**MANAGING YOUR LEADERSHIP CAREER**

**ASHA LEADERSHIP ACADEMY**

**ANDREA FALZARANO:** Welcome to the ASHA Leadership Academy webinar on Managing Your Leadership Career. This webinar content is appropriate for entry leaders. I am Andrea Falzarano, Director of Association Governance Operations at the ASHA National Office. We planned this webinar to help Communication Sciences and Disorders professionals to understand that leadership is not restricted to people who supervise employees or hold certain titles, but a series of skills and behaviors that can be learned and developed. Each of you should have a copy of the handout which includes speaker information and slides. If you do not have the handout, please pause the webinar now and access a copy from our website. You will need a copy for interactive sections of this presentation.

At this time I would like to welcome our presenter, Kevin Nourse. Dr. Kevin Norse is an executive coach, organization development consultant, and facilitator with more than 20 years of progressive experience in both for profit and nonprofit organizations. He is a professional certified coach through the International Coach Federation, and has extensive experience coaching leaders in the areas of emotional intelligence, career planning and transition, influence, risk taking, and strategic thinking. Now let’s begin. Over to you Kevin.

**KEVIN NOURSE:** That’s great Andrea, thank you. I’m so pleased to, to join you all today. we’ve got a, a live studio audience, but we’ve also got those of you that are listening on the recording. So, anyway, welcome everyone. This topic is a, is a real passion of mine, probably for about 20 years. Early when I started my professional practice, I did a lot a career coaching with people who’d been downsized after 9/11, working for a major hospitality firm. And I heard a lot a stories and, and lessons learned from, these were managers who’d lost their jobs after, you know, many, in many cases, had worked for this organization for about 20 years. So, got a lot a good insights about career management from that experience. Fast forward to today, and a lot a the work I do now is with leaders in transition. So leaders that maybe are promoted to the next level up, or to their first position, or those that are onboarded, bringing in then from the outside. So I’ll try to share as many of the insights that I’ve gained from that work with, with you all today, as well as getting some engagement with our, our friends in the, in the studio audience.

Okay, um… just the disclosure statement. I’m Kevin Nourse, I’m an independent contractor to ASHA, and I’m receiving compensation from ASHA for conducting this webinar. And I do not have any nonfinancial interests.

Okay, so let’s talk a little bit about where we’re gonna go today. Some of the learning objectives in terms of our webinar. We’re gonna spend, uh, a bit a time really thinkin’ about career viability and really assessment, as we think about where are you at now as a precursor to where you wanna be in terms of career development. We’ll then talk about priorities, especially associated with your professional support network. We know that that is really, really key in terms of really career resilience, and able to achieve your career goals is through your professional support network. And then lastly we’ll talk about strategies associated with preventing derailment. For those of you who may be in leadership transitions, maybe you’re about to get your first leadership or management position, or you’re kinda being promoted. But there’s quite a bit of research out there about what happens in terms of what causes, you know, good performers to derail as leaders, and, and we’ll talk about how to prevent that.

So then in terms of our agenda, we’ll start off with some key concepts around career management. We’ll look at assessing your career, support networks, and then navigating transitions before we wrap up. And then we’ve got some resources that I’ll identify for you.

So in terms of getting the most out of this webinar, um, for those that are listening to the recording, we suggest that you print the, the guide out, and that way you can make notes, in terms of the ideas that you hear from me and, and from the participants. Really think about your learning environment. So when you’re listening to the recording, making sure that you really can focus without distractions. Feel free throughout the webinar to stop the action. Hit the, the Pause or the Stop button on the, the recording, so that you can apply the activities. And I’ll be cuing you up at the points that it might be appropriate to stop, so that you can reflect on an activity before we come together and share with the live audience. And then deepen your learning. And I think a great way to deepen your learning is to teach these concepts to others and share them. Especially if you’re in a, a leadership position, or aspire to be, the idea of helping others develop their careers. So that’s our roadmap for where we’re gonna go.

Some a the core leadership competencies associated with this topic, again, we’re gonna be addressing all of these today, but I think the ones that stand out are really about this idea of assessing your career viability. So, it’s hard to know where you’re gonna go if you don’t know where you’re at. So it’s really lookin’ in essence at past, present, future. And then also thinking about both breadth and depth when it comes to your professional network. And we’ll have some more time to explore that. Okay.

Well, I’d like to talk about some key concepts. And this is page, page 6 in your workbooks if you wanna flip ahead to that page. I think the quote there at the beginning, really says it well. Michael Gerber is a, an author and career expert, writes a lot on the topic. But I think it really boils down to this idea of intentionality and proactivity when it comes to both creating your life, your, your life, your work life, personal professional. So it really is I think movin’ beyond just existing, but this idea of really living fully. And I think it really goes hand in hand, and although we’re gonna be focused on career management today, I think it, it’s as much as life management too.

Just as an aside, years ago, I worked with a high tech company. Actually it was American Online teaching career classes, career management classes. And one a the things I emphasized was that to develop a good career plan, it, it also entails doin’ a good life plan. So we can look at how life and work fit together. And I always say, figure out where you wanna go in your life, and then how can car--, your career compliment and support that.

So, let’s start with a definition. Again, this is kind of glued together from another dif—number of different sources and writers on career management. But a couple things to point out. One is that it’s an ongoing process. So we know it’s not just you do this once and then you’re good for the next 20 years. But given the way things are changing this environment, and we’re gonna talk in a bit about that, but given how much things are evolving and changing in organizational life, really it’s, it’s kind of an ongoing, or needs to be an ongoing process. And again, what we’re doing is thinking in terms of assessment, planning and setting goals, and then actually moving them to action associated with that. And ultimately what we’re tryin’ to create is really satisfaction growth, and also financial stability, which is, you know, part a the reason that, you know, we all work, is really thinking along those lines.

So I think that’s a really good framework for looking at really the, the journey of career management. So this is a pretty standard process when you think about it. We start with assessment. And as I mentioned, it’s not just assessing where you are in your career, but also where you are, you know, in your life, and for yourself. And we start to think about things like your strengths and weaknesses, what are some of the opportunities or threats.

So with that assessment, we can then move into doing research, which is really starting to think about what are some emerging trends or opportunities in terms of new career opportunities for you, new ways to kind of add value to your organizations, or move up. And, uh, a key way that we do that is through informational interviews. Starting to talk to people, which is why this idea of a support network I think is so critical. We then start to set some goals, both career, job, life, within your organization, and then really think about plans to get there, and specific milestones along the way.

And then we go to actually implement. There we start to take action and really lean in and engage our support structure, support system. And then periodically reflecting in progress and adapting plans.

So I did wanna point out, you know, it’s, as we, uh, approach the end of the year, one a the things I found that I’ve gotten into the habit of doing is, I do an annual trip to Hawaii in January. I take a week off, and just do quite a bit a reflection on the year as it’s closing, and also the year that’s opening up. And for me, it’s, I’m moving into the, kinda my evaluation stage at this point of the year, and it’s a good time a year to do it. But really looking at what’s worked, what hasn’t. Where am I in kinda the grand scheme a things in term of, terms of my career, and start to use that to set intention about next steps in terms of my own professional practice and professional growth.

So, if there’s any comments from our folks in the, the classroom about this career management journey. If you followed a similar path, or anything that stands out in this career management journey that’s really relevant for you right now. So if you were to think about what stage might you be at with regard to your own career management, we’d love to see in the chat box any ideas you have on that.

You know, while we’re waiting for some, some sharing, um, notice the arrow goes all the way back to assessment. So I think it’s really critical to look at this kind of as a recursive process that happens over time.

I find that this is also, this journey can be a little lonely, which is why support is so critical. Always think about that. I’ve got a couple colleagues that we do this together, where we do some evaluation at the end of the year. We think about holding each other accountable. And I think that’s just such a great way to think about this idea of career management, and making it a less solitary experience.

Okay. Well let’s do a little bit of a brainstorm. I’d love to hear from you all. You know, you’re in different kinds of organizations, whether it’s healthcare, schools, in academia, whatever. But what are some of the, the, the trends you’re noticing or experiencing relating to managing your career? What are just some of the things that you’re noticing, and again, feel free to, to populate the chat box and see what, what folks share.

And Erin points out so the idea of trends equal flexibility. It, and, and it seems to me Erin, it’s, it’s both trends, suggest the need to be flexible, but they also may represent more opportunities to be flexible in terms a your career and how you focus it. So I love that addition to it. Yeah. Other, other thoughts from our participants. What do you see going on? Yeah, Melissa, being creative as the way that we work has changed. Big, it’s a big shift. Melissa, if you think about, um, what we’re all up against in the last 18 months with COVID. It so fundamentally, um, foundationally changed the way that we work. I’m working with a healthcare institution that is quite conservative in terms of labor practices. And I actually have talked to the CEO was very ardent against telecommuting and telework. And he’s now actually open to the idea, ‘cause he recognized through the pandemic, that that was, you know, a, a big way that they were at, actually able to engage the workforce. So, this idea of virtual work, suddenly it’s okay. Suddenly we realize we can be productive. And Andrea points out, bein’ on top of new technology. I think it’s really fascinating is that more and more jobs, even ones that traditionally have not been technology based, are incorporating that. So the idea of developing and, and refining your tech savvy, I think no matter what field you’re in, is critical. And Bob, I love what you suggested around, because, you know, many of us are telecommuting and working from home, less time and space between work and nonwork. So it really points to this idea of, how do you sustain your resilience when maybe you’re working at home. And I’ve heard from, you know, stories from managers I’ve coached about their struggle, which is they’re working basically, they get to their workstation at home at 7:00 AM and work till 7:00 PM, so they’re exhausted by the end of the day. And to me that’s not a sustainable model. I think really starting to think about, if we’re gonna work that way, how do we adapt it to make it more livable and sustainable in the long term.

Let’s see, Melissa points out, um, it’s, it’s circular in nature, because, in assessment mode, having not been selected for a volunteer leader posi—position, and also points out that it can be lonely. “No one else in my daily work has the same goals I do.” So that’s right. So finding kind of your allies in this process I think is really critical.

So there’s a couple other man— career management trends that I’ve noticed. Um… what we’re seeing more and more is that soft skills are becoming more and more critical. Things like resilience, teamwork, collaboration, communication. In other words, employers are looking for more than just technical or clinical skills, but they’re really looking to, to get to the complimentative skills associated with the work that we do.

The other perspective is that more and more boomers are retiring, so it’s opening up opportunities that traditionally haven’t been available to maybe people earlier in their, in their careers or their tenure. And then, this idea of working from home, and the, the premise that we can; (coughs) excuse me, is that we can work from anywhere, and live anywhere. And, so we’re starting to make those adjustments in terms of renegotiating in the relationships with our employers.

The last thing I was gonna add is this idea of the use of social media. More and more employers are looking for… your social media in terms of your presence online in making hiring decisions. So that can both be a friend and an enemy to us. So when I did a lot a career coaching with individuals, one a the things I reinforced with this, was this idea of really payin’ attention to your presence online, and how it can compliment the way that you show up in person. So, anybody else have any other… thoughts as it re, relates to some a these trends that we’re dealing with in terms of career management? And feel free to type in the chat box.

Okay, well let’s continue with our topic. I wanted to talk a little bit about assessing your career. And, think about it this way: We’ve got, um, emerging trends, and external threats that come together. And, it’s, you know, organizations are tryin’ to make sense of that. You think about COVID was the big one. Well, these external trends then relate to how do we adapt our leadership responses. In other words, how do leaders think and, and behave differently in light of these external trends? And then what this points to is enhance, the need for enhanced leadership skills and capabilities. So to be on a leadership path means that we’re really gonna have to think about evolving our self over time, because our organizations really need us to continue to proactively develop skills, and new ways of thinking and acting as a leader. Well one way we can do that is through what, what I call the, the SWOT analysis. And those of you who have done strategic planning in organizations may be familiar with this model. But the premise is that we can think about our careers in terms of four attributes; strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. So those strengths and weaknesses really refer to kind of our internal, our self, or what do we bring that are, you know, strengths and positive attributes, and what are those that are actually weaknesses. We can then think about external opportunities and threats. So the premise is that we can stop and pause and reflect on our careers in terms of these four attributes, and use it to determine what are some a the key priorities in terms of actions that we need to take in terms of moving forward.

So I’d like to give you a sense of the kinds of questions that we can ask ourselves as it relates to the SWOT analysis. So take a look at the, on page 9. For example, when it comes to strengths, we start to think about what do you do better than anyone else. Or what achievements are you must proud of. As an aside, one of the things that I’ve done with people I’ve worked with as a career coach, is have ‘em do what I call the Seven Stories Exercise. To stop and think about seven peak experiences in your professional career you’re most proud of. And the premise is that if you base your future on what you’ve done in the past where you felt alive and engaged and high impact, it’s a great way to set the trajectory. So it may be going back and looking at seven experiences that you’ve had, really peak experiences, and what was the commonality, the common factor about the skills, the impact, the people that you worked with.

The second area, weaknesses. I think a big way to look at this would be, um, question Number 1. What tasks or situations do you usually avoid because you lack confidence? And to me that’s really an important part I think of leader functioning, which is not just the skill to get things done, but it’s also having a sense of confidence in terms of your leadership presence. So to me, that could be a really powerful question to explore.

Number 3 would be the opportunities for, you can leverage for career advancement. There we start to think about, um, things such as emerging trends in the CSD profession, that you could introduce to your organization. So what are some emerging best practices? Or what are some trends internal to your organization? How can you take advantage of them?

And then lastly threats. Things such as, is your organization fachi—facing, uh, budget cuts, or cut, budget cutbacks? If you’re in an organization that for example is a for profit, are you likely or are being targeted for a takeover or merger? I went through the experience when I was an HR director at Price Waterhouse, at the time it merged with Coopers and Lybrand. And so the bringing together these two large consulting firms again was an opportunity and also a threat. Because ultimately as an HR guy, I had to recognize that they were bringing these two firms together to save money on infrastructure. And being in infrastructure, I had to be some a, uh, as, you know, proactive about this idea of anticipating what is the worst case scenario and how would I prepare for it. So I think these questions can really shape and guide your process of, um… conducting a SWOT analysis.

So I’d like to invite you all to complete an activity. For those listening to the recording, if you wanna hit the Stop button and complete the activity, and then join us when you’re ready. So I’d like to hear from you all. For those that have done the SWOT analysis, what are some examples of strengths that you identify in your, you know, in what you bring to your career? So if you wanna type in the chat box, what are some examples of the kinds of strengths that, um, that you think you possess for your careers?

And while I’m waiting, I’ll share a couple of mine. I went back and reflected on this. I’ve got several clients that I’ve had, ASHA for example, and others that I’ve had for nearly 10 years. And to me, it’s a big strength for me in terms of my career, is just he relationship that I’ve formed with ASHA and with other organizations, is such a, an important strength that I think of, that I bring in terms of my work as a, as an entrepreneur, self-employed guy.

Okay, so some of the sharing in the, chat box around strengths. Andrea points stuff out. Points out the idea of relationship building with members. Basically your internal, your, your external customers to the association. Bob points out he’s got experience, diverse experience across various settings. Yeah. And, uh… let’s see. Ta, uh, Tasha toi—points out, uh, thinking relationship building. So your skills at building and sustaining trusting relationships was clearly a strength. And Melissa is very passionate about helping others to be leaders. And I think that’s a really positive attribute, Melissa, in terms of your brand, that, that you’re not only there to sup—serve your patients or clients, but also grow leaders, grow future leaders.

Yeah, I like Erin, what you’ve pointed out about multiple perspectives and how things relate to each other. I think about systems thinking, how things are connected, and the interrelationships.

Okay, great, good examples. How ‘bout weaknesses? Any weaknesses that stand out for you? And again, I’ll, I’ll go first to, just to model the behavior. One of the things I’ve noticed in the last 18 months, how isolated I’ve become professionally. I used to be very engaged with some professional associations, in terms of going to dinners and to conferences. But I think like a lot a people have really, that’s really become very narrow. I’m feeling a bit isolated, so I’m really seeing that I’ve gotta augment and go back and revisit and refresh some relationships that I’ve got. The other thing I found is that lately I’ve been so caught in terms of the transactions and the day to day of work, that I’m not thinking more strategically about the longer term view of my work and the impact that I wanna have. So I’d love to hear other examples in terms of maybe some potential weaknesses.

Yeah, so Bob you, I guess you share kinda my perspective, is not taking the time to reflect and really think strategically like where am I; where am I going. Um, let’s see. Melissa points out, so the idea of having difficult conversations. And then also procrastinate on tasks that I don’t like. Yeah, uh, Melissa, I think your, your pain is many of our pains in terms of that procrastination. And by the way, I’ve heard that described, procrastination, um, the, the, the clinical term for it is self-regulatory failure, where we say something’s important but we don’t act on it. And Tasha points out tryin’ to meet others expectations over my own. So, Tasha, that’s a really interesting one, which is you think about your ability to negotiate outcomes, where the other benefits, but do you benefit at the same time? And really thinking about maybe it’s time to, to explore that. Melissa again points out the, the procrastination. Um, let’s see. Another pers, uh, uh, perfectionist expectations, which can pro, produce stress and avoidance on areas that I dislike, like writing. So Andrea, I’m with you. So one of my strategic coals is to get another book out. Well, to do that basically means I’ve gotta write every day. And it’s funny how suddenly the refrigerator desperately needs to be cleaned out, despite you know my need to write. So I find any excuse to avoid doing what I know I need to do. Okay, good examples.

How ‘bout some a the opportunities? When we think about… think about in your organization, say within the profession, CSD profession. Maybe some of you are in healthcare, some are in schools. But what are some the opportunities that you’re noticing as it relates to potential direction in terms of career?

So a couple things from me. One thing is that I’m starting to shift from doing just executive coaching to doing group coaching. So organizations are tryin’ to save money on people in leader development. So if I can work with a group of eight leaders, versus doing them one on one, I can create much more value and build relationships for those participants, help the organization save money, and also it kind of leverages my time. So instead of doing eight hour long sessions, I can do a may two hour session and really have high impact. So I’m starting to really think about group coaching as a new addition to the services that I offer.

What are some like other examples in terms of opportunities? So Melissa points out this idea in CSD to move toward tele-practice. Boy, exactly. So that’s, in, in fact Melissa, that may be both an opportunity and a threat, depending on where you are with that, uh, that, that idea. But so many different ways to explore it, to do research on it, to clarify how to implement it. Let’s see, and a, for Erin, in education, about using simulation to train students, to really help them build skill and also confidence. Yeah, so Melissa, the opportunity to take advantage of your leadership network. And, and colleagues when looking to grow, uh, personally. So it’s about really leaning into your support network. Starting to think about how to do that.

Okay, well the last box is, is this idea of threats. Those are those scary trends, those, those possibilities, those scenarios that could really trip us up in our careers. And we thought about that. Whether it’s organizational, or within your industry or sector. For me, you know, I, I had this experience years ago where I had one big client, one primary client. And the issues is that if I put all my eggs into one big client, what happens if there’s a, uh, a, a kind of a turndown in the economy; some weakening of the economy; what’s gonna happen there? Or, what I found is, working in healthcare, through COVID, a lot of healthcare for profit organizations really struggled financially. And I found that… one of the keys for me in being self employed is to have diversification of my client, so that maybe when healthcare’s down, associations are up or whatever. So it’s finding more balance. So that to me represented a potential threat.

Would love to see our folks in the classroom. What are some of the threats that you’ve gotta maybe do some fresh thinking on or try to anticipate the implications for your career? Again, if you wanna type those in the chat box, we’d love to see what, what you’ve got.

Yeah, Melissa; so there’s many other companies in emerging, uh, in tele-practice and, and the increase in competition associated with that, right? So it often becomes like who’s gonna get to market first in terms of those fresh ideas. Yeah, Melissa. So, how can we accomplish more with fewer financial resources? And Melissa, I’ve seen working with healthcare, you know, this big push coming out a COVID on productivity almost to an excess, which is really kinda beating managers up to, to become more productive, and do it with fewer financial resources as some had to cut, had to cut back on staff. Let’s see, expanding the numbers of programs in, uh, CSD, and the decline of students coming into college. Right. So that’s AS Bob points out, a kind of, a pretty big strategic issue, you know. So it’s interesting when you think about threats, many times things that, and these trends that appear at least initially as threats, if we get enough time and perspective with threats, many times we can shift our thinking to looking at them as an opportunity. And that’s usually by engaging our, our kind of social resources, our networks, to help think through these threats and look at what’s the silver lining, is there anything in them.

Okay, well, based on a SWOT analysis, we can then use that to identify say, two to three key priorities for our career. And any specific actions that you could take to address those. So again, for example, one a the things I found as I mentioned, because of a weakness, a, to me a big priority in terms of the next few will be, creating the space in my professional practice to do more writing. So for example, I’m starting to look at how can I limit face to face client meetings on Mondays and Fridays so I can use those days for thought leadership, research, and writing. So starting just to, to anticipate that. So again, I would love to hear any examples in the classroom of what this suggests be maybe potential priorities in terms of your career management, career development, moving forward, as we think about going into the new year. So again, a good place to start thinking and starting to prioritize, again, as we start to look at the new year.

Other ideas in terms of potential priorities. What does your SWOT analysis suggest? And we can also think about actions associated with how do we move into pro— into action with these priorities. Okay. We’ll give you all a moment, while we’ll continue the dialogue in just a moment. Oh, Bob, that’s a great one; finding a mentor, which I think is really a big part. And again, we’re gonna be talking about support networks, but it’s really looking at that. Um… and Melissa talks about defining leadership style and conflict management strategy. So addressing that weakness to, to add some more muscle and confidence associated with it. And Andrea, I think that astutely points out this idea of, I think more and more we can’t take resilience for granted. We have to actively invest in ourselves and how we navigate setbacks and stress in building our resilience. Yeah. Erin points out reducing procrastination. Starting to identify times a the day where I work, work like I’m on deadline. Havin’ a clock that helps me work faster. And Erin, when we talk about support networks, that’s, I mean that’s a big part of it. Sometimes to break a procrastination, we’ve gotta get out of ourselves, and ask people to hold us accountable. Who’s gonna challenge us on that procrastination tendency?

Okay, well let’s continue. So we’ve talked about assessment just broad, whole scale assessment in terms of our careers, and startin’ to think about that. So what I’d like to do now is think about this idea of support networks. And this is on page 11 in your workbook. So it builds upon like what many of us assess be, may be a weaker area in our career management approach. I think the, the quote Michelle Genet; she wrote *The Connect Worker*, all about the importance of networking. But I think she says it really nicely. It’s not about just connecting people, it’s really connecting people with people, people with ideas, and people with opportunities. And I have to say that as a, as a entrepreneur, you know, my financial viability is a direct correlation to the quality in a, of my professional network. Is that, you know, people buy from people they trust and know. And so that’s a big part I think of those of us that are self-employed succeed. But I think even those of you in organizations, I think that’s a really key part of not just managing your career, but really attaining your career goals. So I think along three lines, when we look at support networks, which is breadth, depth, and currency. So let me define what those terms mean. When I say breadth, I mean, the idea is that it’s really more than just who do we know within our, our organization. But if you look at the graphic below, the matrix, along the left side of that matrix, would represent the breadth. It could be personal connections. People of course in our organization. People within our profession, or specific industry. So maybe you’re in education or… in healthcare. And then in, within our volunteer context. And then there may be others. For example, um… I, since I worked for Price Waterhouse Coopers for years, there’s actually a huge alumni association. So this would be a former employer, where there’s a lot a rally awesome people out there that were working for the firm as I did, that I can connect with. So really it’s about breadth. And so you think about, it’s, it’s interesting. When I worked with people who had lost their jobs, this was, you know, as I mentioned back after 9/11, what I found is that I couldn’t; I had a number of my clients that actually cried in my office when they were talking about their careers, ‘cause they realized how isolated that, it be pa, it had become. And that the time to build relationships is not when you’re down and out, it’s really to be proactive about it. So, it really reinforced for me, the importance of like the care and feeding of your support network, meaning that it’s like a living entity, and it has to be maintained.

So the other aspect is depth. That’s really the level of you say trust, the level of, um, kind of connection to that person. And we think again in the matrix below, at the low end we’ve got a number of acquaintances in our lives, people that we might of met at a, a ASHA conference or on a committee. You know, we know these folks, and, they could be potential allies of us, or, you know, really support us, but we don’t have a very trusting relationship with them yet. But it’s a place to start. We then think about, um, maybe we advance that. So we develop a relationship with them. As, as an ally, maybe they’ll, they will do, look out for us, we’ll look out for them kind of thing. But it’s still a little bit, you know, arm’s length. But that final column would be the idea of confidants or mentors. Again, the idea being these are people that not only will support us, but you think if they’re in our organization that beyond closed doors, they may not, may advocate on our behalf for us. They’re willing to kinda put their own reputation on the line to support us, and help us get a, you know, a toe hold into an opportunity. So the reality is that we do need a broad swath of people in our, in our professional network that, you know, it takes time and energy to maintain confidante or mentoring relationships. So with, they can’t all be in that category, but we do need a, a nice mix associated with that.

So that’s breadth. We talked about depth. The last thing is currency. You think about ultimately, currency’s really about how current are we in those relationships. And again, as I shared earlier in the SWOT analysis, through the COVID pandemic I’ve lost a lot of my currency because, you know, became like a lot a people, fairly insular in terms of my own career and management practice, so that I’ve lost touch with a lot a people. And I think it’s really important to get current with them in terms of finding new ways to support each other around that. So currency’s a really important part of it. The ultimate test of currency, think about it this way; if you got really good or really bad news, like who would you call? In other words, you know, having current relationships means that, you know, they’re accessible to us. And I find that, you know, unless we’ve invested in that, it’s really hard to sustain that.

Okay, so that’s our, our framework for thinking about this. Let’s think about, uh, let’s take some time and do an activity. And again, if you’re listening to this recording, if you’d like to hit the Pause button, complete the activity, and then rejoin us to hear the, the studio audience. So what I’d like you to do is think about your support net, network. And maybe grab, or drop a name, in each a these boxes associated with these different categories, both breadth and depth. You know, to jut, it really it’s doin’ an inventory of your support network. And, and then, once we do that, then we can look at what are the gap areas. Are there areas where maybe you’ve got all acquaintances, and perhaps lack depth, meaning people that are at an ally or confidante level. Or maybe your network is not very broad. Perhaps it’s only people in your organization that you know and have good relationships with. So this is a way of kind of diagnosing where are you at, and it’s kinda takin’ our SWOT analysis down to the next level.

So I’d love to just ask the question of the studio audi— the audience; when it comes to where’s your support network the strongest, what is, where is that? Is it primarily within your organization, or maybe more professions through ASHA? But what, what do you notice, you know, in terms of completing this assessment about what’s strong in your network? And so feel free to type that in the chat box.

So for me, I found that… my strength right now is really, um… in the capacity of really I think personal relationships. So there’s a number of coaches herein Palm Springs that I’ve been connecting with, who are all doin’ similar work with regard to leadership. And many of these people I would consider to be confidantes and allies, and we really do look out for each other. Say for example I’ve, I know several other coaches that if I get a client opportunity and it’s not a good fit for me, I will pass it along, and vice versa. So I’ve got pretty strong personal relationships. And then, the other thing is I teach as an adjunct, and so it’s another kind of domain. It’s really kind of within an organizational context. I’m developing relationships with other faculty, and those of you that may be doing in academia, to me that is a great network to tap.

Let’s see, so let’s look at some of the, the sharing from folks in the classroom. Melissa points out strong a support network is in personal and professional relationships. That’s great Melissa. Um… Melissa, let’s see… Another Melissa, strongest networks in my organization, so in a, in a university setting. And then profession. So that, that’s great. So it’s really pointing out that the affiliation with both your state ASHA and the national associations, um, would be an important part of it. And then Andrea points out, personal and organizational since working for ASHA. And strengthen allies in confidence. That’s great. So, and Andrea, you’re, knowing you, you’re particularly good about building relationships. And it’s not just the work, but it’s the people doing the work. You just have a, a natural way of connecting with people. Great.

Strong personal relationships. Um, but they can’t help me professionally, because they’re outside my field. Great Melissa. So that kinda points this, this, some opportunities.

So, let me ask you this; If you were to, to maybe to focus on one aspect of breadth or depth, um, in terms of what needs focus, what would that be? So let’s maybe get a couple examples of your intentions around where you need to focus your support network. And Bob, I’m reminding, uh, reminded when we did the SWOT analysis, he pointed out finding a mentor. And I think that’s a good example in terms of that level of depth that you need. Yeah.

Again, I’m finding that, since I’ve been working more and more in healthcare, there’s both national and local organizations, associations associated with it. In fact, during the pandemic, I did some volunteer resilience webinars for healthcare leaders in southern California, as a way to kinda stay in touch with folks. I just need to continue that effort. I find that for me, around networking, I do it once or twice, but the fact is that you’ve gotta do it continually, and, and build, and just build it in, and to, terms of a new habit. Maybe once a week touch base with someone.

Let’s see. Um… and, let’s see, Melissa points out finding a, a leadership, um, volunteer leadership mentor. So those that aspire to grow in the association, how do you get that level of support, you know, with folks maybe that have gone down that path?

Yeah. And so for Andrea, it’s, in, in an industry where focused on building allies and confidantes, and perhaps a mentor. Okay.

And then that last question I would just invite you to reflect on, is this idea, again, who are the, like the top two or three people in your field that are like your go to people? You got really good or really bad news. And, you know, if you can’t answer that, again, it’s suggestive of that’s an opportunity to develop it. So maybe you could become that go to person for others, and they can be that for you. but I think that really is, this is such an important part of building and sustaining resilience. So I think it’s a really relevant topic these days, especially as it relates to the stress we’re all continue to experience with COVID. Okay.

Well let’s continue. So we talked about the SWOT analysis, we did that kind of broad brush assessment. We then zeroed in terms of the support networks and, and starting to think about ways that we can augment that support network. Let’s talk about managing transitions. And so the idea is, for those that, you know, since this is really focused on your leadership career, what do we need to do to, to manage this process of transitions? Well, you know, we think about typically the, the transitions that people make. Going from individual contributor to maybe that first frontline manager or supervisor to maybe middle manager and senior manager. And I think about within the CSD profession, um, you know, the, the transi— transitions that people make. So for example, I did some work with a, a major medical center here in Los Angeles, and was working in one part of the organization and came to, to know an actual former SLP who had worked her way up in the organization, and was now a service line, a senior leader in the organization, would be considered a senior manager in our executive, in charge of a major service line within this healthcare system, it, which included their cancer center. So was really fascinated to come, compare notes in her journey of, you know, to those levels. But we think about a transition, as a definition. So there we’re thinkin’ about, it’s a significant change in a leader’s role. So it’s, could be a promotion. It could be that your role is being restructured, or you’re changing organizations. But I think even for those that may be out on maternity or paternity leave, or some type of a career leave, into be, uh, family medical leave, it’s coming back, and that, that there may be a transition back into the organization, depending on how long you’ve been gone. Leaders, are, leader transitions are really, they’re, they’re at times a great opportunity, but derailment can easily happen. And I’ve worked with leaders for whom they didn’t make the transition gracefully, ended up, uh, suffered some consequences. So I think about that. You know, so much of my work is about prevention. How can we prevent leaders from derailing when it comes to leader transitions? And derailment is this process, or, it’s really about being unexpectedly, or unintendedly like hitting a roadblock, or, or you know, being demoted because of some missteps associated with it. Okay.

So with that in mind, these definitions in mind, let’s think about… some really good research from Harvard and other places, about… well what causes people to, um… to de, to, to derail, especially during transitions. And, you know, this is such an interesting fom—phenomena because there is quite a bit a research that, it’s interesting, some a the stats on this, um, uh, 21% of internal, uh, promotions fail, in a, in a study. Or, there was a study of 150 senior leaders. 30% of external hires failed in their role within the first 18 months. So the data is really striking with regard to derailment. And so you asked the, the, the reason why; why are leaders derailing during transitions? These are really the top six reasons associated with it. So let me introduce these, and just see, get your, your engagement with ‘em.

So the first one is ignoring the need for learning. For really new learning. So many times when leaders maybe step into their new leadership role, or get you know, promoted or hired, um, they tend to focus only on the technical knowledge of, of the role. But what they forget, are things around cultural, political relationships, those things associated with learning about the organization and its context. Where has the organization been, where is it at now, where is it going? Say for example I’m coaching a new leader in healthcare, and one of the things that I’ve invited ‘em to do is to really focus on this idea of learning about what hap—happened before he came into his role, to better understand that. So understanding context is hugely consequential in terms of leader effectiveness in preventing derailment.

Secondly, acting too soon after you get hired or get a promotion. So here’s the scenario. I was brought in to try to save a leader in a healthcare organization who derailed, because he came in with a, a very compelling vision. That’s part of like why they hired him. But he, he immediately came in, and, and tried to slam this vision into place without really getting to know the organization. Almost like this, addressing the, the first issue here. So, the idea is that be; I think in many cases, you’ve gotta earn the right to create change in a new organization or in a new role, by demonstrating that you understand context and what shape the organiza— organization got at that point. So again, there is such a thing as acting too soon.

Thirdly, a big thing that causes, uh, derailment is just unrealistic expectations, um… that lack alignment. So, you know, I’ve seen leaders, or new managers, they have in their mind what success looks like, but they didn’t do a very good job aligning it with their boss, or the boss’s boss, or some a their colleagues, or even getting the input of their direct reports. The other thing is that, you know, they’re tryin’ to solve world hunger within the first 90 days. So, instead of really looking at what does the organization need the most salient priority, they’re, they’re kind of, you know, scatter shot all over the place as it relates to that. So that would be our fourth one. Again, to scatter. Tryin’ to accomplish too much too soon. And it, therefore, nobody really gets a sense of their priorities. So that scatter thing can really, it’s also really exhausting and stressful.

Um, the fifth one, ignoring relationships with peers. More often than not, I find new supervisors or managers, they know they have to look down, and they know they have to look up. But you think about the idea of looking left and right. So many business processes are impacting their organizations, but they don’t look at kind of who’s before them or after them in the value chain. That this can be a really deadly derailer, by ignoring those peer relationships.

The last thing is this idea of cultural missteps. And of all six of these, we find that this is, to me is the, it’s the most critical one, and it’s often what creates the most likely to create derailment. So we think about cultural missteps. So for example, working with a hospital system, the CEO had a very, very strong opinion, that he did not wanna see people using technology or cellphones, even iPads in meetings. So I had to work with a, a new leader of the organization who derailed, because he was violating these unstated rules of the CEO. Um… and nobody told him, nobody told this new leader. But it had real consequences. Or another organization I worked with, the CEO expected that people would leave their doors open, because he was a wanderer. He was like a little bee buzzing around chatting with people and, and other leaders. If your door was closed, he would not open it, or even enquire, he would just create a story in his own mind that you’re not really a team player. Well, if you don’t know what those norms are, you’re likely to step on them. And what I found is that… you think about the body’s immune response, and that when we behave in ways, the culture set is, is taboo. It’s, it’s almost like this, the white blood cells surround us and, and marginalize us to protect the organization. So, so it’s like you get these strong reactions, and it’s where careers are made and broken, quite honestly.

So when it comes to facets of organizational culture, when I go in and do work with organizations, I’m looking at these four things. Certain norms. What are the norms in the organization? Those are patterns of behavior that we often don’t talk about. Things like… no meetings are held without an agenda. Or norms around conflict or… you know, the idea of, um, one norm in a different organization I worked with was that… you, you don’t talk about your accomplishments like you did it all yourself. You always use the We Concept.

Okay, so those are examples of norms. And again, of, unless we ask ‘about ‘em, we don’t know what these things are. Rituals. Rituals are those things we do in group activities. So for example, when I worked for Price Waterhouse, there was a day when all the promotions were announced. And the expectation kind of implicitly was that you better be on that call, and be part of that celebration. And if you weren’t, then you were, maybe viewed as maybe not being a team player.

Other rituals, things like the annual holiday party, the, the company picnic, those things that we do as a group. Working at healthcare. They have a daily huddle. Everybody shows, all the managers show up at the huddle. If you don’t show up, again, they might enquire where you’re at, but more often than not, it’s, creating a story. Again, you’re not part of a team.

Taboos are the things in cultures that if we do this, there are real sanctions for it. For example, challenging, maybe challenging the boss in a meeting with your, your, your team kind of thing. Or, um… I’ve even seen people, the way they’ve clo—uh, the clothing they wear. Working for Price Waterhouse many years ago, it used to be, for example, back in the ‘80s, that men could not wear pink shirts. That was just a taboo. It was kinda like the white shirt environment, and if you wore anything than a white shirt, it was considered a taboo. And it’s fascinating how these things emerge. Anyway, so taboos are somethin’ to think about. Just of the example that I cited, yet if having your door closed on an organization, that the expectation is you keep your door open.

And then symbols. We think about these are inanimate objects that are symbols of the culture. They usually indicate power or status. Where, you know, who gets the big office? Who gets the window?

I worked with a, an executive or a leader who had just been promoted in a financial services company. When she, when she got to a certain level, they moved a big red sofa couch into her office. And she told me, she’s like “Kevin, this means nothing to me. I don’t know why they, they did this.” And I’m like, you know, client, this is it, uh, an, an indication that you’ve reached a certain level. So whether you want it or not, take the sofa. It’s a symbol of power in the organization, fact that you’ve made it. So it’s those external symbols that we look for in terms of who’s got power and how do things get done. Okay.

So that’s just a real quick review. Breakin’ this idea of culture down, and some of the underlying facets. So let’s do an activity, do some reflection on this. So, those that are on the recording, go ahead and stop the recording and then join us at the end, and we’ll kinda debrief this. But, the activity where you’re thinkin’ about these different derailers. What do you think we could do associated with each a these? And I think what we’ll do is we’ll focus on cultural missteps. Let’s just zero in on that one. So I’d love to hear from the folks in the classroom, what could you do to prevent cultural missteps? Let’s say that you get your first leadership position, or you’re brought in new to an organization, or get a promotion. In light of what I described about culture, what are some examples of things that you could do to prevent cultural missteps? And again, feel free to type in the chat box. And we’ll take just a minute and see what you, you come up with.

So this idea of preventing derailment by better understanding the organization’s culture. How do you do that? Bob points out about listening, observing, and asking. Yeah. What are some a the kinds of questions you think you might ask? This kinda gets back to this idea of the need for new learning. But what would you ask people when you’re tryin’ to uncover some a these norms and rituals or taboos? What would we ask? Yeah, right. Is something, oh, is that okay here? Right? yeah. Erin points out seeking out opportunities to meet new people and work with people outside the immediate circle. That’s right, so you’re gettin’ exposure and understanding kind of different context. That’s right, um-hm. Yeah. Yeah. Expectations from managers. Melissa, I’ve heard that phrase in terms of who gets ahead in this organization. What are the attributes of managers that really do succeed and kinda like have kind of an accelerated path to the top? What do they do? How do they prepare for it? That’s right. Well, you know, associated with cultural missteps, but also the need for learning, new learning, you might ask questions about the past, the present, and the future. In other words, what have been some significant milestones in the history of this organization I should know about? Or, I’m takin’ over for a new manager. What did the last manager do that worked or didn’t work? You know. Or in the present, what really are our key priorities right now? How do we implement change around here? Um… what do we do in conflict? So if we have differences of opinion, what is typically done around that? Or we can ask about the future. What, what are the goals of the organization? What are some of the emerging threats that you all have thought about? So you can think about questions to understand culture in terms of past, present, and future. So not only will this help prevent cultural missteps, but also addresses the need for new learning about the culture. Yeah. Let’s see, Melissa points out, investigate the diversity of your team and understand how they’re all different before engaging in conversations that effect possible systemic change. That’s right, so giving them a voice, and tryin’ to learn a little bit about that. So I think those are great strategies.

Couple of the things; so acting too soon. Again, going back to that derailment. Doin’ a SWOT analysis of your function is a great way to, to learn a little bit about well what’s working what’s not. So, that to me is a great strategy.

Thirdly unrealistic ex, expectations. I think it gets back to identifying who are my stakeholders, including my boss. And maybe I need to go talk to them about what does success mean for them in my role, and try to clarify like what is their ag—uh, interests. Too scattered. It’s really thinkin’ about your tendency to be, you know, scattered and lack focus. So I think it’s really this idea of, um, setting strategic goals, and aligning those with your boss that can really help you keep focus. It also speaks to the whole emotional intelligence, which is maybe it’s really looking at your own tendency to ske—to, to be scattered, to be too flexible, to, to be too shiny object oriented, and really start to think about how can I focus, and focus on these key priorities. And ignoring your relationships with peers. Really, it’s about, I start to think about not only meeting your peers, but starting to look at what of their interest, and how can you support them. What are their goals, what are their interests? So it really comes down from the place of power, which is like, you know, how can you help me, how can I help you. So I think that’s a great way to balance the equation. Great.

Okay, well we’ve got just a couple minutes left. I do wanna just tie things together with a summary, and then we’ll talk about next steps with resources. So, the bottom line is we talked about is that successful leaders really do proactively manage and evolve their careers. And they grow to that, that, those stages of career management that starts with assessment, and doing some research, setting some goals, and then of course, some evaluation. Support networks. It’s really about creating that psychological safety net, to really help you achieve and sustain success over time. We talked about the importance of assessing the health and wellness of that support network. So leaders of transitions, it’s a time a great opportunity, but also time of risk. So really the key is to think about how do you prevent derailment when you get into a new leadership position or get promoted, and try to find out ways, especially around culture and understanding the culture. So the idea of stepping into a leadership position, you know there’s a, there’s a heightened level of scrutiny of you to behave in ways that are kind of aligned with the culture and what it says is important for leaders to do. Okay. So with that, we can then just look at a couple resources. For those that are in transition, a couple books do stand out. This idea of the first 90 days. Michael Watkins did a really wonderful book about strategies for getting up to speak in a new role. So whether you’ve been promoted or brought in from the outside. Another really action oriented one is this idea, um, the last one of the new leader’s hundred day action plan. Okay. Well, just it’s been great connecting with you all. I’ll toss to Andrea to tie us together.

**ANDREA FALZARANO:** Thank you Kevin. And thank you everyone for joining us. This webinar is part of a series in ASHA’s Leadership Academy. For more information, including information on continuing education credits, visit [www.asha.org](http://www.asha.org), and search Leadership Academy. We also encourage you to join the ASHA community focused on leadership topics. Go to asha.org, and search Leadership Academy. You will find a link to the online community on this page. This concludes the ASHA leadership Academy Webinar, Managing Your Leadership Career. Goodbye from the ASHA National Office.