

Sara Ross

Leadership Expert. Keynote Speaker & Author. Founder & Chief Vitality Officer at BrainAMPED.

Please contact a GDA agent for information.

Topics

- Emotional Intelligence
- Leadership
- Management
- Peak Performance
- Stress Management



About Sara Ross

Sara Ross is an international keynote speaker, the founder and Chief Vitality Officer at BrainAmped—a leadership research firm—as well as the author of the book, *[Dear Work: something has to change](#)*.

Sara is on a mission to help organizations and their leaders reignite a sense of aliveness in both their work and at home. She and her company do this by using brain science-based strategies to teach people how to amplify their emotional intelligence, resilience, and well-being.

As a leadership expert, Sara's ideas and research have earned her a reputation as a fresh and thought-provoking voice in discussions focused on the future of work. As such, Sara is called on to work with clients such as Microsoft, PepsiCo., Cisco, Wells Fargo, T-Mobile, Rogers, Allstate, United Health, Fidelity, BMO, Stanford University, and as diversely as the U.S. Navy SEALs and the leadership team of the NBA's Orlando Magic, among others. In addition, Sara has worked with numerous government agencies, foundations, and associations as well as guest lecturing in the executive leadership program at Smith College. This broad perspective and diverse experience help explain why Sara is called on to work with some of the most senior, technically sophisticated, and skeptical audiences.

You can count on Sara to bring her trademark energy with the integration of relevant, cutting-edge science and relatable 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.

Before founding BrainAmped, Sara spent a decade immersed in the neuroscience of Emotional Intelligence and Performance at a leadership development company where she served as their Vice President and Global Head of Leadership Innovation, Research and Education. As head of faculty, Sara and her team led the development and delivery of award-winning leadership programs, assessments, coaching and accreditation programs that helped leaders from across the globe to be their best, even in the most complex and stress-filled moments.

Sara has a Master of Science (MSc.) from the University of Waterloo. 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

• Dear Work: Something Has to Change

We all want to put the last few years behind us. Unfortunately, with stress spiking, energy dropping, and challenges around quiet quitting, hybrid work, retention, and recruitment lingering, we can't ignore the toll things have had on people and organizations.

Sara Ross, the founder and chief vitality officer at BrainAmped, believes that addressing these challenges and navigating the changing world of work requires starting with a new question. Instead of asking how to help leaders feel less tired, stretched, and stressed, Sara transforms the traditional approach by asking how we can help leaders and their people feel more *ALIVE – more energized, capable, and purposeful*.

In this keynote, based on the research and principles shared in her bestselling book, *"Dear Work, something has to change,"* Sara will show that the solution begins by helping audiences boost their Work Vitality Factor by focusing on four core ideas:

1. **Beliefs can be the biggest barriers.** Sara will identify three common misconceptions audiences hold regarding success, stress, and rest that keep them and their teams stuck in the survival zone and how to shift them into vitality ignitors.
2. **Surviving the day is not a strategy.** Audiences will learn a mindset to work better with stress and how to use it to fuel the energy needed to pursue bold, meaningful goals, invest in important relationships, and live a full, energized life.
3. **Standing out shouldn't mean burning out.** Sara will challenge audiences to break the cycle of over-working and under-living by incorporating three simple yet empowering questions that amplify vitality and performance across an organization—particularly in hybrid environments.
4. **Boosting vitality requires intentionality.** Audiences will learn how to practice more strategic self-care at work and outside of it while creating environments that allow others to do the same.

- **Stand-Out Leadership: Thrive with Vitality in the Future of Work**

Taking on anything challenging—even when meaningful and exciting—will involve stress, discomfort, and struggle. In a world defined by uncertainty, the most powerful way to raise the bar and get to the next level is to boost the collective potential of how people work together. That starts by helping leaders and their people build awareness of their behavior, learn to embrace the emotions that come with challenges, and strengthen the skills of empathy to thrive collectively together, whether in-person or virtually.

Sara Ross, Chief Vitality Officer of the leadership research firm, BrainAmped, studies the influence of emotional intelligence, vitality-generating energy, and organizational culture on leadership, performance, and teamwork. Combining these areas and looking at them through the lens of brain science, Sara uses humor and storytelling to ensure people have actionable strategies they feel empowered to start using the moment they leave their seats. Specifically, Sara will share the following in her keynote:

- ♦ **It's less about what you know and more about how you lead;** learn the key behaviors that differentiate the best from the rest for creating stand-out leadership, performance, and teamwork.
- ♦ **Knowing what to do and doing what you know are not the same;** establish an in-the-moment emotional management strategy to strengthen personal accountability, make better decisions, and respond more skillfully—even in the most challenging circumstances.
- ♦ **Trust is both a science and a skill;** uncover the brain science of trust and how to use it to create more collaborative, innovative, and diverse cultures.
- ♦ **To demonstrate empathy, you need to first develop it;** learn an approach to extend empathy, especially in difficult conversations that get to the heart of the matter while strengthening relationships and driving results.
- ♦ **Caring for people is not the same as carrying people;** embody a mindset to shift leadership fatigue into leadership vitality.

***** It tends to be the best fit for groups looking for tools and insights around:**

- ♦ Helping people strengthen their emotional intelligence and creating high-trust environments.
- ♦ Creating collaborative cultures where people feel cared about, respected, and part of something bigger.
- ♦ Strengthening leadership, relationships, and teamwork.
- ♦ Addressing change, getting buy-in around change initiatives, and creating cultures that foster innovation.
- ♦ Helping people build self-awareness and take personal ownership of their actions.
- ♦ Strengthening emotional-management strategies to help people approach and deal with difficult conversations, feedback, and relationships.
- ♦ Increasing the skill of empathy to strengthen diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging.
- ♦ Bettering listening, communication, and coaching skills, particularly in virtual and hybrid environments.
- ♦ Insights on how emotional intelligence influences recruitment, retention, and psychological safety.

- **The Confidence to Get Knocked Down and the Resilience to Get Back Up**

What would you do if you could not fail?" This is a good, thought-provoking question, but unfortunately, it is inherently flawed. If you are going to take on bold goals, get outside of your comfort zone, try new things, and build new skills - it will be hard and you will fail along the way.

Instead, "What would you do if you knew that even if you failed, you'd be okay?" This is what it means to have the confidence to get knocked down and the resilience to get back up; stronger, faster, and healthier each time. While researching for her upcoming book, "Dear Work, something has to change" Sara Ross found that in a time of record-setting stress, uncertainty, and change, those most successful didn't fail less often. Instead, they learned better. It's the connection between confidence and resilience that free's people to consistently stretch their potential to innovate, adapt, and thrive – even in the most stressful times.

Too many people miss out on opportunities in work and life because they lack the confidence to try. It might be taking on a new role, adjusting to changing client expectations and competitive market landscapes, or simply seeking feedback. All because they fear that they aren't equipped to handle the obstacles that come with each. In this session, Sara will change that by taking the audience through a practical four-step method

to strengthen their confidence - resilience loop by:

Explaining the brain science of emotions under stress and sharing a strategy to address the three thieves of confidence: perfection, comparison, and the fear of judgment.

Addressing common misconceptions about what confidence and resilience are and how each is built and maintained.

Identifying where mindset shifts will help change the narrative of the story people tell themselves when it's keeping them stuck, scared, discouraged, and overwhelmed.

Building a "resilience resume" to highlight strengths and experiences to draw from when faced with obstacles and channel both into positive, momentum-creating action.

Select Book Titles

- **2023:** Dear Work, Something Has To Change

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.

Select Testimonials

I just wanted to let you know that Sara was fantastic at yesterday's Annual Meeting. She connected with the audience, and her message was well received. We appreciate her participation and contribution to the success of the event. Please convey our appreciation to her. I also sent her a text yesterday after the meeting.

– ASCIP

Sara, That was fantastic. Our women leaders definitely need to be told its important and fruitful to relax and recharge. Your comments came at just the right time, we needed that! Your personal stories and practical tips are very helpful in driving the point home and making it actionable.

– Charles Schwab

She was incredible, messaging was awesome, a breath of fresh air, commanded the stage, overall fantastic to work with and brought different perspectives to this topic and conversation! She was also incredibly nice and sincere!

– EFM Events