



RECLAIM YOUR 'I' – STOP PUTTING YOUR ACHIEVEMENTS DOWN TO A 'WE'

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Reclaim your 'I' – stop putting your achievements down to a 'we'

Almost every time I ask a client to tell me about a positive result delivered, an achievement story or a significant contribution made, I have to stop the storyteller in their tracks, maybe three or four times, because there isn't an 'I' in sight. That stealthy little 'we' loves grabbing the spotlight!

The generic 'we' is so dull. The specific 'I' is so compelling! Whose story is it anyway, if not yours? Minimising your contribution or even putting yourself down to ensure you stay 'part of the team' is a misguided approach. You're squandering an opportunity to get your story right for those who need to hear it.

The great news is that you can 'claim the I' while also acknowledging others. It's not an either/or situation. To cross the threshold from the 'we' habit to the 'I' habit, here's a fun exaggeration exercise to try:

Stand up (get your whole body into this) and tell your 'I did it!' story 'as if' you are speaking to a packed auditorium of 'fans' who love hearing your stories. Go wild. Go over the top. Step into your world champion, your super hero or your diva persona and enjoy punctuating the word 'I' all the way through your story by belting out the word with your voice and bigging it up with your posture. Blow your horn loud and clear. You're just playing. You can do it!

Playing the exaggeration game requires nothing less than total embodiment – voice, physicality, gestures and laughter. That 'physical thinking' helps rewire your brain, help break the habit of defaulting into 'we' and enjoying the warmth of the 'I' spotlight a bit more!

Now that you've gone way over the top with the 'I', tell your story again and see where you can acknowledge the 'we'. Keep it relevant but sparse. Keep it gracious but keep it moving. Be sure to end on the 'I' note.

It's essential to understand that claiming the 'I' isn't arrogance, but valuing; not selfishness, but ownership; and shining a light so others can see themselves more clearly too. Having the gravitas, presence and integrity to be able to claim the 'I' and also credit and appreciate others is key to your visibility.

If you don't claim your 'I', someone else will.

Diana Theodores is an international women's leadership coach. Her new book [Performing As You: How to have authentic impact in every role you play](https://www.amazon.co.uk/dp/1781333823) is out now, priced £12.99. To find out more go to: <https://www.amazon.co.uk/dp/1781333823>