



**AUTHENTIC
LEADERSHIP**

**INSPIRE
PERFORMANCE**

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Speaker | Consultant | Writer | Performer



**LIVING YOUR
LEGEND**

**ENGAGE
DYNAMICALLY**

Engaging Presence: Our Mission

We help leaders build their capacity to authentically engage staff, customers and stakeholders to increase performance and bring out more spirit at work. Through training and consulting, we guide them to increase the impact of their communications and presentations, improve team effectiveness, and convey strategy in compelling ways.

We increase creativity, adaptability and collaboration, using a combination of approaches drawn from business strategy, systems thinking, human relations, and performing arts. Our approach is fresh, innovative and grounded in our twenty-five years experience consulting in leadership development. We create learning environments to build skills while encouraging insight, deep change and fun.

Our clients are organizations where strong relationships with customers and staff are vital including health care, engineering, education and high tech.

Sally Fox, Ph.D. is the owner and principal, working in tandem with collaborators both regionally and across the country.

Engaging Presence: Our Services

1. **Story-crafting.** Helping leaders and organizations find and develop stories they can use to reinforce key messages, build credibility and peak interest of stakeholders.
2. **Presentations, workshops and performances.** Customized topics on leadership, change management, self-management and using organizational stories.
3. **Presentation skills workshops and coaching.** Training for leaders who want to have more impact speaking before groups, incorporating stories and other performance tools.
4. **Leadership development.** Programs and workshops to help leaders develop presence, communicate effectively, speak powerfully, turn conflict into collaboration, and lead change.
5. **Team effectiveness.** Coaching teams through retreats, meeting facilitation, and customized team training.

What I'm Up To

My work is for leaders who appreciate the power of engagement, who want to reach people and create a culture of high performance through collaboration.

I am an educator, consultant, speaker, designer, coach, and performer.

I guide leaders to communicate with more impact and increased leadership presence. I help them reach both the minds and the hearts of the people with whom they work – customers, staff, and teams – to inspire sustainable action.

I support clients to discover and craft stories, both personal and organizational, that make their visions, commitments and key messages come alive. These are not “once upon a time in a fairy kingdom” stories – but real stories about the exciting and hard work of trying to make a difference in the world.

I help clients develop stories that:

- build credibility and move others to act
- demonstrate what change really looks like
- peak the interest of customers

I help teams and departments develop consistency and “speak the same story.” Together we create more effective ways of working together, practice clearer communications, develop a set of common dreams and visions, and develop plans for executing them.

With twenty-five plus years of experience in leadership development – and advanced education (Ph.D. and M.B.A), I've road tested the diverse tools I bring to clients. And I've never stopped learning new ways to help.

A few years ago, I started introducing tools from improvisational theatre, clowning, and performing to help clients develop presence and ease presenting before groups.

I believe that the workplace of the future requires spirit, skills, and strategy. My work is for leaders who want to achieve market success by tapping the genius of their people.

What I'm Presenting and Performing

Here's a sample of recent topics. Let us customize a presentation for your organization!

Lead with Your Legend: Crafting authentic stories to guide you and your organization

Discover how to craft bold professional stories and compelling narratives – legends – to develop business or support the professional future you want to create. Learn the exciting ways in which storytelling has become part of the leader's toolbox and how organizations are using stories to increase the impact of their messages. Develop a road map for crafting your own authentic story, one that will inspire, promote your practice, send a message about your organization, and share your values and insights with others.

Bring the Magic Back: Adding story into your business message

Facts inform, stories give meaning and motivate your customers, colleagues and employees. Learn how organizations are enhancing the impact of their messages and bringing customers to conversation through the power of story. Explore the key elements of a great story – and how to start capturing, developing and presenting stories that enhance your leadership practice.

Let Me Tell You a Story: The essential stories every leader needs to tell

As a business leader, stories can help you reveal your authenticity, commitment, and leadership style. Stories are a potent tool for showing – rather than telling – members of your team about your values. Stories inspire, inform and move people to action. They create a picture of needed change that inspires and motivates. They can move your mission beyond frequently forgotten words into a living statement that becomes seared in memory. Learn how to select the right story to introduce yourself, teach, or clarify direction. And get ready to deliver stories more powerfully than ever before!

Stop the Internet, I Need to Get Off: Leadership practices for the solo-preneur

As an entrepreneur, with a solo practice, it's easy to slip into a 24-7 workweek. Add to that the pressure of the Internet's constant availability and you have a formula for burnout. The good news – you're free to use whatever tools and tricks you like to keep you sharp, focused, creative and relaxed. Explore some fun and innovative ways to manage yourself when no one's managing you.

Making It Up Together: Navigating conflict with improvisational theatre

Learn how theatrical improvisation tools can help you resolve conflict with ease and inspiration, tackle the critical conversations you need to have, and have a lot of fun doing it! Get your creative juices flowing as you learn to work with emotion, improve your listening skills and develop conflict management skills that will be immediately applicable to your life.

Becoming Perfectly Imperfect: Claim your power by sharing your vulnerability

In a success-based culture, it takes courage to be authentic and embrace our imperfections. Gain new freedom and ease as you let go of the need to be perfect. Experience what it is to take a risk – at any age – and jump into new waters while discovering new passion. We'll explore what it takes to live and work with authenticity, welcome paradox and lead with both strength and vulnerability.

Embrace Your Inner Clown

All of us have an inner clown, a secret place that is deliciously stupid and delightfully real. Free yourself from the fear of failure, find the perfection in being imperfect, and connect more authentically by welcoming your vulnerability. Hear how you can apply ideas from this profound and delightful path to your life and profession.

**Want more than a presentation?
We can create an experiential workshop on any
of the above topics or contact us about your needs.**

Community Performances

Ly Sieng Ngo: A story of epic resilience

Ly Sieng Ngo survived the worst of Cambodia's horrific Killing Fields only to discover that her trauma didn't stop when she arrived at her new home in Seattle. But through reflection and perseverance, combined with a deep desire to help others, she came to heal herself and was able to bring healing to her community in profound and unexpected ways. For her work, she was awarded a prestigious Robert Wood Johnson Community Health Leader award. This performance will stir your heart with the power of human resilience, commitment and the power of stories to move us through trauma.

Please Help Me Remember: Learning to deal with early onset dementia

Please Help me Remember is a 45-minute performance about living with early onset dementia. Every year in this country it's estimated that approximately half a million adults under the age of 65 suffer early onset dementia. This is the story of one family, spoken through the words of the wife who is losing her memory, her husband and her daughter.

The story is about coping, laughing, caring and enduring. It is about balancing medicine and faith, loss and hope. Although the focus is on dementia, it also speaks to those who deal with other forms of challenging life circumstances.

The piece leads effectively into a community dialogue about living gracefully with dementia or with a loved one with dementia.

Where I Have Spoken: A Sampler

Bellevue Chamber of Commerce

Bellevue Rotary

Bellevue Schools Foundation

Boeing

Chicago Medical Society

City of Seattle

Federal Aviation Agency

Federal Executive Development
Program

Health Care Forum Conference

Honeywell Corporation/Allied Signal

IGNITE Seattle!

Intel Corporation

International District Rotary Club

Eicher Consulting, Delhi, India

John Muir Medical Center

Key Bank

Media that Matters Conference

Microsoft

National Veterinarians Association

NW Development Officers

Organizational Development Network -
National

Pacific Northwest Organizational
Development Network - Regional

Pacific Northwest Power Utility Districts
- Regional Conference

Polarity Management Associates
Learning Conference

Population Association of America

Seattle Chamber of Commerce

Seattle Downtown Kiwanis

Stories from the Soul, Santa Fe

University of Washington

Washington Mutual

Women Plus Business

Women's Business Owners

Women CPA's

How People Experience Our Presentations and Performances

“Our very diverse group found Sally Fox an inspiration. Her thoughts, her philosophy, her very timely information were articulated with such spirit that we all left the meeting buoyed with renewed energy and commitment to our goals.

She renewed our confidence in ourselves and confirmed our reasons for being. We would recommend her to any group committed to getting results while honoring the human spirit.”

– *Marsha MacInnes, Women’s Business Owners Association*

“Sally’s brilliance lies in her simplicity – in that she took us into a life experience that enabled us to be a player and spectator, the protagonist and the observer, through an intense, entertaining medium of embodied expression. Sally laughed and cried, sang and danced, talked and thought, cringed and shone.

Even though I was silent I was intimately engaged with every movement, word, nuance and emotion she impressed. I was moving with her, crying and smiling and comprehending life-stories she narrated as my own story and as the universal story. Only she made me “live” the story, in a few minutes, not just think about it.”

Her presentation was an eye-opener for me! My own experience of teaching and facilitating paled in comparison to the living, intense, profoundly powerful interaction I had with Sally as she performed.”

– *Beena Sharma, Cook-Greuter & Associates*

“Sally gave us an amazing gift of *Cultivating Hope* as a closing presentation for our conference, *Media That Matters*. She was able to weave core themes she heard throughout the conference together with her stories, music, and dance -- bringing all the dynamics of our work alive.”

– *Stephen Silha, Film Producer and Journalist*

“Watching Sally begin to set the context for the story. *Please Help Me Remember*, I realized what an amazing art form this is. The writing, character development, acting, and delivery came together to walk us all through the story of this family dealing with early onset Alzheimer's. I was drawn into their stories of how they were coping and living with this reality. By the time it was over, I felt like I had experienced a moment of their lives and understood the challenges they face. It was an amazing experience, thank you Sally.”

– Claire Bronson, Graphic Designer

“Sally Fox's unique, powerful, and insightful interpretation of the familiar journey of challenges we all face in life provides a fresh, empowering perspective. It left me eager to get out of bed the next morning. Hearing her strength and her vulnerability, I am ready to embrace the contradictions in my own life. I say, “bring them on!!”

– Robert “Jake” Jacobs, Author of *Real Time Strategic Change*
Co-Author of *You Don't Have to Do It Alone*

“I just wanted you to know how much I enjoyed and appreciated your presentation of “Please Help Me Remember” at VCC. After the performance, I thought about how personal and loving your connection was with the people in your story, but at the same time how you were able to give each of them the space to have their own feelings and ways of coping with dementia. It was a message of love and respect, and a reminder of how important it is to honor the different ways we handle life's challenges! Thank you! “

– Carrie Chambers, Physical Therapist

“Your presentation was very moving for everyone in the group. One member said you were the best speaker that we have ever had, so that gives you a little insight into how deeply positive everyone felt about your presentation.”

– Teresa Bourke, Docent Seattle Art Museum

“Because of its realness, I found the piece [*Please Help me Remember*] stunningly beautiful in it's exploration of what it's like when a member of a family system suffers a dramatic change.”

– Susan Kaetz, retired acupuncture faculty, Harborview Hospital

A Slice of My Story

As a child, I lived in a New York City suburb populated with Mad Men. I received a great education while learning that power and money are not an automatic ticket to fulfillment. It was in my Connecticut community that I heard my first calling: helping people find meaning as well as money from their work.

The summer I turned 16, I went to Europe, and my world expanded quantumly. Standing in the Grand Place of Brussels feeling like a world citizen, I knew that my work would be global – a direction I pursued after college as I worked in fourteen countries on four continents.

Learning has been a passion. I attended Oberlin College and then completed a Masters degree in Sociology at the University of Michigan where I had a full fellowship to earn a doctorate. But I cared more about solving real-life problems than I did about research, so I interrupted my studies to work in international development.

As I managed population-related programs in Sub-Saharan Africa, I became intrigued with management. Why did some programs succeed and others didn't? What did it take to bring about lasting change? How could people communicate better, build alliances, and learn to trust? How do leaders learn?

I became inspired to do an MBA and shipped off to Yale's newly created MBA program. And I kept asking the questions I discovered in Africa when I later joined the faculty of Antioch University Seattle. I designed an innovative Graduate Program in Management for mid-career professionals, while completing an applied doctorate focused on leadership development.

My focus today is on leadership engagement – particularly engagement through story. How can we free ourselves from boring meetings and polemic polarized rhetoric to move others with our ideas, our interests, our meetings and our presentations?

Stories are key. As I work with professionals to uncover stories from their pasts, I also help them craft stories about their futures – inventing new stories, for themselves, their teams and organizations.

I'm blessed to be married to Steve Brown, have two grandkids, a garden that is way too big, a horse I love to ride, and Barry the Cat (who rules).



What I've Done

I've trained, coached, and consulted to mid-career professionals for over 25 years to bring out their leadership strengths and organizational effectiveness through my firm Engaging Presence.

I designed and managed an innovative Graduate Program in Management for mid-career adults for Antioch University Seattle, where working professionals experienced the power of community while earning an M.S. degree.

I've spoken to audiences from five people to one thousand, offering keynotes, association talks, seminars, and performances.

I've coached hundreds of individuals.

Who's Listening?

Teams and companies undergoing major transitions.

I've hosted retreats for agency departments to cut through old issues that were weighing teams down, to align staff, and to create the positive energy needed to execute needed changes.

Leaders and staff in organizations where the "spark has gone out" due to tough economic realities; leaders who want to rekindle the spirit in those around them.

I've spoken to health care organizations, to health care administrators, nurses, doctors and staff, helping them to reclaim the original vision that led them to choose their vocation.

Leaders and professionals with bold visions for the future, a plan for change, and a desire to bring others along.

I guided a corporate innovation team, where, with limited resources, the team wanted to launch an initiative deemed critical to the future of the organization.

Innovative companies who want having fun to be part of their workplace strategy and discover innovative ways to make learning come alive.

I've run workshops using improv and performance skills to teach critical leadership topics such as how to navigate conflict.

Associations seeking inspiration for their membership.

I've keynoted addresses and spoken before national and regional organizations.

Communicators and social media professionals who know that whoever has the best story sells.

My workshop on "Lead with your Legend" teaches professionals how to create personal, professional and organizational stories that can inspire others and attract customers.

Solopreneurs and professionals who have discovered that power and vulnerability, deep purpose and market savvy, a sense of hope and a willingness to confront tough reality can all go together.

I've given performances that opened up retreats, closed out conferences and moved the audience into new dialogue.

Where I've Been Learning

Ph.D. Human and Organizational Systems Fielding Graduate University

M.B.A. Yale University

M.A. Sociology University of Michigan

B.A. Interdisciplinary Oberlin College

Where I've Learned About Performance

Matt Smith, improvisational theatre teacher;

Avner the Eccentric, performance arts;

Martha Enson and Mik Kuhlman, founders UMO theatre ensemble (actresses, directors and clowns);

Gary Schwartz, Viola Spolin, trained master improvisation teacher;

Ruth Zaporah, founder of Action Theatre;

Arne Zaslove, actor, director (Bathhouse Theatre, Teatro Zinzani);

Jane Nichols, former faculty Yale Drama School;

Victoria Millard, clown school director; and

Tanya Taylor Rubinstein, Project Life Stories.

Questions You Might Have

1. You call your firm ‘Inspired Leadership’. What does that mean to you?

Great leaders inspire, moving others in a way that touches both their minds and their hearts and leads them to want to act. Leaders do many things but this quality of inspiration is vital. In our information-saturated world, people are selecting where they put their attention. Leaders who inspire are more likely to stand out and be heard.

I like the old definition of inspire: to infuse life by breathing. Inspired leaders help to bring life to their organizations – infusing them with spirit – and offering people a chance to see that their work really does make a difference.

2. What do you mean by ‘presence’?

Presence is a state of being present – and moving with poise and effectiveness. Leadership presence is the art of being authentic, comfortable with your role, and able to connect well with others. Presence looks different for everyone and varies by situation.

You can feel when you are around someone with presence. It engenders a quality of trust and, yes, inspiration. And with presence we often find self-confidence that’s mixed with humility. One of the great ways to build presence is to be interested in the world around you; engaged with others, showing your care for them, and offering a way for everyone to thrive in the new reality or vision for the future you are hoping to create.

3. Can leaders develop presence?

Absolutely. Sometimes it’s as simple as learning how to breathe and stay calm under fire. Sometimes it requires revisiting one’s values, commitments, visions and aspirations to kindle the fire of conviction; helping you find new energy and stand out. Sometimes it’s being willing to risk the vulnerability of coming out behind the masks we often wear at work to connect more deeply with others.

Another way to build presence is learning to find and tell the stories that help others to relate to you in a very human way.

4. How have you seen the power of story influence leadership development?

A leader who knows how to tell a relevant story has a very potent tool for reaching people. Facts don't inspire – but facts that connect us to a sense of meaning can inspire. Stories help people make meaning. They bring ideas to life. We talk about leaders helping to create a vision, mission and goals for an organization. Yet too often these become “just words.” Stories make them real.

5. You say stories can make your message memorable. How do you do that?

Stories give your message emotional and intellectual power. Stories peak our interest and engage our senses. In their specificity, stories help abstract ideas come alive (e.g. business missions and values) so that they become real for an audience (e.g. employees or stakeholders). Stories paint a picture and can point to the road ahead, reinforcing without demanding what needs to be done.

6. How do you work with clients to develop their story?

I have a method based around a story form often used in movies – the heroic journey. I find it useful to coach people at every stage of the story-development process. Often clients start by saying, “I don't really have a story” or “my story is not so important.” I remind them that everyone has a unique story – and that an authentic story that has meaning to them can be crafted into a story that will engage others. Then, once we get going, the story often begins to tell itself.

Sometimes the setbacks along the way of a journey can feel too much like failure – but this is where the story form is so useful. In a story, it's the little failures and conflicts that bring out the tension, which can be so gripping to listeners. We stay on the edge of our seats wanting to know how the tension will be resolved.

In a business environment, where it's easy to believe that successful people have to be successful all the time (no failures, no setbacks), story points to a deeper, more truthful reality. We see that no one succeeds all the time and we learn to harvest the gold, the gifts to our listeners, in the stories we tell about our setbacks. Then our successes become all the sweeter.

7. Where did your interest in story begin?

I'd been teaching mid-career adults and managers for years. And, although I know a lot about leadership theory, I discovered that people needed more than great ideas to stay interested in a subject. So I punctuated my work with stories as well as active learning and lots of sharing. Then one day, at a professional conference, I decided that my subject would be much more interesting if I performed it...rather than just talking about it. I created a story, based on my own experience, to share with my colleagues. They loved it. It woke them up, improved the energy at the conference, and they asked me to keep performing.

8. Why are business leaders turning to improv?

Business requires us to constantly think on our feet and that's exactly what improv teaches. Planning is still important, but we improvise constantly throughout the day – responding in the moment to situations, requests, conversations as they arise. Improv teaches us to respond more adeptly and be ready to flex and change.

I've used improv to help engineers become comfortable making presentations and responding to questions. I've used improv to help managers tackle difficult conversations with their staff.

Sometimes when we think of improv we think about shows like "Whose Line Is It Anyway?" But, for the most part, improv is not about having to be funny, quick or competitive. Improv teaches us some important rules that can help any conversation: be present, commit to the conversation, say "Yes, And" and concentrate on relationship – aka make your partner look great.

9. Who are you trying to reach? What kind of leadership professionals have most benefitted from your work?

Over the past years, the majority of my clients have been in two camps, although I've also worked with a wider variety of other professionals and organizations.

In the first camp are engineers, scientists and planners who are really bright but often feel challenged to get their ideas across effectively. In the leadership program I run I asked class members to create digital stories to illustrate their development through the year. It was a stretch for some to think about their learning through the lens of story – but the results were great – very authentic and compelling.

In the second camp are health care providers. When I worked with groups of doctors and nurses I discovered that they all had huge stories they were dying to share. Many of them had come into their professions from a sense of calling and then became disillusioned by the business aspects of their jobs. When they shared their stories with each other that sense of calling and commitment to their profession came alive again. And so did they.

10. What's the book you are working on?

I am in the middle of writing a book called *Lead with a Legend: Living your emerging story*. It's all about using the power of story to create a vision for the future that we can live today. As I write, "why wait for a story to be in the past, why not create one that empowers what you are doing now?"

11. Who are your heroes?

I love everyday heroes, hearing the stories of ordinary people who have faced extraordinary circumstances and learned to survive...and thrive. I do a performance about a woman named Ly Sieng Ngo in Seattle. She spent four years in Cambodia's horrific Killing Fields before coming to this country and becoming a health worker. The fact that she now devotes her life to helping other refugees and immigrants heal some of the trauma they faced inspires me every time I think of her. She is a small woman but a big hero to me.

12. Who would you like to have lunch with?

Anna Deavere Smith, the McArthur Award winning actress who has made it her life's work to find and tell people's stories.

13. What's the hardest thing you have ever done?

Two things. First, moving into New York City on my own and looking for a place to live (I was mugged six days after arriving but the story ended up OK – I learned so much living in the Big Apple).

Second, taking a beginning clowning class. Clowning is like boot camp learning to accept one's peculiarities and vulnerabilities as well as the art of connecting with others.

Contact Information



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In business since 1984.