



SPEAKER PORTFOLIO

Inspiring leaders. Empowering organizations. Igniting what's possible.

Our Philosophy

At Zealyst, we believe every workplace has the potential to inspire extraordinary people, cultivate exceptional cultures, and create lasting impact.

Zeal emerges when people experience **belonging**, understand the **purpose** behind what they do, and have the opportunity to **grow**. Together, these experiences inspire people to contribute with confidence, collaborate with intention, and fully engage in the success of their teams and organizations.

That belief guides everything we do. We exist to help organizations create the conditions where zeal can thrive.



The Zealyst Speaking Experience

Every Zealyst speaking engagement is intentionally designed around your audience, objectives, and event goals. Whether you're planning a keynote, breakout session, panel discussion, or interactive workshop, each presentation is customized to address the unique needs of your audience while delivering meaningful engagement, actionable takeaways, and lasting value.

Our speakers do more than deliver presentations. They spark meaningful conversations, challenge perspectives, and equip participants with ideas they can immediately apply. Every session is designed to cultivate belonging, clarify purpose, inspire growth, and create lasting momentum long after the event concludes.



Belonging

Creating cultures where people and teams thrive

1. Belonging Builds Better Teams

Strong teams don't happen by chance. They are built through trust, meaningful relationships, and a shared commitment to one another. This session explores how creating a culture of belonging strengthens resilience, deepens collaboration, and empowers teams to navigate change with confidence. Participants discover practical strategies for fostering psychological safety, strengthening communication, and creating an environment where every individual feels valued and connected. Attendees leave equipped to cultivate belonging, inspire stronger teamwork, and build resilient teams that thrive through every challenge.

Presented by: Carolyn Reeves

Designed For: Executive Teams, People Managers, and Leaders at Every Level

2. Leading Women. Expanding Possibility.

When women thrive, organizations thrive. This session explores the opportunities, challenges, and leadership experiences that shape women's professional journeys while highlighting the power of authentic leadership, mentorship, and sponsorship. Participants gain practical strategies to build confidence, expand their influence, and advocate for themselves and others. Through meaningful conversation and real-world insights, attendees leave inspired to cultivate inclusive workplaces, elevate emerging leaders, and create pathways where women can grow, lead, and ignite what's possible.

Presented by: Tracie Kenyon, Ciara LaVelle, Jill Nowacki, or Katy Zaleski

Designed For: Emerging Leaders, People Managers, and Executive Teams

3. Creating Cultures Where People Thrive

Culture isn't defined by mission statements. It's created through the everyday behaviors, conversations, and decisions that shape the employee experience. This session helps leaders understand how trust, collaboration, and psychological safety fuel engagement, innovation, and organizational performance. Participants assess the health of their culture, identify opportunities for growth, and explore practical strategies to strengthen communication, encourage accountability, and cultivate environments where people and performance thrive. Attendees leave equipped to intentionally shape a culture that inspires connection, purpose, and lasting success.

Presented by: Carolyn Reeves and Jill Nowacki

Designed For: CEOs, Executive Teams, and HR & Talent Leaders

4. Emotional Intelligence: The Leadership Advantage

Exceptional leadership begins with self-awareness. Emotional intelligence is one of the strongest predictors of leadership success, influencing how we communicate, build relationships, navigate challenges, and inspire others. In this session, participants explore the core components of emotional intelligence and discover practical ways to strengthen self-awareness, empathy, resilience, and intentional communication. Through reflection, discussion, and actionable tools, attendees gain strategies to enhance collaboration, build stronger relationships, and lead with greater confidence and impact.

Presented by: Tracie Kenyon

Designed For: Leaders at Every Level

Purpose

Leading with intention and meaningful impact

1. Authentic Leadership That Inspires

Leadership is at its best when authenticity and purpose work together. This session helps leaders reconnect with what drives them while aligning their values, actions, and leadership philosophy to inspire trust, strengthen relationships, and create meaningful impact. Through reflection, discussion, and practical application, participants discover how authentic leadership cultivates belonging, deepens engagement, and empowers others to do their best work. Attendees leave with renewed clarity, greater confidence, and actionable strategies to lead with intention and ignite what's possible for themselves, their teams, and their organizations.

Presented by: Carl Clark, Tracie Kenyon, Jill Nowacki, Carolyn Reeves, or Katy Zaleski

Designed For: Leaders at Every Level

2. Best Practices for Board Effectiveness and Governance

Exceptional organizations are guided by boards that lead with vision, purpose, and strategic focus. This session explores the principles of effective governance while providing practical strategies to strengthen board engagement, clarify roles and responsibilities, and foster meaningful partnership between boards and executive leadership. Participants discover how future-focused governance aligns strategy, culture, and mission to create lasting impact. Attendees leave with actionable insights to help their boards lead with confidence, strengthen organizational alignment, and ignite what's possible.

Presented by: Tracie Kenyon, Jill Nowacki, or Katy Zaleski

Designed For: Boards, CEOs, and Executive Teams



3. Hiring for Purpose and Potential

Attracting exceptional talent starts long before an offer is made. It begins with creating an experience that reflects your culture, purpose, and leadership. This session explores today's evolving talent landscape and the strategies organizations can use to recruit, engage, and retain purpose-driven professionals. Participants discover how leadership, culture, and candidate experience influence hiring success while gaining practical tools to build a people-first recruitment strategy that attracts top talent and supports long-term organizational growth.

Presented by: Carl Clark or Jill Nowacki

Designed For: CEOs, Executive Teams, and HR & Talent Leaders

4. Success Isn't Linear: Finding Direction in the Detours

Leadership journeys are rarely predictable. The moments that challenge us often become the ones that shape us most. This session explores how resilience, adaptability, and purpose transform setbacks into opportunities for growth. Participants learn how to reframe obstacles as valuable learning experiences, stay connected to their purpose during times of uncertainty, and move forward with confidence when the path isn't clear. Through authentic stories, practical insights, and meaningful reflection, attendees leave inspired to embrace change, grow through every season, and define success on their own terms.

Presented by: Carl Clark or Ciara LaVelle

Designed For: Emerging Leaders and People Managers

Growth

Preparing extraordinary leaders for what's next

1. Navigating Leadership Without Losing Yourself

The higher you lead, the more leadership becomes about people. Success isn't defined by strategy alone. It's built through trust, influence, meaningful relationships, and the ability to inspire others toward a shared vision. This session helps leaders successfully navigate the transition from individual contributor to people leader while staying true to who they are. Participants explore how to balance accountability with empathy, communicate with clarity, and lead in ways that elevate both people and performance. Through practical insights and real-world experiences, attendees leave equipped to build stronger relationships, strengthen their leadership influence, and ignite what's possible within their teams.

Presented by: Tracie Kenyon, Jill Nowacki, Carolyn Reeves, or Katy Zaleski

Designed For: Emerging Leaders and People Managers



2. Coach-ish Leadership: Leading Through Questions, Not Answers

The most effective leaders don't have all the answers. They create the conversations that help others discover their own. This session explores how adopting a coaching mindset transforms everyday interactions into opportunities for growth, accountability, and leadership development. Participants learn practical techniques for asking better questions, listening with intention, and empowering others to think critically, solve challenges, and take ownership of their success. Attendees leave with actionable coaching tools that strengthen relationships, accelerate development, and create teams that thrive.

Presented by: Tracie Kenyon, Jill Nowacki, Carolyn Reeves, or Katy Zaleski

Designed For: Executive Teams and People Managers

3. Leading Through Change and Uncertainty

Today's leaders are navigating constant change, increasing complexity, and evolving expectations. This highly adaptable session equips participants with the mindset, strategies, and practical tools to lead with confidence when the path isn't always clear. Whether the focus is building personal resilience, strengthening decision-making in ambiguity, or leading teams through uncertainty, each experience is tailored to address the unique needs of your audience and organization. Participants leave with actionable insights to navigate change with clarity, build trust, strengthen resilience, and create momentum through every stage of transformation.

Presented by: Tracie Kenyon, Jill Nowacki, or Carolyn Reeves

Designed For: Executive Teams and People Managers

4. Lead Through Your Strengths

The most impactful leaders understand what they naturally do best and intentionally apply those strengths to elevate others. This highly adaptable session helps participants uncover their unique talents and explore how they influence communication, decision-making, collaboration, and leadership. Whether the focus is individual leadership development, team effectiveness, or building high-performing teams, participants gain practical strategies to leverage their strengths with greater intention, strengthen relationships, and maximize their impact.

Presented by: Carolyn Reeves

Designed For: Leaders at Every Level

Format: Workshop Only

5. The Conflict Advantage: Turning Tension into Trust

Healthy conflict isn't something to avoid. It's an opportunity to strengthen relationships, spark innovation, and build stronger teams. This session helps participants reframe conflict as a catalyst for growth by exploring how different conflict styles influence communication, collaboration, and decision-making. Through practical strategies and meaningful discussion, attendees learn how to navigate difficult conversations with empathy, remain curious through disagreement, and transform tension into trust and alignment. Participants leave equipped to foster psychological safety, encourage diverse perspectives, and create a culture where productive conflict leads to stronger outcomes.

Presented by: Tracie Kenyon, Jill Nowacki, or Carolyn Reeves

Designed For: Executive Teams and People Managers

6. Resilient by Design: Building Balance & Inclusion with the Wheel of Life

Resilience begins with understanding the whole person. Using the Wheel of Life framework, this interactive session helps participants evaluate the areas that influence personal well-being, leadership effectiveness, and long-term success. Through guided reflection and meaningful discussion, attendees explore how balance, self-awareness, and intentional habits strengthen resilience both personally and professionally. Participants leave with practical strategies to navigate change, protect their well-being, and build sustainable habits that support continued growth, connection, and leadership impact.

Presented by: Jill Nowacki or Carolyn Reeves

Designed For: Leaders at Every Level

Format: Workshop Only

7. Succession Planning: Preparing Leaders for What's Next

Leadership transitions are inevitable, but intentional succession planning ensures organizations are ready for the future. This session explores how succession planning becomes a strategic advantage by strengthening leadership pipelines, preserving organizational culture, and creating long-term continuity. Participants learn practical approaches to identifying and developing future leaders, aligning succession strategies with organizational goals, and building confidence through intentional talent development. Attendees leave with actionable tools to prepare for leadership transitions, strengthen organizational resilience, and develop the next generation of leaders.

Presented by: Tracie Kenyon, Jill Nowacki, Carolyn Reeves, or Katy Zaleski

Designed For: Boards, CEOs, Executive Teams, and HR & Talent Leaders

8. Growing Leaders from Within: Practical Strategies for Developing Your Team

The strongest organizations don't just hire great leaders. They intentionally develop them from within. This session explores practical strategies for identifying emerging talent, creating meaningful development opportunities, and building a culture where leadership growth becomes part of everyday work. Participants learn how to align employee development with organizational goals, create clear pathways for growth, and foster accountability, engagement, and continuous learning. Attendees leave with actionable tools to strengthen their leadership pipeline, retain top talent, and unlock the potential that already exists within their organization.

Presented by: Carl Clark, Jill Nowacki, or Carolyn Reeves

Designed For: Executive Teams, People Managers, and HR & Talent Leaders

9. Next in Line: Preparing for Your Next Leadership Opportunity

Leadership growth doesn't happen by chance. It happens through intentional development, meaningful contributions, and a commitment to continuous learning. This session empowers emerging leaders to take ownership of their career journey by building credibility, expanding their influence, and demonstrating readiness for the next opportunity. Participants explore practical strategies for communicating their value, strengthening key leadership skills, and aligning their growth with organizational goals. Attendees leave with a personalized action plan to confidently pursue new opportunities, elevate their impact, and continue growing as leaders.

Presented by: Carl Clark, Ciara LaVelle, or Carolyn Reeves

Designed For: Emerging Leaders

10. Unlocking Performance Through Leadership

Exceptional performance starts with exceptional leadership. Productivity isn't driven by processes alone. It's shaped by how leaders communicate, coach, and empower their people every day. This session helps leaders evaluate their approach, uncover the behaviors that most influence engagement and performance, and identify opportunities to better support their teams. Participants explore the difference between leadership intention and employee experience while learning practical strategies for delivering meaningful feedback, developing talent, and focusing on work that creates the greatest impact. Attendees leave with actionable tools to cultivate engaged teams, elevate performance, and create lasting organizational success.

Presented by: Carolyn Reeves

Designed For: Executive Teams and People Managers

Meet Your Zealysts



Jill Nowacki

Co-Founder & President/CEO

Jill Nowacki has worked in the credit union movement since 2001, serving in leadership roles at credit unions and trade associations before co-founding Zealyst. She blends experience in communication, HR, and strategy with a passion for helping organizations realize their potential through people. Jill partners with boards and executives to strengthen leadership pipelines, align culture, and enhance engagement. Her work centers on creating workplaces where authenticity drives innovation and inclusion. Jill holds a Master's in Public Administration from the University of Montana, a Bachelor of Arts in Communication from Carroll College, and certifications as a Certified Association Executive (CAE) and International Credit Union Development Educator (I-CUDE).



Tracie Kenyon

Co-Founder & Executive Development Partner

With nearly four decades of experience, Tracie Kenyon is a respected credit union leader and executive coach. After 22 years as CEO of the Montana Credit Union League, she co-founded Zealyst to help leaders unlock their potential. Her approach - rooted in empathy, accountability, and strategy, supports growth and organizational transformation. Tracie has chaired national boards and earned top industry honors, including the Eagle and Eugene Farley Leadership Awards. She holds a Master's in Professional Communication, a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology, and credentials as a Professional Certified Coach (PCC), Certified Association Executive (CAE), and Credit Union Development Educator (CUDE).



Carl Clark

Talent Experience Manager

Carl Clark has worked in the credit union industry since 2008, bringing expertise in marketing, governance, and community development. At Zealyst, he leads executive searches and recruitment strategies that help organizations attract mission-driven leaders. Carl believes credit unions should reflect the communities they serve, and he works to build leadership teams that advance this goal. An active mentor and speaker, he has served in credit union chapter leadership and community programs. Carl holds an MBA from Pfeiffer University, a bachelor's degree from Murray State University, and certifications as a Credit Union Development Educator (CUDE) and Certified Credit Union Financial Counselor (CCUFC).



Ciara LaVelle

Vice President, Strategic Growth

Ciara LaVelle is a people-centered leader with more than a decade of experience driving growth and inclusion in the credit union industry. At Zealyst, she leads initiatives that strengthen partnerships, expand organizational reach, and align business strategy with the firm's mission of helping credit unions build extraordinary leaders and stronger organizations. Ciara's expertise spans leadership, operations, and strategic planning, with a focus on connecting strong culture to sustainable performance. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Organizational Leadership from Duquesne University, is a Credit Union Development Educator (CUDE), and earned a certificate in Advancing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the Workplace from Georgetown University.



Carolyn Reeves

Leadership & Organizational Development Consultant

Carolyn Reeves brings more than 19 years of credit union experience helping leaders and organizations reach their full potential. She partners with boards and executive teams to strengthen leadership, align strategy, and build healthy, high-performing cultures. Previously, Carolyn served as Vice President of Learning and Talent Development at SchoolsFirst Federal Credit Union, where she led enterprise-wide talent and engagement strategies. She is an ICF Associate Certified Coach (ACC), Senior Professional in Human Resources (SPHR), Gallup-Certified CliftonStrengths Coach, and Credit Union Development Educator (CUDE).



Katy Zaleski

Leadership & Organizational Development Consultant

Katy Zaleski has over a decade of experience leading initiatives that strengthen organizational culture and professional development. At Zealyst, she advances strategies that enhance employee engagement, leadership growth, and organizational effectiveness. From front-line operations and HR leadership to IT systems, training, and financial education, Katy's career has given her a broad perspective on how people, process, and purpose come together to drive success. As a Certified Coach through the Association for Talent Development (ATD) and a Credit Union Development Educator (CUDE), Katy brings a people-centered approach to leadership and development.