

Rachelle Strawther, Ed.D., M.A.

Speaker • Coach • Facilitator • Leadership Consultant



Dr. Rachelle Strawther is a life-long student and practitioner of leadership. As the Director of Leadership Training and Development for Gonzaga University's School of Leadership Studies, she designs and leads executive leadership programs on topics such as emotional intelligence, conflict resolution, innovation, and interpersonal communication. An engaging and candid speaker, Rachelle has given presentations at the Boeing Company, the International Leadership Association, TEDx Kisumu, the National Association of Sports Officials, and many other organizations. She is also a sought-out storyteller, speaking at the inaugural event for *Pivot* (a live storytelling event in Spokane), the 2019 Spokane Women's March, and Gonzaga University's *Story Slam*.

Rachelle graduated with a degree in Anthropology, earned a Master's in Communication and Leadership, and completed a Doctorate in Educational Leadership. In addition to her full-time role in leadership development, Rachelle has taught at the undergraduate and graduate level and recently served a term as President of the Staff Assembly, representing more than 800 employees at Gonzaga. Prior to coming to Gonzaga, Rachelle worked in Kisumu, Kenya, for eight years, first implementing community-based programs for women and children affected by HIV and later leading a regional sports-for-development organization serving 3000 youth. She continues to stay connected to this community by managing the Kalaki Fund, a scholarship program for disadvantaged youth that she co-founded in 2009.



Rachelle's approach to speaking and teaching revolves around authenticity, humility and humor. Rather than canned, one-size-fits-all speeches, Rachelle engages audiences through, yet honest and often self-deprecating reflections of her leadership failures and lessons. She connects deeply with diverse audiences in various ways, whether that be sharing stories to elementary school students or engaging engineers in discussions about workplace challenges. Her guiding leadership mantra can be encapsulated in this African proverb: "If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together."

Testimonials

“Rachelle is electric! Instantaneously, Rachelle commands attention and grabs the audience while captivating their focus. Her stories endearingly opening up hearts and expand people's minds while allowing them to privately explore their soul...Rachelle is a ‘must-have’ speaker.”

-Latisha D. Taylor
CEO/Founder Health Measured.net Ventures
Global Partnerships Director, Women's Entrepreneurship
Day Organization (WeDO) @ United Nations



“During the International Leadership Association conference in Brussels, I stepped into a workshop that was led by Rachelle Strawther... Her ability to share her personal experiences, interact with a globally diverse audience, and provide the participants with time to process and build relationships generated a more relevant and powerful learning experience for all involved.”

-Steadman Harrison
Senior Leadership Solutions Associate, Geneva Center for Security Policy/Center
for Creative Leadership

"Rachelle is a very engaging speaker on topics that are so relevant to today's businesswoman. She is honest about real life issues, which resonated with me as a participant in her sessions."

-Krystal Manalo
Supply Chain Operations Project Manager, Boeing Commercial Airplanes

“A law enforcement audience is often difficult to captivate. Rachelle effectively rose to that challenge and provided thought-provoking concepts applied to real life challenges faced by supervisory personnel. The resulting experience was insightful, engaging and benefited my group immensely by providing them with new tools to become not only better managers but effective leaders for their respective units.”

-Keith Weis
Regional Head of a Law Enforcement Agency

“Rachelle’s presentation touched the hearts and minds of our class participants professionally and personally... She was engaging, enthusiastic and inspiring. She skillfully communicated, shared the importance of collaboration, had an inspiring message, and embodied servant leadership.”

-Sheryl McGrath
President, Washington Agriculture and Forestry Education Foundation

“Rachelle brings vivid story telling abilities to her speaking engagements and backs these stories with a strong understanding of how leadership enables organizational success.

Rachelle is an asset to anyone bringing leadership training to their organization and I highly recommend her to help you shape your leadership discussion.”

-Mike Gribner

Regional Administrator, Washington Department of Transportation

“For our 2019 National Association of Sports Officials (NASO) Summit, Rachelle presented on the subject of emotional intelligence and why it is important for sports officials. Her presentation grabbed the audience’s attention, laid out key messages they could take away, and engaged attendees through visuals, her humor and how she interacted with those in attendance. I was not only tremendously impressed with the tempo, subject matter and Rachelle’s command, but also how her points build leadership skills for others. Over the two days that followed, I received multiple compliments on her presentation. Rachelle brought a leadership outside perspective to our Summit, and I’m confident she could do so for any number of professions. I highly recommend her as a speaker on leadership issues.”



-Dave Simon

Associate Editor, NASO and *Referee* magazine

Examples of Rachelle's Presentations



Title: *Thinking Differently, Listening Intentionally*

Description: Discussions of diversity typically focus on ethnicity, gender, age and other identifiers that are often visible by looking around a room at a company meeting. However, in this talk, we'll discuss the importance of recognizing differences that are less obvious and require exploration to distinguish. Through interactive activities, we'll learn about different perspectives and how to adapt to various styles of thinking and communicating. Most importantly, we'll discuss how listening with intention and empathy creates a workforce that can better foster difference and diversity.

Title: *The Best Mistakes I Ever Made: How Failing Forward Changed My Lens on Leadership*

Description: Like most of us, my best – and most difficult – leadership lessons didn't come from reading textbooks or sitting in a classroom; rather, they came from personal failure. Through anecdotes and audience interaction, I'll facilitate a reflection on universal leadership principles, learned through challenges I experienced while working in a vastly different culture for nearly a decade. Most importantly, I'll discuss the concept of 'failing forward' and examine how to embrace failure as a means of future success.

Title: *The Power of Shame*

Shame is a powerful emotion. It's that voice in our head that tells us we're not good enough, that we're not deserving of the good things that happen to us. While it can drive achievement, it can also hold us back. It can keep us from saying 'yes' to new opportunities, lock us to past experiences (whether we are aware of it or not), and can compel us to carry burdens that should not be ours to carry. But, as strong as shame may be, it doesn't have to anchor or define us. During this interactive presentation, we'll talk about how shame shows up in our lives (particularly in relationship to gender), how to disarm it, and how to communicate without shaming others.

Topics that Rachelle addresses include:

- Servant Leadership
- Emotional Intelligence
- Giving and Receiving Feedback
- Women in Leadership
- Storytelling for Leadership
- Building Effective Teams
- 360 Assessments
- Learning from Failure
- Diversity
- Intercultural Competence
- Adaptive Leadership
- Innovation & Design Thinking
- Organizational Change Management



Click [HERE](#) to view video clips of Rachelle speaking.

Click [HERE](#) to read an article about one of Rachelle's keynotes.

Learn more at <https://www.bestselfconsulting.net/>