions.com](http://www.newberrysolutions.com)

### Professional Summary

Neena Newberry leapt into entrepreneurship in 2008 by launching Newberry Executive Solutions to focus on her passion for developing strong leaders, especially women. She left a more than 16-year consulting and human resources career, and a role leading performance management and career planning for 34,000 employees on Deloitte's U.S. HR Executive Team. She didn't know the economy would tank just three months later, teaching her lessons that would benefit her clients.

Grounded in practical business experience, Neena develops leaders through Purpose, Presence, and Power. The result: rave reviews about her company's products and services from *Fortune* 500 clients such as AT&T, Marriott, PepsiCo, Shell, and Sysco, and organizations like the United Way and the George W. Bush Presidential Center. Not to mention Neena's chapter in the *MBA Women's Guide to Success*, the *WOW! Women On the Way to Peak Performance Program<sup>SM</sup>*, and this book, *Show Up. Step Up. Step Out.*

Newberry's credentials include more than 20 years of advising and coaching business leaders, an MBA, a Professional in Human Resources Certification, and a Professional Certified Coach credential from the International Coach Federation.

Through volunteer work with Collaborative for Children in Houston and the United Way of Metropolitan Dallas (UWMD), Newberry has been a long-term champion of education reform. Her other endeavors include an adjunct professorship in executive education at the SMU Cox School of Business; vice president of the board of the National Association of Women MBAs; global and local leadership roles with the International Coach Federation; chair of the UMWD Advocacy Committee; and author of leadership articles for her alma mater, the McCombs School of Business at the University of Texas at Austin.

Neena has designed a life that allows her to spend quality time with her family while pursuing her passion. She just broke in her first glove learning to play baseball with her son, who keeps her grounded and energized. Neena's sense of adventure takes her outdoors, most recently hiking 50 miles over five days at the Grand Canyon.

### Areas of Expertise

Executive Coaching  
Leadership & Management Development  
Performance Management  
Strategic Planning  
Operations Improvement

### Industry Experience

Healthcare  
Professional Services  
Oil & Gas  
Utilities  
Consumer Products  
Telecommunications  
Financial Services

### Functional Experience

General Management  
Strategy  
Technology  
Operations  
Human Resources

### Associations

International Coach Federation  
ICF - North Texas Coaches  
MBA Women International  
Network of Executive Women  
United Way Women of Tockeville  
Women's Energy Network

### Education

BBA in Management, University of Texas at Arlington  
MBA in Finance, University of Texas  
College of Executive Coaching