When the Algorithm Becomes the Advisor: Tackling Impostor Syndrome in AI-Enabled Campus Health Leadership

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About the speaker

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20+ years in healthcare operations and leadership

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Research focus: AI-enabled leadership confidence

Note:

This session shares practice-informed leadership insights drawn from healthcare workforce transformation and emerging research on impostor phenomenon.

These insights are educational in nature and not derived from IRB-reviewed research.

Interactive polling will be conducted using Slido:

- Participation is voluntary
- Responses are anonymous
- Results will be displayed in aggregate only

Agenda

- Introduction of topic
- Objective 1 – Defining impostor syndrome
- Objective 2 – Leadership behaviors and AI-adoption
- Objective 3 – The Confidence Loop framework
- Closing thoughts/Q&A

Why this conversation matters now

Campus health is entering a new era:

- AI-assisted clinical decision tools
- predictive analytics for student health
- digital triage and population health systems
- AI-supported learning and workforce development

Leadership expectations are increasing rapidly.
Psychological readiness often lags behind.

The Leadership Confidence Gap

Many leaders report:

- uncertainty about AI decision support
- fear of making the wrong call
- concern about ethical responsibility
- feeling “behind” technologically

Capability is growing quickly.
Confidence is not always keeping pace.

Objective 1

Identify cognitive, emotional, and organizational drivers of impostor syndrome

What is impostor syndrome?

Also known as impostor phenomenon, it is the internal experience of feeling intellectually fraudulent despite objective success.

Common patterns:

- attributing success to luck
- fear of being exposed as incompetent
- discounting achievements
- persistent self-doubt despite evidence of capability

Impostor Phenomenon in Healthcare Leadership

Key statistics:

- up to **60% of healthcare professionals report impostor feelings**
- associated with burnout, anxiety, and lower job satisfaction
- common during role transition and innovation adoption

Impostor phenomenon is widely measured using the **Clance Impostor Phenomenon Scale (CIPS)**

Why AI Amplifies Impostor Feelings

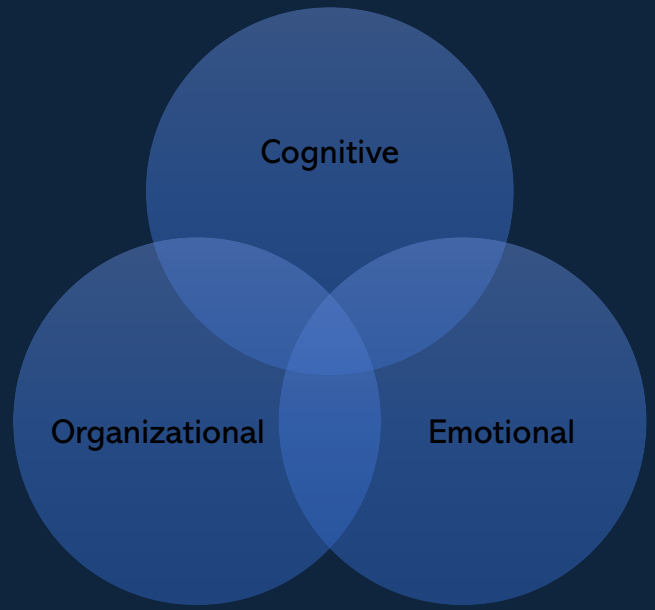
AI introduces new leadership uncertainty:

- expertise boundaries shift quickly
- technology evolves faster than training
- ethical responsibility increases
- decision-making becomes more complex

Leaders often feel pressure to appear confident even when they are learning.

The Three Sources of Leadership Impostor Feelings

1. **Cognitive**
   "I should already know this."
2. **Emotional**
   "What if people realize I am uncertain?"
3. **Organizational**
   "Our culture discourages questions."



Note:

The following reflection exercise is designed for personal insight and professional development.

This is not a clinical assessment

Results are for personal reflection only

Participants are encouraged to interpret results within their own context

The Clance Impostor Phenomenon Scale (CIPS)

20 questions

Likert scale 1-5

Total score 20-100

Score interpretation:
20–40 few impostor characteristics
41–60 moderate
61–80 frequent
81–100 intense

Note. From The Impostor Phenomenon: When Success Makes You Feel Like A Fake (pp. 20-22), by P.R. Clance, 1985, Toronto: Bantam Books. Copyright 1985 by Pauline Rose Clance. Reprinted by permission. Do not reproduce without permission from Pauline Rose Clance, drpaulinerose@comcast.net.

Reflection

Consider the following statements:

- I sometimes feel my success is due to luck.
- I worry others may overestimate my abilities.
- I compare myself unfavorably with peers.
- I fear being exposed as less capable than others think.
- I tend to discount praise or positive feedback.

Which statement resonates most?

Note: This optional exercise is for personal reflection only and is not a diagnostic tool.

Discussion

Discuss with a neighbor:

- Where do these feelings appear in leadership?

Examples:

- implementing new technology
- presenting data insights
- leading strategic change
- making high-stakes decisions

Objective 2

Leadership behaviors that promote confidence and trust

Technology Adoption Is a Leadership Challenge

Technology adoption succeeds or fails based on leadership behavior.

Common barriers:

- lack of trust
- unclear communication
- insufficient training
- fear of change

Leadership behavior is the primary driver of adoption.

Human-Centered AI Leadership

Three behaviors support healthy AI adoption

Transparency

- Explain what the technology does and does not do.

Curiosity

- Encourage questions and experimentation.

Psychological safety

- Allow uncertainty without penalty.

Case Example: Health System AI Adoption

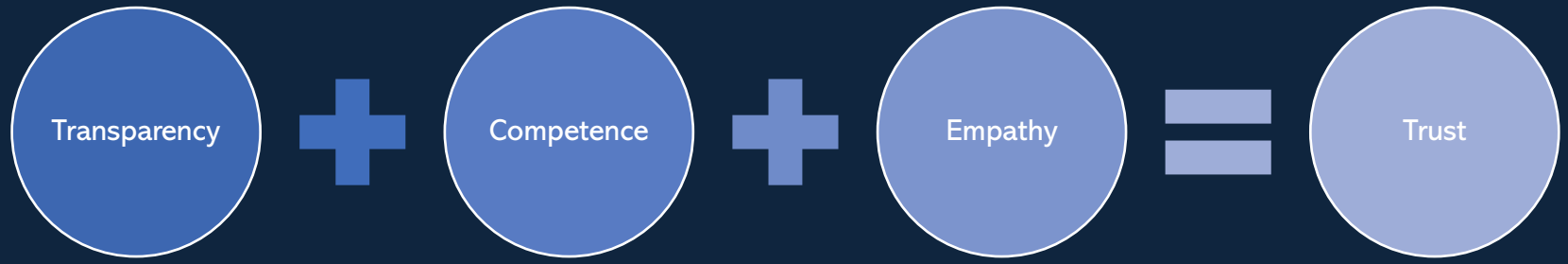
Focus areas:

- workforce readiness
- leadership development
- digital capability building

Technology adoption improved when leaders focused on people first.

The Trust Equation

Trust in AI-enabled leadership requires:



All three are necessary.

Leadership Communication

Helpful leadership language:

“I am learning alongside you.”

“We will test and evaluate this together.”

“Human judgment remains central.”

Exercise

Scenario: Your campus introduces an AI triage chatbot for student health services.

Staff reactions include:

- excitement
- anxiety
- Skepticism

Develop three leadership messages.

Debrief

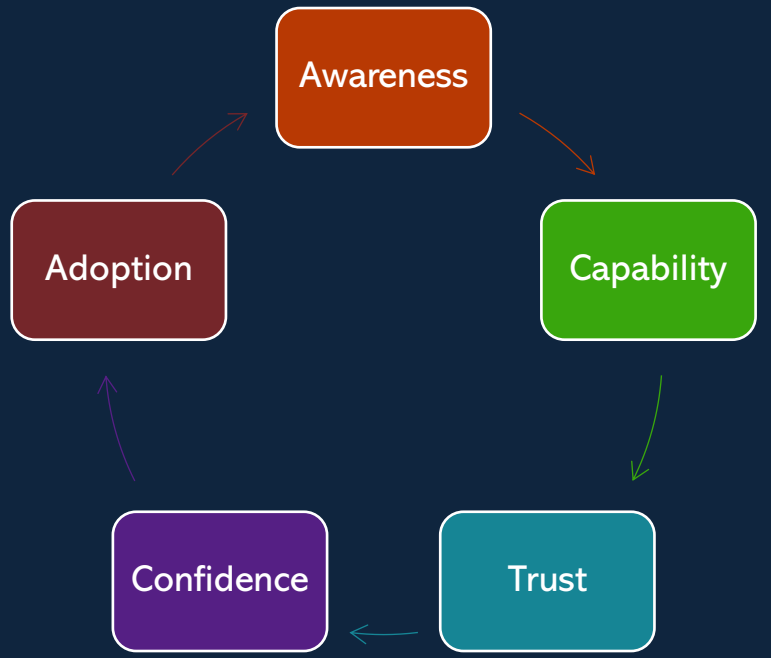
Common leadership themes:

- acknowledge uncertainty
- emphasize human oversight
- invite feedback
- reinforce mission and patient care

Objective 3

Confidence Loop Framework

The Confidence Loop



Confidence develops through a cycle.

The cycle repeats as leaders grow.

Stage 1: Awareness

Leaders begin by recognizing impostor feelings.

Key actions:

- name the experience
- normalize it
- create open dialogue

Stage 2: Capability

Capability builds through learning.

Strategies include:

- AI literacy education
- peer learning communities
- coaching and mentoring

Stage 3: Trust

Trust grows through governance and transparency.

Important elements:

- ethical oversight
- shared decision making
- clinical accountability

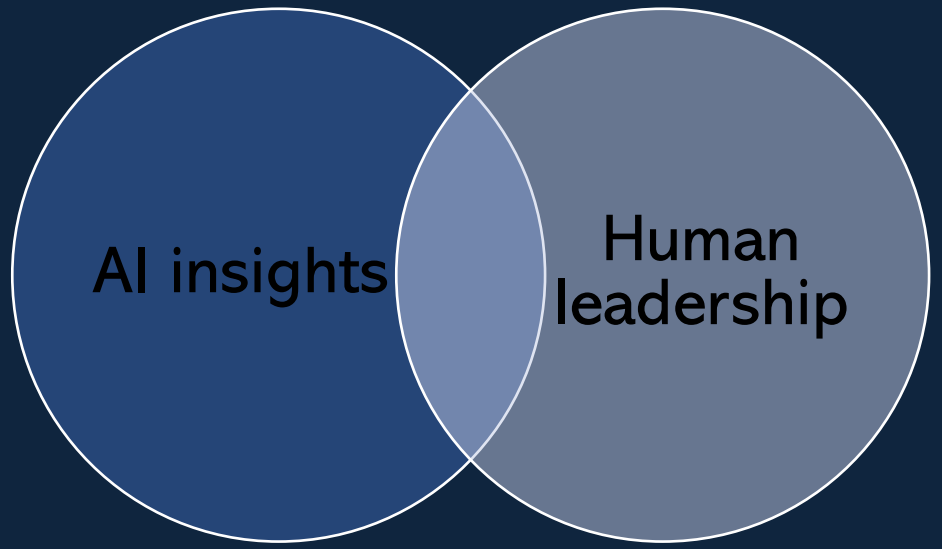
Stage 4: Confidence

Confidence develops through experience.

- Practice
- Feedback
- Reflection

Confidence grows through repeated action.

Stage 5: Adoption



AI provides insights.

Leaders provide judgment.

Effective decisions require both.

Peer Coaching Exercise

Work with a partner.

Describe one upcoming technology change.

Your partner asks:

- What concerns you most?
- What would confidence look like?

Leadership Reflection Tool

Consider three questions:

- What am I afraid of being exposed for?
- What capability do I actually need?
- Who could help me build that capability?

Key Takeaways

- Technology transformation is psychological transformation.
- Impostor feelings are common among high performers.
- Leadership confidence develops through deliberate practice.

Final Reflection

What is one action you will take in the next month to build confidence in AI-enabled leadership?

If this resonated...

If you are dealing with:

- stalled AI implementation
- leadership hesitation
- psychological readiness gaps
- uncertainty in tech outcomes

I would love to connect afterwards!

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tinyurl.com/SCHA26