



<WOMEN.4/STEM>



FINDING YOUR VOICE: REAL-WORLD PRACTICE - WITH DAISY WU

13 May 2026



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

AGENDA



- **Welcome, AOC, Housekeeping**
- **Speaker Introduction**
- **Speaker Presentation**
- **Panel Questions**
- **Q&A with Audience**
- **Closing Remarks**





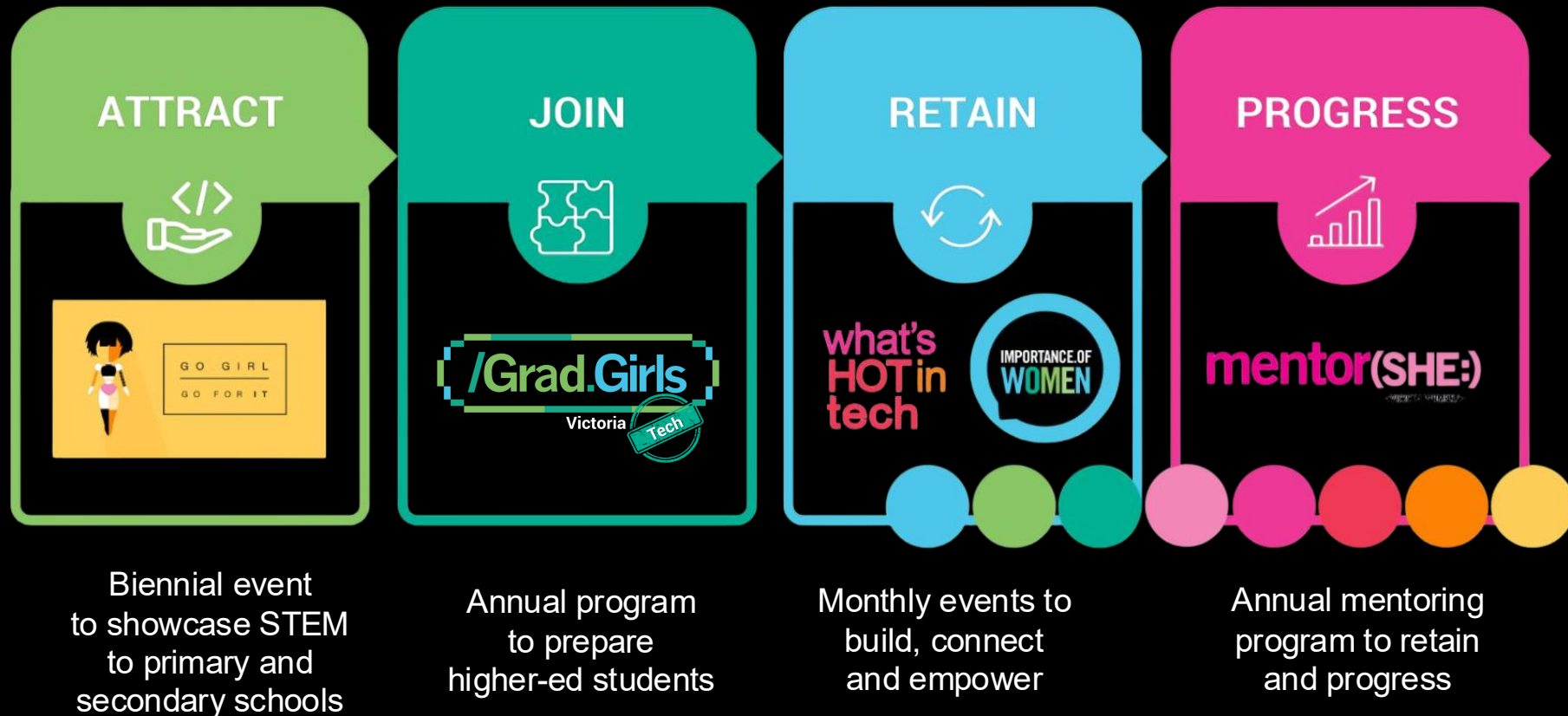
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WHY THIS SESSION MATTERS

ABOUT WOMEN 4 STEM

At Women 4 STEM, our vision is to champion and support women throughout their STEM careers by introducing practical and sustainable programs. These are tailored for the unique challenges faced by women in both urban and regional areas, providing them with the tools they need to thrive in their chosen fields.



INTRODUCING: DAISY WU



- TEDx speaker, author, and career connection strategist
- Founder of Multilingual Connectors
- Award-winning book '*Multilingual Connectors*' author
- Experience across Tier 1 organisations and University of Melbourne
- Women Changing the World Award Global Finalist
- Business Aficionado 25 Under 35 Entrepreneurship Award winner
- Top 100 Women in Construction and Women in Industry Awards Finalist
- Australian Institute of Building VIC Chapter Medalist
- Mentors professionals and business leaders to build visibility, influence, and meaningful career connections





***Finding Your Voice:
Real-World Practice to
Build Career Connections for
Performance, Wellbeing and Growth***



**MULTILINGUAL
CONNECTORS**

***Presented by
Daisy Wu***

13 May 2026



Without connections,
performance feels **lonely**



“Don’t make ‘basic’ mistakes”

“Don’t look unsure”

“Speak up”

“BE MORE”

A man in a light blue button-down shirt is sitting at a wooden desk in an office setting. He is holding a black pen in his right hand and gesturing with his left hand as if speaking. In front of him is a clipboard with a document. To his right is a silver laptop. A woman with long dark hair is seen from the back, sitting across from him. The background shows a window with a view of a city.

“Nobody can ever go far alone.”

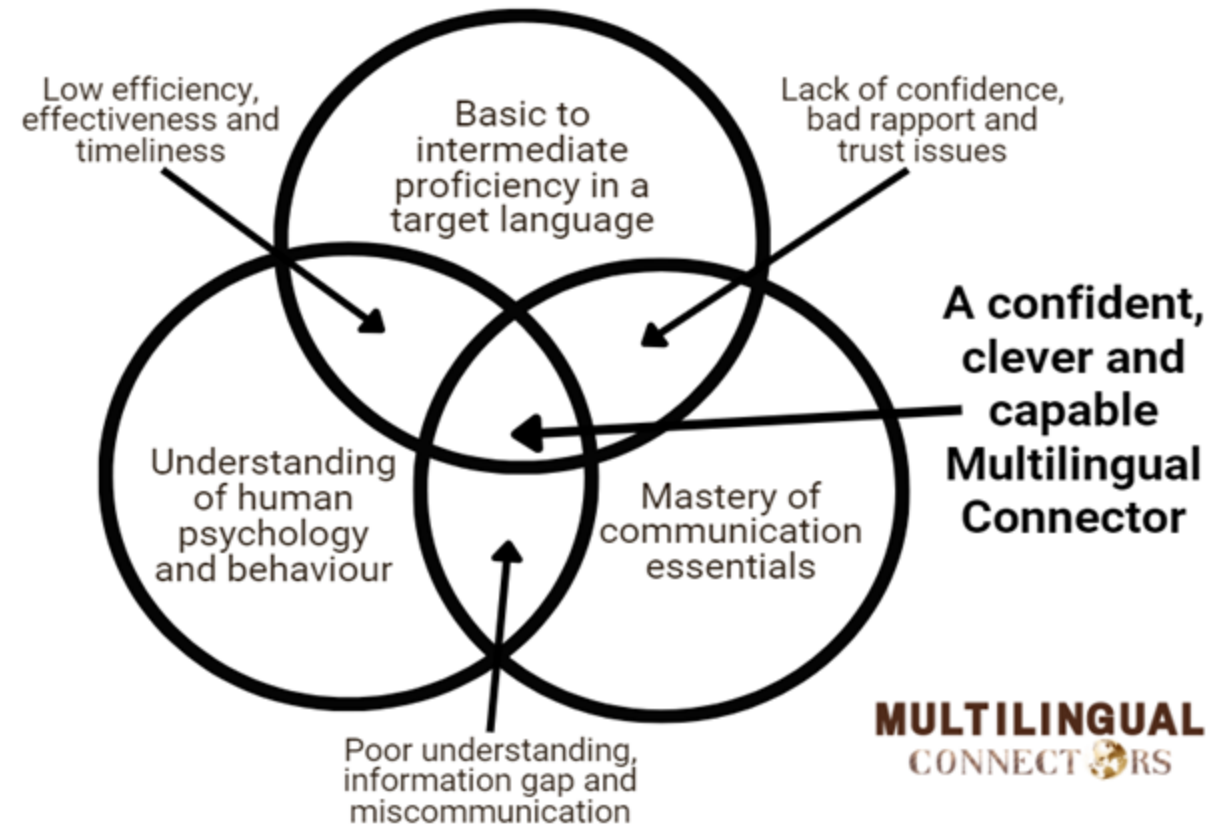
Connection is not
random by luck,

but **ENGINEERED** by
design



3 Essential Foundations to Turn Career Connections into Real Opportunities: *Mindset, Language, Context*

The MLC Framework



1. Mindset:



Which one resonates?

- * Imposter syndrome
- * Fear of showing up
- * What would others think

1. Mindset:

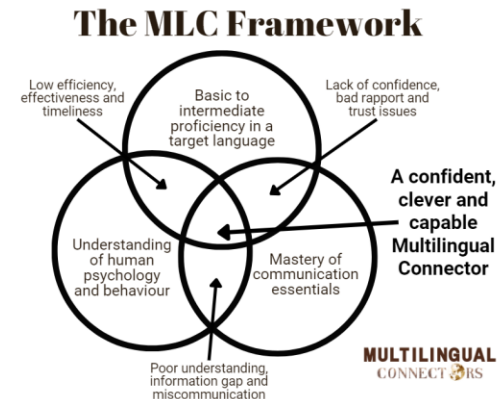
Quick reflection: 3 lessons you wish you'd known earlier to your younger self:

- * 6 months ago
- * 1 year ago
- * 3–5 years ago
- * 10+ years ago

***Mistake 1- Mindset:
You think ‘more experience’ will make you stand out***

“**Men** tend to pursue roles when they meet only **60%** of the qualifications,

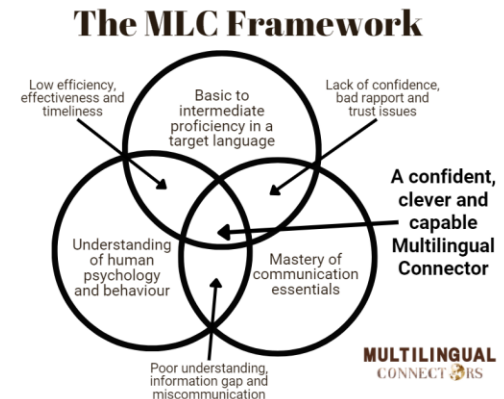
while **women** only apply if they **almost meet 100%.**”



***Mistake 1- Mindset:
You think ‘more experience’ will make you stand out***

“Most of the successful professionals land roles or promotions

when they **appear to** meet only **60-70% of the performance criteria.”**



Mistake 1- Mindset:

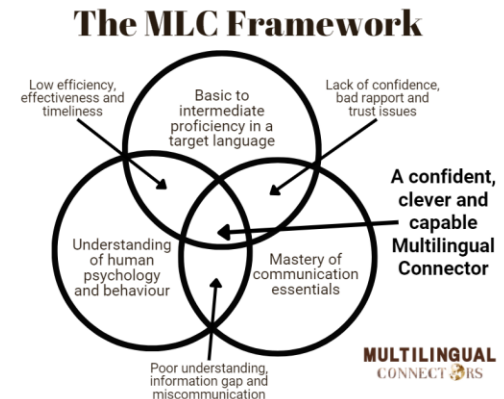
You think ‘more experience’ will make you stand out

“You are **not good at translating** the value of your work.”

≠

“Your English is not good enough.”

“You don’t have enough skills or experience.”



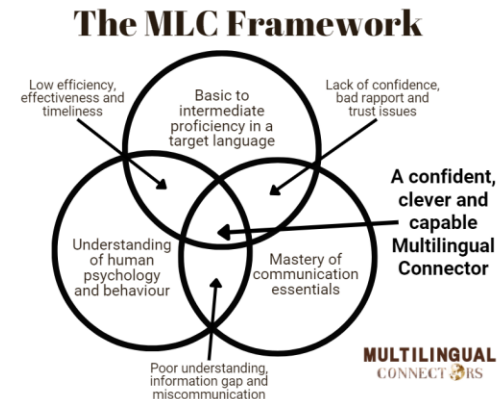
1. Mindset:

Strength-based Reframe for **vague verbs** on key duties to make yourself more **credible** and the other person more **curious**

“~~I **assisted in** XX project and provided structural design.~~”

“~~I **worked at** XXX company as an electrical engineer.~~”

“I proactively **led** key deliverables across stakeholders, **coordinated and streamlined** communication on the XX project **valued at \$\$\$**, contributing to its early delivery and **saving of \$/Time.**”



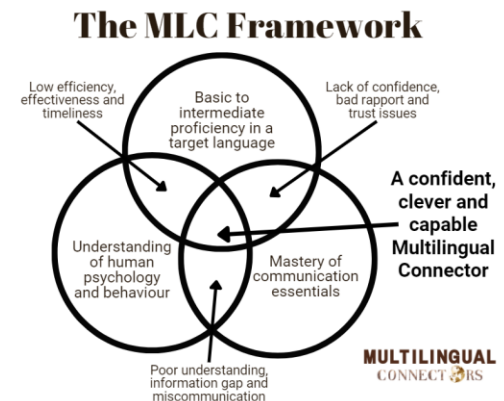
1. Mindset:

Strength-based Reframe for **weakening expressions** to make yourself more **credible** and the other person more **curious**

“I **just** had 3-years of internship in Asia (at **AECOM**).”

“I’m working locally **but** my company is small.”

“ That was **only** a volunteering role.....”

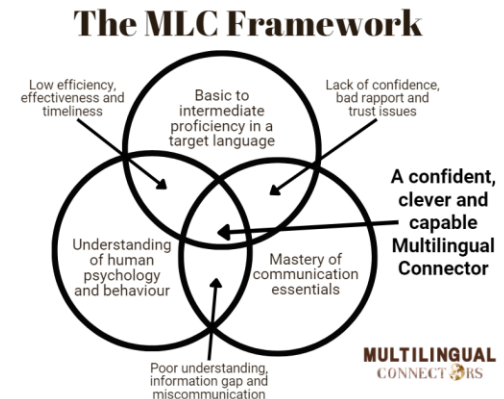


1. Mindset:

Strength-based Reframe for **weakening expressions** to make yourself more **credible** and the other person more **curious**

~~“I **just** had 3 years of internship in China (at **AECOM**).”~~

*“I gained three years of hands-on intern experience at **AECOM** in China, where I developed industry expertise in a fast-paced, global environment.”*

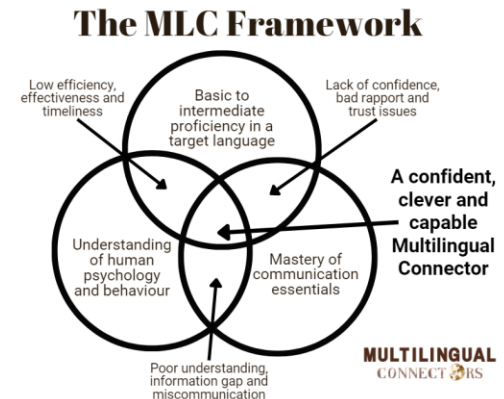


1. Mindset:

Strength-based Reframe for **weakening expressions** to make yourself more **credible** and the other person more **curious**

~~“I’m working locally **but** my company is small.”~~

*“I work in a **dynamic, close-knit team** where I take on **diverse responsibilities**, allowing me to develop a **broad skill set** and make a **direct impact**, liaising closely with **stakeholders**.”*

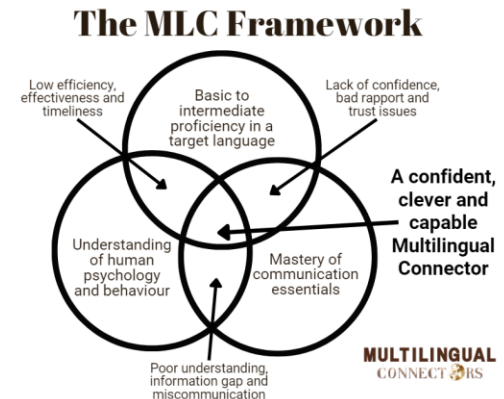


1. Mindset:

Strength-based Reframe for **weakening expressions** to make yourself more **credible** and the other person more **curious**

~~“That was **only** a volunteering role.....”~~

*“In that volunteering role , I **contributed to [specific project or impact]**. Basically/specially, I was **responsible for [routine duties]**. It’s been a valuable experience to **expand my network and competence in [skills]**”*



Exercise 1:

Craft a relatable & strength-based introduction

3-part structure (Present-Past-Future):

1. WHO YOU ARE

What you do / care about

2. WHAT YOU'VE CONTRIBUTED TO

Projects / experiences / strengths / impact

3. WHAT YOU'RE CURIOUS ABOUT

What you want to learn, explore or connect on

Exercise 1:

Craft a relatable & strength-based introduction

Sentence starters:

“One experience that shaped me was...”

“Over the past months, I’ve been working/focusing on...”

“Something I’m currently learning is...”

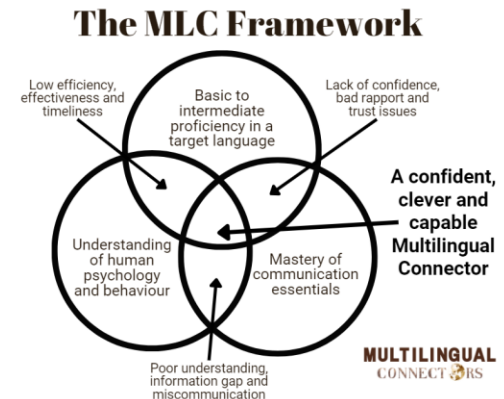
“A strength I’m developing is...”

“One thing I’d love to learn more about is...”

2. Language

Connection is built
when you communicate **proactively**,
rather than perfectly

Imperfect yet proactive>> **procrastinated**
due to perfectionism



***3 Essential Conversations
You Should Not Procrastinate
For Trust, Visibility and Connection:***

2. Language

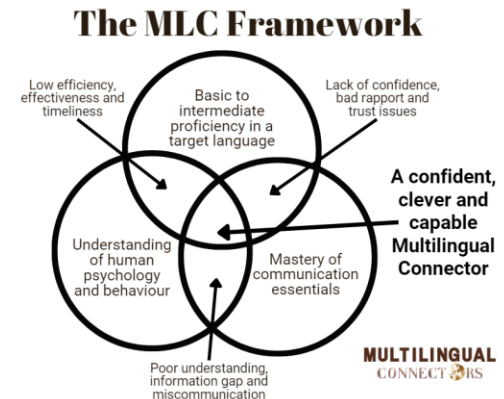
>> 1. Ask one clarifying question

Workplace

“How do I clarify expectations professionally?”

Networking / Career Transition

“How do I ask meaningful follow-up questions instead of surface-level small talk?”



Exercise 2: Ask one clarifying question

Scenario A — Workplace

Your manager gives you a task during a meeting, but the deadline, scope and priority are unclear throughout the briefing.

Less effective

 “Okay, will do.” “Sure.”

Better



“Would you like any parts completed before Friday’s coordination meeting?”

“Just to make sure I’m aligned with expectations, should I prioritise this over the other task from yesterday?”

“Who would be the best person for me to check with if I get stuck on this?”

“Would you prefer a brief summary update each day or a more detailed update later this week?”

Exercise 2: Ask one clarifying question

Scenario B — Networking / Career Transition

You meet someone at an industry event or networking session.

Less effective



“What do you do?” “Any advice for me?”

Better



“What’s been the most rewarding/challenging part of your work recently?”

“What’s something that surprised you in your first few years in the industry?”

“What skills do you think helped you most in the first 3-5 years in your career?”

“What’s been one of the biggest learning curves for you professionally?”

“What’s an area you think will become more important in the industry over the next few years?”

2. Language

3 Essential Conversations You Should Not Procrastinate For Trust, Visibility and Connection:

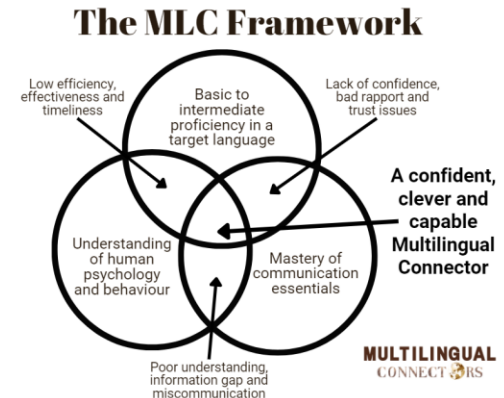
>> 2. Share a progress update

Workplace

“How do I communicate project progress and contributions tangibly?”

Networking / Career Transition

“How do I answer ‘What have you been up to?’ in a more memorable and meaningful way?”



Exercise 3: Share a progress update

Scenario A — Workplace

Your job captain seems busy and has not been checking in on you, whilst you do want some feedback and advice to ensure expectations are aligned.

Less effective  stay silent and wait for them to text you

Better 

“I’ve completed the first draft and I’m currently coordinating feedback from the structural team before finalising. Would be good if you could do a quick scan.”

“I’ve finished the initial calculations and identified a few coordination gaps that we may need to discuss in the next meeting.”

Useful Lead-ins

“Just checking in regarding...” “An update from my side about this week...”

“I wanted to give you a quick progress update before our coordination meeting...”

“Just a note that so far only XXX remains outstanding in this project.....”

Exercise 3: Share a progress update

Scenario B — Networking / Career Transition

A senior asks: “What have you been up to lately?” “How’ve you been?”

Less effective



“Just busy...” “Not much apart from work...”

Better



“Work/Uni has been well, and on top of that I ‘ve also been in Women in STEM’s professional development program and it made me think more deeply about leadership and communication in technical industries.”

“I’ve been trying to step outside my comfort zone more through networking and industry events lately.”

“Lately I’ve been involved in a complex project that really showed me how important communication is in engineering environments.”

“Recently I’ve been more interested in the intersection between technical work and stakeholder communication esp. from the podcasts and seminars I’ve consumed.”

2. Language

3 Essential Conversations You Should Not Procrastinate For Trust, Visibility and Connection:

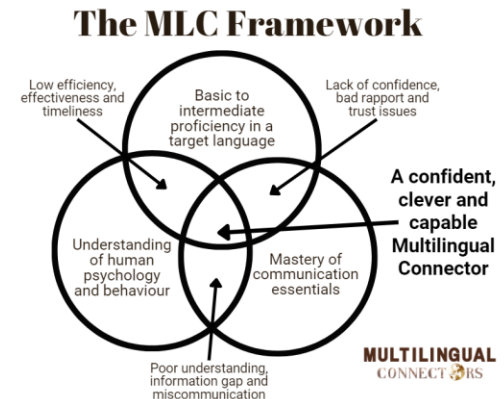
>> 3. Express one appreciation

Workplace

“How do I acknowledge colleagues professionally?”

Networking / Career Transition

“How do I continue a conversation or build connection naturally?”



Exercise 4: Express one appreciation

Scenario A — Workplace

A colleague helped explain something difficult or supported you during a task.

Less effective



“Thanks.” Or silence now and later

Better



“Thanks for taking the time to explain that — it helped me understand the bigger picture much more clearly and made the process much easier to navigate.”

“Your feedback helped me approach the issue XXX differently, and it almost saved us at least an extra day of work, so thank you for that.”

“Thanks for supporting me through that client meeting — I learned a lot from observing how you handled the discussion.”

Useful Lead-ins

“It was really helpful when you...” “I found your feedback really valuable because...”

Exercise 4: Express one appreciation

Scenario B — Networking / Career Transition

You've had a meaningful conversation with someone at an industry event.

Less effective



"Nice to catch up" "Thank you for meeting me"

Better



"I appreciated how openly you spoke about the challenges of leadership, particularly as it made me reflect on 1. 2. 3. that I am navigating in my current transition..."

"It was really thought-provoking your perspective on communication in engineering environments. I used to believe A, now I think B because of C as you shared..."

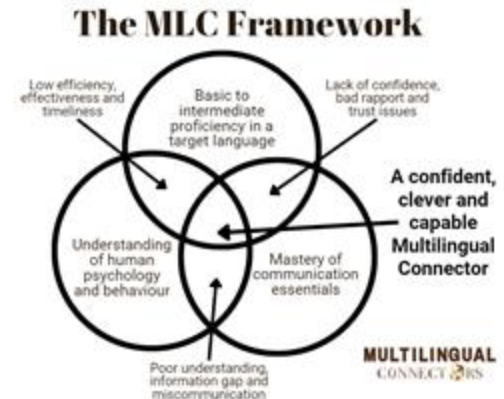
"I found your insights around stakeholder management really valuable----especially in my current position/project where A, B & C is of essence that you highlighted..."

"What you shared about navigating your early career was really relatable and moving forward, I will implement XXX in my next steps...."

2. Language:

From 'self-promotion' to connection

- * Not just wins → also challenges
- * Not just challenges → also transformations
- * Not just transformation → also lessons



**Even 'massive followings'
online or
working at a big firm**

**may still lead you nowhere
without designing the
career connection structure
with intention**

3.Context:

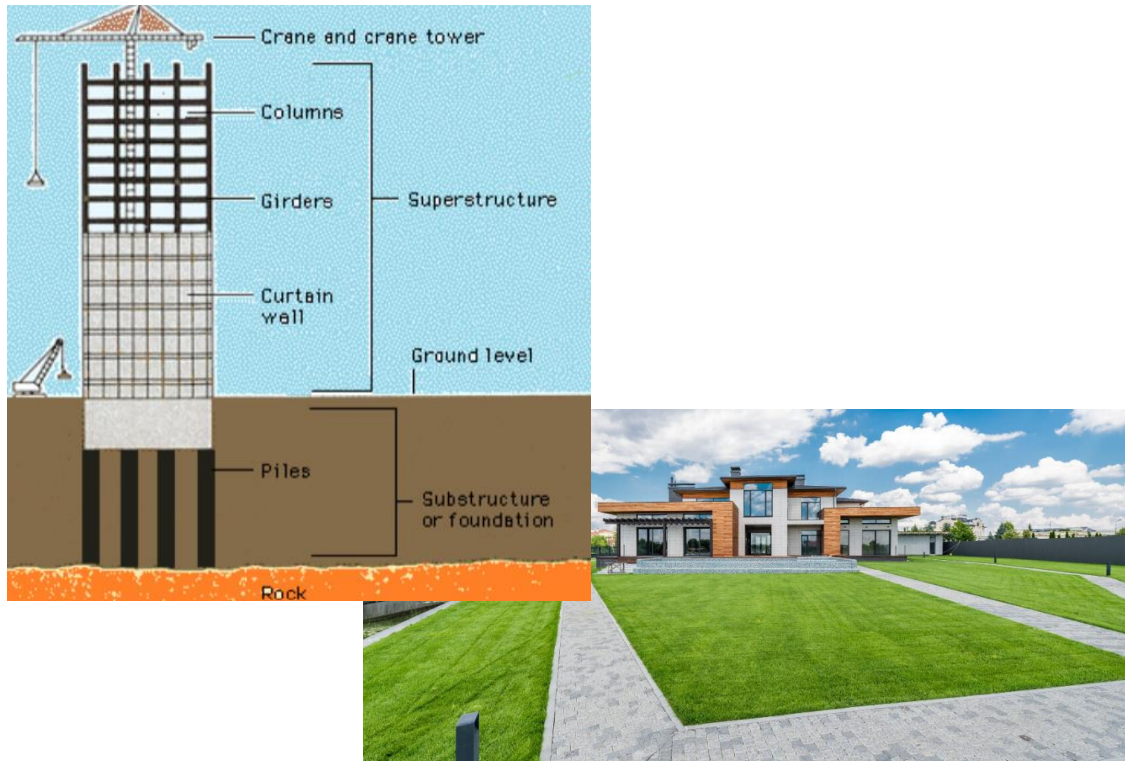


3.Context: Connection by design, not by chance



Under pressure —the **weakest connection** is where the **crack** begins before **collapse**

3.Context: Connection by design, not by chance



**Internal Career
Connection**

Vs

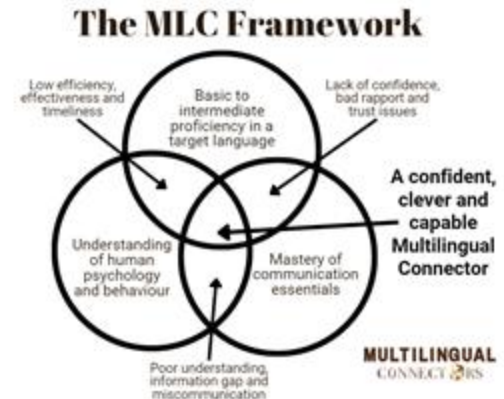
**External Career
Connection**

3.Context: Connection by design, not by chance

Three 3-Tier Career Connection Structure:

>> 1. Peers and followers

- * Share insights
- * Events / resources

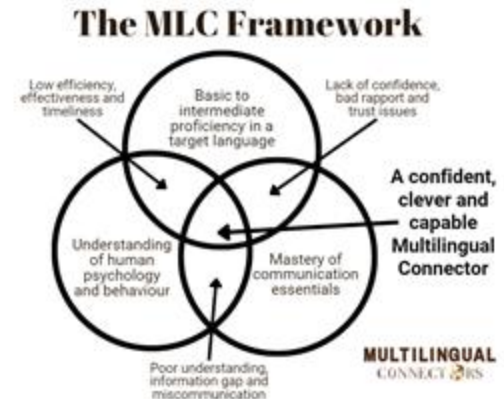


3.Context: Connection by design, not by chance

Three 3-Tier Career Connection Structure:

>> 2. Mentors and Champions

- * Give credit
- * Show proximity

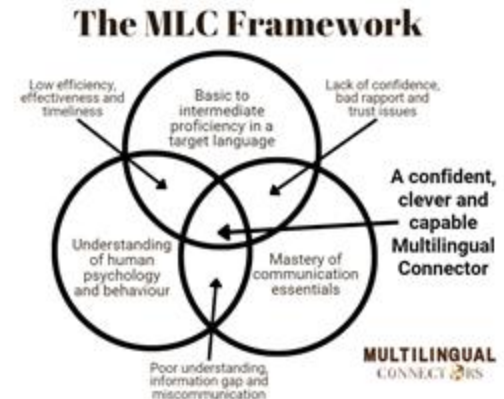


3.Context: Connection by design, not by chance

Three 3-Tier Career Connection Structure:

>> 3. Decision Makers

- * Initiate conversations
- * Offline channels



Exercise 5: Career Connection by Design

Identify:

**one internal OR external connection
from one of the three categories**

Then reflect and discuss:

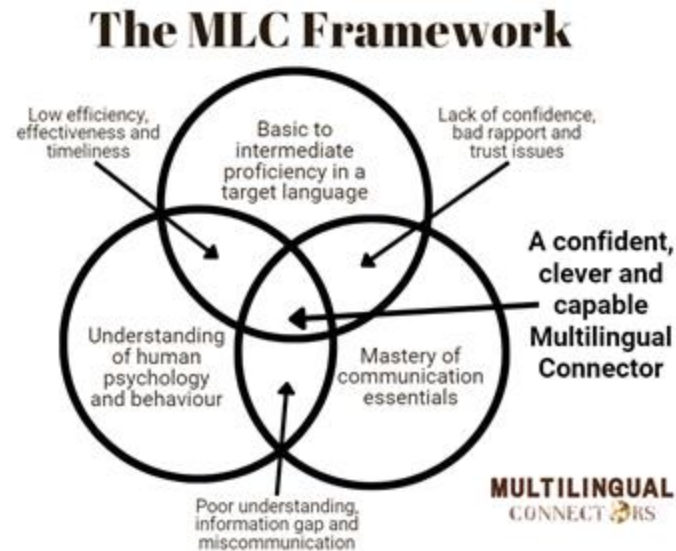
1. Who is this person?

(peer & follower / mentor & champion / decision-maker)

2. Why does this connection matter?

**3. What are 1–2 actions you can take in the
next 2 weeks?**

3 Essential Foundations to Turn Career Connections into Real Opportunities: *Mindset, Language, Context*





“Performance drives output.

Connection drives growth.”

*Connect with me on social media
and check out my work:*

Books/Mentoring/ Events/Speaking/Podcast:



POST EVENT SURVEY



CONNECT WITH DAISY



CONNECT WITH US



Email: students.gradgirlstech@women4stem.com.au

Discord: [Grad Girls Tech \(server\)](#)

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Victoria



THANK YOU
FOR JOINING US!