



## **Act Like a Leader - Business Offsite Workshop Agenda**

The purpose of this workshop is to experience how using personas can help organizations build empathy and communicate better. Participants will have the opportunity to “hide” behind a persona in order to discuss contentious issues and give difficult feedback. They will also use the personas to communicate their own preferences and understand those of their colleagues. Finally, they will adopt a persona in order to further their own communication skills and to expand their perspectives.

Learning objectives:

- Depersonalize communications in order to make difficult conversations easier
- Create more flexibility in interpersonal skills
- Build empathy about others’ priorities and motivations
- Adopt the talents of others to increase your own repertoire of behaviors



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### **Full Day Agenda**

#### **Introduction**

We introduce the concept and its roots in emotional intelligence, neuroscience, and behavioral psychology.

**Be a pundit** – Exercise to discuss candid opinions freely

This large or small group exercise explores the “Stephen Colbert effect” when using a character gives you permission socially to act in ways that are not part of your norms. Participants experience how personas can depersonalize and defuse discussions of highly charged and contentious issues.

**Who wears it better?** - Exercise to provide personal feedback in an impersonal manner. This exercise in pairs gives participants the chance to give and receive very personal feedback (on their appearance) in a fun and depersonalized manner by taking on the persona of some very fashion-forward characters.

**Most like me** – Exercise to provide a method of easily understanding and communicating personality, values, and priorities. In this small group exercise, participants choose personas who are most like them as well the personas they would most and like to work with. The small group discusses their choices and the conflicts that may arise as well as the perspectives they may be missing.

**I’m not myself today** – Exercise to take on a different perspective to improve creativity and empathy. Participants will pair up in order to portray a persona that is least like them with help of coaching from someone like that persona. Once they are comfortable, they will participant in a small group brainstorming exercise in order to practice not being themselves and determine small habits that will help them become more effective.