

# Sara Ross

## Chief Vitality Officer at BrainAMPED

Please contact a GDA agent for information.

### Topics

- Emotional Intelligence
- Leadership
- Peak Performance
- Virtual

### About Sara Ross

Sara Ross is a Speaker and the Chief Vitality Officer at BrainAMPED, a research and strategy firm dedicated to redefining how we succeed at work and thrive in life by sharing brain-based, vitality-enhancing strategies to create healthier, happier, high performing leaders and workplaces. Sara is a contributor at Thrive Global and her work is earning her a reputation as a fresh and thought-provoking voice in the discussions of leadership, work-life balance, emotional intelligence and organizational health.

Before founding her company, Sara spent a decade with the Institute for Health and Human Potential, formerly serving as their Vice President and Global Head of Leadership Innovation. As head of faculty, Sara led the delivery of leadership programs, assessments and award-winning coaching and accreditation programs aimed at helping leaders grow their emotional intelligence and be their best, even in the most complex and pressure-filled moments.

Sara has worked with Fortune 500 companies such as; UnitedHealth Group, Verizon, Rogers and Allstate; tech companies such as Adobe, WAVE and ATS; financial firms such as Scotiabank, Fidelity, BMO and PwC; pharmaceutical companies such as Sunovion; educational institutes such as Smith College and the University of Toronto, and the leadership team of the NBA's Orlando Magic. Her clients have ranged from surgeons, bankers, lawyers, air traffic controllers and engineers to government agencies, nurses, nonprofits, start-ups and entrepreneurs. This broad perspective and diverse experience help explain why she is often called on to work with some of the most senior, technically sophisticated and skeptical audiences.

Balancing relevance and practicality with a contagious energy, Sara integrates cutting-edge science with real-life stories of success and failures. Her approach is guaranteed to challenge the status quo, provide new insights and inspiration, and most importantly, leave audiences with a blueprint of actionable strategies.

Sara has a Master of Science (MSc.) Graduate Degree. Outside of work, she is a coffee loving, meditation rookie who can't help but slip in the occasional Canadian "eh" at the end of a sentence. Her husband describes her career as professional eavesdropping-people-watching. She argues that she is merely a dedicated street scientist doing her professional duty to better understand why people do what they do, and why they don't do what they know they should!

### Select Keynotes

- **Igniting the Leadership Vitality Factor: Next-Level Leadership for an On-Demand World**

Organizations know that to be successful and innovative in a service and knowledge driven economy requires a workforce with expertise, intellectual curiosity and the ability to use emotional intelligence to collaborate and execute through people. And yet, with all the acknowledgement and investment in capitalizing on these skills, something is missing, and stress is exponentially rising.

In this keynote, Sara Ross will share the missing piece of the success equation that all too often is over-looked and under-valued. After a decade of studying high performers, Sara has found that the key differentiator between exhausted leaders and exceptional leaders is what she has coined their Vitality Factor.

This isn't just about stress management, time management or simply sleeping more and working less. This is about strategy. How to move performance and leadership to the next level in an ondemand world where an abundance of information, distractions, and expectations are unrelentingly pulling on time, energy and attention. This is how top performers pressure-proof their leadership impact.

The research is clear, how an organization manages that Vitality factor will either burn their people out or allow them to burn bright and bring their best work forward and Sara will show you how by sharing:



- \* The three common habits that are mistakenly leading to over-stressed, under-fueled brains and how they deceptively influence decisions, effectiveness and leadership impact;
- \* A Key Vitality Indicator (KVI) system to identify the tipping point where more work becomes counterproductive and healthy challenge becomes unhealthy stress;
- \* Practices to expand productive vitality ranges to increase creativity, collaboration and agility;
- \* Insights to help leaders shift from inadvertently being a Vitality-Depleter to a positive Vitality Ambassador by multiplying each of these practices across teams and workplaces.

- **Performing Under Pressure: Doing Your Best When it Matters Most**

This program is based on the New York Times and Amazon bestselling book *Performing Under Pressure*. Pressure changes how the brain functions; it diminishes our cognitive success tools – our ability to think, deal with change, make decisions, focus and pay attention. Most people take a haphazard approach to dealing with their pressure moments. Our study of 12,000 people showed the top 10% performers have insight about their pressure moments and situations, and use strategies to be their best under pressure.

- **Performing Under Pressure: The Science of Emotional Intelligence**

Why do smart people fail? Why do technically brilliant individuals have trouble managing others and collaborating on a team? It is not because they lack intelligence or technical skills. Far from it. What they lack is a critical level of Emotional Intelligence (EI) and the ability to manage their own emotions and others' when they are under pressure. Whether you are a formal manager or want to increase your individual performance (or both), this program will teach you the foundational principles and brain science of Emotional Intelligence (EI). Focusing on managing your emotions under pressure, this program will enable you to increase your personal leadership by learning how to manage your emotional brain in your most difficult moments. This will allow you to influence and engage others, and connect with them in a more meaningful way. In this program, you will: Learn the brain science of emotions that drives your behavior under pressure. Increase your awareness of the situations that put you at risk of having your emotions lead to unskillful behavior and poor decisions. Have the option to utilize our state-of-the-art EI360 feedback assessment to increase self-awareness of the 11 key EI competencies that drive your success. Learn practical strategies to help you respond more skillfully as pressure, tension and complexity increase. Identify patterns, triggers and emotional habits that either drive or derail your performance. Learn to suspend judgment – become 'more curious and less certain' – to effectively engage and influence others. Understand how to be an effective coach and help others develop the skills to perform under pressure. Practice techniques through interactive exercises and develop an action plan to put those strategies into practice.

- **Performing Under Pressure: The Three Conversations Of Leadership**

People want to make relationships work with their managers, teams, and peers. They want to give formal and informal feedback that improves accountability, clarity and performance. They want to bring their ideas and concerns to the table regardless of who is in the room. What is surprising is the lack of skill and ability most people have to step into the difficult conversations they know they need to have. Focusing on having effective conversations under pressure, this program will help people conduct daily, difficult and courageous conversations that cultivate teamwork, build connected relationships, and help global, highly matrixed, virtual teams learn to influence and collaborate more skillfully. In addition to helping you have high-pressure and difficult conversations, you will also gain insight that when you are under pressure, you often have less effective daily conversations, which can erode trust and connection in your key relationships. This program has been designed for people who are in formal leadership positions and responsible for both the performance and on-going development of their direct reports. This program builds on the foundation of Emotional Intelligence and will enable you to: Understand the importance and impact of three critical types of conversations: Daily, Difficult and Courageous Conversations Leverage insight from the brain science of emotions to have more effective conversations. Learn techniques to have high impact daily coaching conversations that build trust and drive results, even in time-constrained, pressure-filled environments. Practice having difficult conversations in a way that allows you to speak your truth and get to the "last 8%", while not emotionally triggering the other person. Examples include: Engaging people by creating emotional connection when rolling out change. Delivering bad news or saying "no" in a way that ensures a person is still valued and understands the message. Providing continuous coaching about behavior, performance and impact. Managing up and across when we have limited or no direct authority. Understand the importance of having a developmental mindset so you can coach people to the next level of performance. There comes a time when we need to have a difficult conversation in the workplace. This program will provide you with the knowledge and techniques required to have the critical conversations that you know you need to have. These kinds of conversations are never easy, but we need the skills to have them in order to consistently drive performance.

- **The Future of Leadership: How Workplaces Use EQ to Thrive in a Pressure Economy**

In a world defined by unrelenting pressure, it's not surprising that a 2018 StressPulse survey found almost 60% of people reported being "highly stressed." In response to the increasing intensity, the World Economic Forum ranked emotional intelligence as one of the top five business priorities people need to invest in to succeed in the future. And yet, as certain as the research is in demonstrating that it is a powerful predictor of performance and organizational success, studies and stories from across the globe indicate that it is harder than ever to build.

This gap inspired Sara Ross to conduct a global survey, across dozens of industries, and throughout all levels of business to focus on answering one critical question: What do you need in a leader?

Whether a seasoned executive, middle manager or a driven individual performer, in this keynote you will learn that the answers to this question are grounded in the practices of emotional intelligence. Building on cutting-edge insights from the fields of business, mindfulness, positive psychology and neuroscience, as well as her latest research, Sara will share:

- \* The top three drivers of leadership excellence and the mindsets that separate the best from the rest;
- \* How the brain influences performance, relationships and emotional energy in today's pressure-filled workplaces;
- \* An in-the-moment strategy to respond more skillfully in difficult situations to increase perspective, focus and calm;
- \* A practical, yet counterintuitive approach to strengthening the skill of empathy and influence without exhausting yourself!

- **Women Under Pressure: The Female Brain is Needed in Leadership**

Women have a brain based difference that predisposes them to weigh more variables, consider more options, see more context, and visualize a wider array of solutions and outcomes to a problem when they or their organization are under pressure. Organizations that leverage this unique strength of decision making, and have more women in top leadership positions, research has shown, outperform the competition in every measure of profitability: return on equity, revenue, and assets. In this powerful and entertaining keynote presentation, you will learn: What is unique about a women's brain, and why is that important to organizations? What is the second layer of pressure that women face that is different from men? What we learned from our research study of 6,000 women about how managing pressure is becoming the competitive advantage of successful female leaders What concrete strategies can women (and men!) learn to perform and lead more effectively under pressure the very next day? This program is based on the research that supports the New York Times bestselling book, *Performing Under Pressure, The Science of Doing Your Best When it Matters Most* (Crown, 2015). It involves a case study (from the book) of a female leader pitching to the Shark Tank. This session is fun and inspiring yet powerful and thought provoking. You will walk into pressure situations more prepared, with more confidence, and ready to use your brain based difference to add value to your organization and grow your career.

## Select Articles

- [Stop Killing Women With Kindness](#)

The problem was, Joanne didn't need less work, she needed the feedback to learn and grow. Without it, she felt stunted in her development. Unfortunately, research (as showcased in the IHHP Women Under Pressure white paper) suggests she's correct.

- [Meetings = Brain Drain: The exception or the rule?](#)

Most perplexing about this shift is that we logically know that asking people to attend back-to-back-to-back meetings with few to no breaks, while expecting them to perform at their very best, is not only unrealistic, but it is unfairly setting people (and ourselves) up to be unsuccessful. And yet "meeting-mania" is a pervasive issue in most of our workplaces.

- [Busting the Biggest Delegation Myth – and strategies to truly improve productivity under pressure!](#)

Delegation Capacity = Time Pressure x Task Switching "Too much to do and not enough time" is one of the most often cited stressors in organizations today and the reason why understanding each variable in this equation is so important.

- [ELT Hot Seat Question-What is a 'variable'?](#)

When we have all of "our markers" our brain has lots of information to make the best and most strategic decisions.