

FACILITATION GUIDE

---

# *Thrive in Color* Book Club



Dear *Thrive in Color* Book Club Members,

First, let me say how proud I am of you for stepping into this space. By joining this book club, you are not just reading a book; you are embarking on a journey of self-discovery, growth, and empowerment.

*Thrive in Color* was written for individuals like you—those who aspire to show up fully and authentically in their professional and personal lives. It is a celebration of resilience, courage, and the power that lies within each of us to create change—not only for ourselves but for those around us.

As you dive into these pages, you will find stories, insights, and tools that will challenge you, uplift you, and remind you of your inherent brilliance. You will uncover the courage to take bold steps, the grace to embrace your imperfections, and the strength to advocate for what you deserve.

This book club is more than just a space to discuss ideas; it is a community where your voice matters. Here, you can share your experiences, learn from one another, and find the support to navigate your unique journey.

I encourage you to approach this experience with an open heart and mind. Let curiosity guide your questions, let empathy fuel your connections, and let courage inspire your actions. Remember, your voice is powerful, your perspective is valuable, and your growth is a gift to the world.

As you engage in this transformative journey, know that you are never alone. You have a community here that believes in your potential and celebrates your victories, no matter how big or small.

Thank you for trusting this process and for showing up for yourself. Together we will thrive.

Cheers to your success,

**Devika Brij**

Author of *Thrive in Color*

# Employee Book Club Facilitation Guide

Welcome to the Employee Book Club Facilitation Guide for *Thrive in Color*. This guide is designed to help employees engage in meaningful discussions, reflect on the book's lessons, and take actionable steps toward personal and professional growth.

Given the variance in framework volume across the book, we recommend a nine session reading plan, included below. All meeting times are one-hour in duration. To accelerate or decelerate the pace, groups can meet weekly or bi-weekly as long as the group commits to reading in between meet up times. For meetings with multiple chapters being discussed, we recommend splitting the hour equally between chapters and selecting two questions per chapter provided in the chapter outlines.

## Book Club Meeting Chapter Outline

### **MEETING 1**

---

Intro, Chapter 1,  
2 and 3

### **MEETING 2**

---

Chapters 4 and 5

### **MEETING 3**

---

Chapter 6

### **MEETING 4**

---

Chapter 7

### **MEETING 5**

---

Chapter 8

### **MEETING 6**

---

Chapter 9

### **MEETING 7**

---

Chapter 10

### **MEETING 8**

---

Chapter 11

### **MEETING 9**

---

Chapter 12, 13  
and Afterword

# *Thrive in Color* Read Along & Book Club Schedule

Welcome to the *Thrive in Color* book club! Our community is designed to help professionals engage in meaningful discussions, reflect on the book's lessons, and take actionable steps toward personal and professional growth.

Please review the read along guide and meeting dates/times below. Please ensure you have read the chapters being discussed within each meeting.

If you have any questions, please contact:

See you at session 1!

<b>MEETING</b>	<b>DATE AND TIME</b>	<b>CHAPTERS BEING DISCUSSED</b>	<b>MEETING LOCATION</b>
Meeting 1		Introduction, 1, 2, 3	
Meeting 2		4, 5	
Meeting 3		6	
Meeting 4		7	
Meeting 5		8	
Meeting 6		9	
Meeting 7		10	
Meeting 8		11	
Meeting 9		12, 13 and Afterword	

# Introduction Chapter

The Introduction chapter sets the stage for the challenges and opportunities underrepresented professionals face in the corporate world.

Devika shares her personal journey of navigating bias, systemic inequities, and the competitive dynamics of professional advancement. She candidly describes how conventional career advice often falls short for professionals of color, leading her to develop actionable strategies that prioritize authentic self-advocacy and meaningful impact. This chapter encourages readers to reflect on their unique experiences, embrace their worth, and prepare to implement proven strategies for achieving success on their own terms.

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

---

- Recognize that systemic barriers and implicit biases often require tailored strategies for career advancement.
- Conventional career advice may not address the unique challenges faced by underrepresented professionals.
- Self-advocacy, strategic action, and community support are essential for achieving equity and professional fulfillment.
- The path to success involves not only addressing external obstacles but also overcoming self-limiting beliefs and behaviors.
- Growth can feel uncomfortable but is necessary for transformative success.

## Discussion Questions

1. What challenges have you encountered in your professional journey that you feel are unique to your identity or background?
2. Reflect on a time when conventional career advice did not work for you. Why do you think it fell short?
3. What does self-advocacy mean to you, and how have you practiced it in your career?
4. In what ways can this group or community provide support in navigating professional challenges?

# Chapter 1: Stop Playing It Safe

This chapter explores the consequences of playing it safe in professional settings.

Devika shares her personal journey of recognizing systemic biases and learning to embrace boldness and self-advocacy. Readers are encouraged to step out of their comfort zones, advocate for their worth, and break through barriers to growth and fulfillment.

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

---

- Self-advocacy is essential for career progression.
- Breaking free from comfort zones fosters personal and professional growth.
- Recognizing and addressing biases in workplace systems can lead to more equitable outcomes.

## Discussion Questions

1. What stood out most to you in this chapter?
2. What does “playing it safe” mean to you, and how has it influenced your career decisions?
3. Have you ever faced a moment where you had to advocate for yourself at work? What was the outcome?
4. What fears or challenges hold you back from being more assertive in the workplace?
5. How can you identify opportunities to step out of your comfort zone in your current role?

## Chapter 2: Performing Under the Microscope

This chapter dives into the unique challenges underrepresented professionals face in the workplace, particularly the heightened scrutiny of their actions and decisions.

Through her own experiences and those of her clients, Devika illustrates the impact of implicit biases and unequal treatment on professional trust, mental health, and career progression. She offers strategies for navigating these situations with clarity, confidence, and self-advocacy while maintaining one's professional brand.

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

---

- Underrepresented professionals often face disproportionate scrutiny in the workplace, which can lead to negative perceptions and outcomes.
- Learning to communicate effectively and take ownership of your professional brand is essential for navigating biased environments.
- Self-advocacy requires asking clarifying questions, setting boundaries, and reframing mistakes as opportunities for growth.
- While bias and unfair treatment exist, individuals can influence outcomes by adjusting their responses and strategies.

### Discussion Questions

1. What stood out most to you in this chapter?
2. Have you ever felt like you were under a microscope in your workplace? How did that impact your trust and relationships with your manager and/or peers?
3. How do you balance advocating for yourself while maintaining professionalism?
4. Have you ever observed or experienced a double standard in how policies or rules were applied? How did you handle it?
5. How can underrepresented professionals support one another in navigating biased environments?

# Chapter 3: The Self-Advocacy Dilemma

This chapter examines the challenges underrepresented professionals face in self-advocating for promotions, pay increases, and leadership opportunities.

Through relatable stories and research-backed insights, Devika highlights the systemic barriers and internal struggles that often inhibit self-advocacy. She emphasizes the importance of creating a strong professional brand, advocating consistently, and addressing workplace trauma to pave the way for career success.

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

---

- Self-advocacy is critical to career advancement, accounting for 60% of professional success, while performance accounts for only 10%.
- A strong personal brand plays a significant role in how leaders and peers perceive you.
- Cultural norms, fear of stereotypes, and workplace trauma are common barriers to self-advocacy.
- Overcoming these challenges requires a shift in mindset, consistent communication of value, and proactive relationship-building.
- Addressing workplace trauma through reflection and support is essential for building confidence and advocacy skills.

## Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think self-advocacy is such a significant driver of career success compared to performance?
2. What cultural or societal influences might shape how you approach self-advocacy?
3. Have you ever hesitated to ask for a promotion, raise, or new opportunity? What held you back?
4. In what ways has past workplace trauma or rejection affected your confidence or willingness to advocate for yourself?
5. What steps can you take to overcome fear of stereotypes or assumptions when self-advocating?



## Chapter 4: Own Your Narrative

This chapter explores the importance of crafting and owning your professional narrative. Devika highlights the dangers of allowing others, especially leaders, to define your strengths, values, and contributions.

Through personal anecdotes and the introduction of the CISS Framework™ (Culture contributors, Interests, Strengths, and Skills), she provides tools to help underrepresented professionals build an authentic professional brand that aligns with their goals. The chapter emphasizes the significance of proactively communicating your narrative to leaders and peers to ensure your contributions are acknowledged and your career path aligns with your aspirations.

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

---

- Taking ownership of your professional narrative ensures your strengths and contributions are authentically represented.
- The CISS Framework™ (Culture contributors, Interests, Strengths, and Skills) provides foundation for understanding and communicating your professional brand.
- Leaders and peers often form perceptions based on limited information; it's essential to proactively share your narrative.
- Aligning your professional brand with your long-term goals helps guide career opportunities and development.
- Consistently updating and sharing your professional narrative reinforces your value and helps secure opportunities that fit your aspirations.

### Discussion Questions

1. How have others' perceptions of you influenced your career opportunities?
2. Reflect on a time when your contributions or strengths were misrepresented. How could owning your narrative have changed the outcome?
3. How does your culture and background shape the way you show up at work?
4. Which aspects of the CISS Framework™ resonate most with you, and how can you use them to build your professional brand?
5. How can integrating your personal interests into your work life enhance your overall performance and job satisfaction?

# Chapter 5: Mindset Matters

This chapter explores the profound impact of mindset on professional and personal growth.

Devika shares her own struggles with self-doubt, shaped by early experiences and reinforced by workplace challenges. She highlights how beliefs about oneself can become self-fulfilling prophecies, influencing actions and outcomes. By reframing negative thoughts, fostering self-belief, and adopting intentional strategies, individuals can transform their mindset and open doors to new opportunities. The chapter introduces actionable steps to identify and address limiting beliefs, cultivate a positive mindset, and ultimately take control of one's career trajectory.

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

---

- Mindset shapes your reality: What you believe about yourself influences your actions, decisions, and outcomes.
- Overcoming negative narratives: Early experiences and workplace challenges can reinforce self-doubt, but these narratives can be rewritten.
- The power of faith and belief: Trusting in unseen outcomes and reframing negative thoughts are essential for growth.
- Intentional mindset shifts: Deliberate practices like affirmations, reflection, and celebrating others' success can change neural pathways and foster confidence.
- Mastering the inner landscape: By addressing mindset barriers, individuals can position themselves for career advancement and greater fulfillment.

## Discussion Questions

1. How have early experiences or cultural influences shaped your mindset about your career and potential?
2. Reflect on a time when negative beliefs held you back. How might a positive mindset have changed the outcome?
3. How did the “Four Steps to Transforming Your Mindset” influence you to reframe negative experiences?
4. How did the concept of forgiveness impact you?

# Chapter 6: Your Elevator Pitch

This chapter emphasizes the importance of clearly articulating your professional narrative and the impact it has on opening doors to new opportunities.

Through real-world examples and actionable steps, readers learn how to craft a concise, authentic, and impactful elevator pitch that conveys their value, contributions, and personality. The process involves breaking down professional roles into meaningful “headlines,” showcasing additional contributions beyond formal responsibilities, and integrating personal interests to create a well-rounded narrative.

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

---

- **Owning your narrative:** Your professional story shapes how others perceive your value. Clearly articulating it ensures you’re in control of your career trajectory.
- **Importance of an elevator pitch:** A well-crafted pitch succinctly communicates your role, contributions, and unique qualities, creating memorable and meaningful connections.
- **Framework for crafting your pitch:** Use three sentences to cover (1) your professional responsibilities and impact, (2) your contributions outside of your role, and (3) your passions and interests outside of work.
- **Tailoring your pitch:** Adjust your pitch based on context and audience, emphasizing relevant aspects while staying authentic.
- **Practice and iteration:** Regularly review and update your pitch as your career evolves, ensuring it reflects your current goals and values.

## Discussion Questions

1. How has a lack of clear communication about your professional contributions impacted your career opportunities in the past?
2. What surprised you most about creating (or refining) your elevator pitch through the framework provided?
3. How did including aspects of your personal interests in your elevator pitch change your perspective on how you communicate your authentic self?
4. How does the practice of creating a “headline” for your role change how you perceive and communicate your value?
5. **BONUS:** Consider sharing your elevator pitch (or part of it) with a partner for feedback.

# Chapter 7: Your Executive Summary

This chapter guides readers through the creation of an executive summary, a concise, visually clear document showcasing key accomplishments, career highlights, and the value professionals bring to their organization.

By leveraging the LSR Method (Leadership, Scaling Solutions, Results), the executive summary becomes a powerful tool for self-advocacy in performance reviews, job interviews, promotion discussions, and networking opportunities.

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

---

- Your executive summary provides decision-makers with clear and memorable data about your contributions.
- Shifts the narrative from tasks to themes, showing intentionality and impact.
- Serves as a professional portfolio for tracking accomplishments over time.

## Discussion Questions

1. Reflect on a time when your contributions were overlooked in a professional setting or interview. How could an executive summary have changed the narrative?
2. Was creating your executive summary challenging? Which parts were most difficult?
3. How does the LSR Method reframe your perspective on your role and impact at work?
4. Why is it important to document your successes consistently, even when working with an unsupportive manager?
5. What is one scenario in which you plan to use your executive summary in the next six months?

# Chapter 8: Cultivating Your Network of Advocates

This chapter focuses on building and nurturing a personal network of advocates—mentors, sponsors, and career allies—who can elevate your career through access to opportunities, guidance, and advocacy.

By intentionally cultivating purposeful relationships, underrepresented professionals can navigate systemic challenges, enhance visibility, and position themselves for growth.

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

---

- Building a diverse network of advocates who believe in your potential is crucial for career advancement.
- Authenticity is key; relationships should be based on mutual respect, shared values, and clear goals—not transactional motives.
- Having a network of advocates enables access to opportunities that may not be equitable or visible otherwise.

## Discussion Questions

1. What generational or cultural advice did you receive about having a network of advocates?
2. What challenges have you faced in cultivating authentic professional relationships?
3. How did the brainstorm help you identify mentors, sponsors and carrier allies?
4. How can you leverage your advocates to improve visibility and highlight your contributions at work?
5. What specific actions will you take to approach and engage your network of advocates?

# Chapter 9: Managing Your Manager

This chapter provides strategies to transform one-to-one meetings with your managers into meaningful and mutually beneficial opportunities to advocate for yourself, gain visibility, and align with organizational goals.

By taking control of these interactions, professionals can highlight their accomplishments, request support, and advance their career goals.

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

---

- Cancelled or infrequent meetings can limit opportunities for visibility and alignment.
- Unstructured meetings often result in missed opportunities to discuss wins or career goals.
- Many meetings focus on the manager's needs, sidelining the employee's goals. A balanced agenda ensures both parties' priorities are addressed.
- Preparation and tracking are critical to maximize these sessions.

## Discussion Questions

1. Have 1:1 meetings with managers (or other leaders) felt mutually beneficial? How did the framework provided help you optimize your meetings?
2. How did the 1:1 agenda influence you to take control of your one-to-one meetings and align them with your career goals?
3. You were taught to leverage your agenda to accumulate a running list of all your accomplishments. How will this approach help you track and reinforce your contributions for important career conversation throughout the year?
4. How can a structured approach to meetings help you overcome challenges with an unskilled or disengaged manager?
5. If you've implemented the agenda and 1:1 flow proposed in the book, how did the experience go for you?

# Chapter 10: Conquering Your Performance Evaluation

Performance evaluations often evoke stress and anxiety, but they are pivotal career moments that dictate future opportunities, rewards, and recognition.

This chapter empowers readers to proactively prepare for evaluations year-round by leveraging structured career conversations, consistent feedback loops, and thorough preparation strategies to ensure evaluations are positive and productive.

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

---

- Why Performance Evaluations Matter
- Provides insight into strengths and areas for improvement.
- Helps align performance with organizational objectives.
- Informs decisions about raises, promotions, and bonuses.
- Serves as official records of performance, which can be helpful in disputes or terminations.

## Discussion Questions

1. What has been your experience with performance reviews? Mostly positive or challenging?
2. What strategies can you use to address unexpected criticism, blindsiding or shifting expectations?
3. How did incorporating the 1:1 Agenda (and tracking your wins) into performance reviews shifted your perspective on how you should be setting yourself up for success throughout the year (instead of last-minute preparation)?
4. How does tracking your progress and wins improve your ability to advocate for yourself during evaluations?
5. How has this chapter empowered you to approach performance reviews more confidently?

# Chapter 11: Mastering Negotiation

Negotiation is a critical skill for achieving career advancement and ensuring you are compensated and recognized fairly for your contributions.

This chapter provides a step-by-step framework for effective negotiation, addressing common fears, preparing for discussions, and structuring asks into actionable options. By applying these strategies, professionals can shift their mindset from fearing rejection to embracing negotiation as a collaborative process to secure career-altering outcomes.

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

---

- Negotiation is not just about salary; it's about securing the resources, opportunities, and recognition you deserve.
- Gratitude for your current role and ambition for more can coexist harmoniously.
- A well-prepared and strategic negotiation can lead to outcomes that align with your personal and professional goals.
- Fear of rejection, retaliation, or reinforcing stereotypes can deter negotiation, especially for underrepresented professionals.
- Cultural conditioning and language barriers may make self-advocacy feel daunting.
- Understanding these barriers is the first step to overcoming them.

## Discussion Questions

1. What did you learn from family and culture about negotiation? Have you followed that advice?
2. What fears or barriers have held you back from negotiating in your career, and how might you overcome them using the strategies in this chapter?
3. Reflect on a past negotiation (successful or not). How could the Career Brainstorm Chart or other strategies in this chapter have impacted the outcome?
4. How do you think the S.T.A.R. method can help you craft compelling examples of your value during a negotiation?
5. When negotiating within your current organization, how can you determine whether your leaders are invested in your growth or stringing you along?
6. How has this chapter helped you embrace discomfort and the “tennis match” of negotiation?



# Chapter 12: Your Exit Strategy

Navigating the decision to leave a role or company is one of the most challenging yet empowering moments in any career.

This chapter shares the author's personal story of facing an unfair workplace situation and how she chose to leave with grace, preserving her reputation and personal brand. The chapter explores key indicators for when it's time to move on, pitfalls to avoid, and practical steps to ensure your exit is professional and dignified. It emphasizes the importance of aligning your career moves with your values and goals, even in the face of adversity.

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

---

- Recognize When It's Time to Leave
- Leaving due to self-imposed timelines or impatience can backfire if opportunities for growth still exist.
- Address short-term frustrations with communication and problem-solving before making a final decision.
- A graceful exit preserves your reputation and leaves a lasting impression on colleagues and leaders.

## Discussion Questions

1. Have you ever stayed in a role longer than you should have? What were the signs it was time to move on?
2. How can you ensure that your exit is professional and aligned with your values, even in the face of adversity?
3. How can you balance advocating for your needs with maintaining professional relationships during a resignation process?
4. What lessons can be learned from leaving a job with integrity, even if the situation feels unjust?
5. What are some ways you can feel empowered during the exit process, whether it's the company's decision or yours?

## Chapter 13: *Thrive in Color* & Afterword

This chapter serves as a practical conclusion, guiding readers to implement the strategies covered throughout the book in a manageable and impactful way.

The focus is on fostering long-term career success through intentional first steps, building momentum, and adopting self-advocacy as a lifestyle. Devika highlights the importance of starting with small steps to avoid being overwhelmed, embracing personal growth, and paying it forward to uplift others in underrepresented communities. The book ends on an empowering note, encouraging readers to make their own success stories ripple through their communities, fostering collective growth and change.

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

---

- Career advancement takes time. Focus on small, intentional steps instead of trying to overhaul everything at once.
- Self-advocacy becomes a way of life as you integrate these strategies into your professional routine.
- Share the strategies and tools you've learned with others in your community. Gift a copy of this book or share on your social networks. By mentoring, sponsoring, and supporting peers, you contribute to systemic change and collective success.

### Discussion Questions

1. What are the immediate actions you plan to take to implement the strategies from this book?
2. What are the longer term actions you will take to shift your mindset and approach career advancement strategically?
3. What are some ways you can “pay it forward” to support others in your community or workplace?
4. Reflect on a challenge in your career. How could the strategies in this book have helped you navigate it differently?
5. What does the phrase “Thrive in Color” mean to you, and how can you embody it in your professional life?

## Continue to Thrive in Color

### Leave a review on Amazon

[Amazon US](#)

[Amazon Canada](#)

[Amazon UK](#)

[Amazon Australia](#)

### Stay Connected

 [@DevikaBrij](#)

 [@DevikaBrij](#)