



8:00

## Speed Networking

Start the morning by jumping into the Speed Networking area, where you'll meet fellow communicators and chat for up to three minutes at a time.

8:30

## Opening Keynote

### **Crisis Management: Communicating in and After a Disaster**

*Featuring: Jacqueline Charles, Journalist & Caribbean Correspondent, Miami Herald*

Natural disasters. Global pandemics. Economic instability. Civilian kidnapping. Political assassination. If there is a crisis in Haiti or the Caribbean, Jacqueline Charles has been boots on the ground humanizing the stories for the crisis that have unfortunately become the norm. Recognized as "Haiti's Ambassador to the world" by former U.S. President Bill Clinton, Charles is a Pulitzer Prize finalist and Emmy-award winning foreign correspondent for the Miami Herald. In this session, you'll hear how Charles navigates and communicates during and after a crisis.

9:20

## Breakout Session #1

### **Cultivating Employee Communication & Connection**

*Featuring: Maren McGrane, Vice President, Culture & Strategic Initiatives, Sonic Automotive, Inc.*

Engaging and strengthening connections with and among employees through strategic internal communication techniques and programs is crucial to a company's success. The session will teach you how to engage employees, deliver key messages to employees, and leverage business partners to support internal communications.

### **The Power of Brand Journalism: Maximizing Your Story with Traditional Media and Brand Journalism Strategies**

*Featuring: Ashley Brown, Clinical Communications Senior Strategist, Atrium Health & Carly Wooten, Owner of Wooten PR*

Great stories can resonate with your audience through traditional media, but how can you take that content and leverage it beyond that tactic? In this session, learn tips for telling your story through various platforms to advance your organization's goals. Additionally, walk away with ideas to develop and repurpose content to maximize audience reach, tips for telling your organization's narrative through various platforms, and an understanding of the importance of measurement and outcomes to show return on investment (ROI).

### **Networking: It's Not About Getting a Job; It's About Getting Ahead**

*Featuring: Ray Jones, Principal of Media Ink Communications*

Networking is an indispensable tool for career advancement and ongoing success, not a short-term tool for finding a job. This session discusses the importance of investing the time to continue to build a network after landing a job and doing the work necessary to maintain that network. Be inspired by personal anecdotes that reveal the difference creativity can make in achieving success.

10:00

## Connect Over Coffee & Speed Networking

Choose between having transparent conversations in small group sessions focused on internal communications, media relations, social media, diversity and inclusion, and more or meet communications professionals one-on-one in speed networking.



10:20

## Breakout Session #2

### **Practicing PR Across the Narratives: Race, Gender and Identity**

*Featuring: Karen Lindsey, PhD, Assistant Professor of Strategic Communication, Elon University*

Today's PR practitioners are expected to authentically communicate and understand the intersections of race, gender, and other identity traits. This session will encourage PR leaders and practitioners to consider their approaches and techniques to internal communication to enhance external reputation and retention of an ever-changing, diverse workforce for both their organizations and their clients.

### **Everyday Heroes: Addressing Taboo Subjects & Fundraising During a Pandemic**

*Featuring: Rachel Sutherland, CEO of Rachel Sutherland Communications*

Learn how Rachel Sutherland Communications worked with Pat's Place, Charlotte's only child advocacy center, to undertake its first public awareness and fundraising campaign, Everyday Heroes, during the pandemic. In this session, you'll learn how to address uncomfortable topics, meet people where they are, and build relationships with the media you can nurture and grow.

### **Should Your Organization Start a Podcast? A Case Study of How An Engineering Firm Embraced Podcasting as an Internal and External Communication Tool**

*Featuring: Julie Smith, Marketing Communications Manager, Engineering Consulting Services (ECS) & Kristen Stegall, CEO & Podcast Producer, Novice Studios*

Podcasting is a communication channel that could benefit every company. Podcasts can build trust between leaders and employees in an organization, and trust is the key to influence. Using the Coffee Talk: From the Ground Up podcast started in 2021 by Engineering Consulting Services as a case study, this session will share insights into why podcasting is an engaging communication tool, how to start your own podcast, and the benefits ECS has already experienced in its first year.

### **How to Effectively Leverage Your Time and Accomplishments**

*Featuring: Lauren Sweeney, Vice President of Business Development, Rise Up For You*

As we navigate this new landscape with COVID-19, we find ourselves working from home, managing remote teams, and trying to be productive while surrounded by distractions. There's no doubt there's more to manage now more than ever. So how do we do it? In this session, you'll learn the key factor to planning and managing your time and actually sticking to the plan! Additionally, you'll learn how to track your accolades and grow your professional confidence for success.

10:55

## Closing Keynote

### **The Power of Heart First Communications**

*Featuring: David Grossman, ABC, APR, Fellow PRSA, CSP, Founder & CEO of The Grossman Group*

After two years of unprecedented change brought on by the pandemic and social unrest, we're in a time that calls for a new level of inspired leadership, what David Grossman defines as a "Heart First" approach. Leading with the heart first is about championing empathy, humanity, and authenticity to become a better leader and build genuine connections. This session is for any leader who wishes to make a real difference for their teams, bring more of who they truly are to the workplace, and help others bring their best selves to work, too.

11:45

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Wrap up your morning by heading back into the Speed Networking area to connect with fellow communicators and chat for up to three minutes at a time.