

Taking part in this project was honestly a turning point for me. I've always heard the word "empowerment" tossed around in professional settings, but it usually felt like a buzzword. Through this experience, I finally felt what it actually means. Being in a space dedicated to supporting women changed the way I look at my own potential. It made me realize that I don't have to navigate my career as a solo mission; there is so much power in having a community that truly wants to see you succeed.

The highlight of the entire experience for me was the focus on public speaking. I've always been someone who gets a bit of a "shaky voice" when the spotlight is on me, but a specific moment during our practice sessions changed that. During Pecha Kucha, instead of feeling judged, I felt an incredible wave of support from everyone in the room. It wasn't about being a perfect orator; it was about the fact that my perspective mattered. That was the first time I felt like I was actually "owning" the room rather than just trying to get through the presentation. This project has changed how I see my future. Before, I think I was playing it a bit safe, but now I feel a new sense of confidence that I can carry into any boardroom or meeting. I've noticed that I'm not overthinking my contributions as much as I used to. I'm learning to trust my expertise. On a day-to-day level, I'm already applying this by speaking up more in small groups and being more intentional about how I present my ideas. I've realized that if I don't advocate for myself, I'm doing a disservice to the work I've put in. When I think back on the past few weeks, the main thing I feel is relief and excitement. Relief because I realized I'm not alone in my struggles, and excitement because I feel like I finally have the tools to move forward. This experience didn't just give me "skills"—it gave me a different version of myself. I'm walking away feeling more resilient, more vocal, and genuinely ready to take on whatever comes next in my career.