

Women's Leadership Programmes

The TALL
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“The components of the programme were the exact ingredients I needed to fully embrace personally and professionally my new role as leader within the organisation.”

PARTICIPANT

The TAILWALL

Rationale

In our experience, workplaces were not designed with difference in mind and many I&D initiatives, whilst developed with good intent, have been designed to ‘fix’ women and under-represented minorities rather than focusing on workplace culture, leadership behaviours, policies and systems that truly value difference and create opportunities for all talent to achieve their potential.

Our “Fish Tank” approach was born out of recognising that traditional female leadership programs were focusing on upskilling women, but they were returning to an environment that was not designed for them to thrive, like taking the fish out of a tank, giving them some training/coaching and then putting them back into the tank full of polluted water.

The organisations we work with are understandably wary of developing “women only” coaching programmes that look like they are designed to ‘fix’ women. We too share this caution, which is why we typically invite participants to help design the programme and, crucially, involve sponsors throughout the programme.

It is our strong belief that the only way to drive significant long-term change is to include everyone in uncovering the behaviours that create gender inequalities – and this means engaging men to partner with women to make this change.

“Wise owners do not blame the fish for their poor appearance or performance. They do not take the fish out from time to time to give them a spot of training, tell them to smarten up and look more lively, and then plop them back in the same dirty water. Instead, they clean the tank.”

DR WILLIAM TATE
INSTITUTE OF SYSTEMIC LEADERSHIP

A photograph of two women in professional attire sitting on a windowsill. They are both looking at their laptops. The woman on the left is wearing a dark blazer over a white top, and the woman on the right is wearing a grey blazer. The background shows a white brick building with several windows. The lighting is soft and natural, suggesting an indoor setting near a large window.

“The programme was a perfect blend of structured learning, safe spaces to reflect and public support through sponsorship – I have never felt so set up to succeed.”

PARTICIPANT



About The Tall Wall

The Tall Wall is a coaching company founded in 2017 to support businesses to create the conditions for men and women to thrive together. We believe that 21st century business success will not be at the expense of families, society or the environment. We know this is what top talent, irrespective of gender, demand and what boardrooms increasingly encourage. The pillars of our practice are: coaching (parental & executive), leadership programmes and consulting.

Our women's leadership programmes are what we believe to be best in class. We deploy an evidence based foundation and approach and blend this with our years of expertise of working with global, complex clients. Our delivery team is made up of exceptional leaders and Partners in their own right who have worked on the front line so can put themselves our clients' and participants' shoes.

Why partner with us

We are more than a group of consultants 'realising potential' within your organisation and people. It is what all consultants are focused on doing, so it can be difficult to differentiate between providers in a marketplace that is currently self-regulated and difficult to navigate for the uninitiated.

Quality

At The Tall Wall we have set a high benchmark for inclusion, based on criteria which epitomise our approach to best practice. Our values underpin how we work, and we apply these as part of a rigorous coach selection process. You and your talent population will experience The Tall Wall coaches as immediately relatable; each of us has been at the sharp-end and operated in environments like yours.

A personal relationship

As well as outstanding consultants, our clients repeatedly tell us that they value the personal relationship we build with them. You will experience real understanding of your business and its culture, reflected in what we do.

Meaningful data

As advisors, we will occupy a unique position in your organisation. You will experience our resolve to constructively share this with you so it can illuminate your leadership teams and people. Integral to our approach is agreeing a framework to share this with you in a constructive way so it can inform future decision making and policy.

Relevance

We have a deep knowledge of what works and what doesn't. Women's leadership programmes aren't a silver bullet to fix retention rates, particularly in organisations where there may be a mismatch between the 'view from the top' and what happens in practice. You will experience insights and guidance on which interventions make the difference and we ensure they are effective within your wider support programme.

Scalability

Whether you require a best practice approach to implementing a women's, partners' or returners' programme, The Tall Wall will architect and build a custom solution to meet your needs. Beyond the core of The Tall Wall consultants and coaches we have an associate network of experts that we deploy to suit the engagement both in terms of content expertise but also geographic location. You will experience this as a determination to really understand your brief, and comfort knowing we are commercially driven to deliver value; a clear scope aligned with your objectives.

Our experts

The Tall Wall's clients include professional services firms, financial institutions and large scale corporates. Our team consists of seasoned professionals with "at the coal face" experience of working in high performing, complex organisations. They understand, first hand, many of the demands and challenges your talented women are facing.

We are a global firm, with coaches and consultants based in the UK, US, mainland Europe, Singapore and Australia. You can read more about some of our professionals in the links below.



Helen Cowan
Founder & CEO



Helen Buckwell
Learning Consultant



Elaine Pearson
Diversity Consultant



Clare Allen
Executive Coach



Fahrah Gulamhusein
Executive Coach



Dr. Spela Trefalt
Executive Coach



Kirsty Reynolds
Executive Coach



Catherine Law
Executive Coach

“The Tall Wall provides us with a ‘one stop shop’ of expertise to be able to successfully and sustainably support our senior women.”

CLIENT – PROFESSIONAL SERVICES



Our approach

Our tried and tested approach to leadership programmes has proved to us that the biggest return on investment for our clients is when these three core components of the programmes are leveraged.

Learning sessions: bespoke sessions tailored to your culture and audience providing valuable frameworks and research as well as space to reflect on topics such as: leadership styles, authenticity, navigating obstacles, authority and impact, and managing stakeholders. The outcome of these sessions is knowledge sharing and increased self awareness, as well as the creation of a community and a network of support for participants.

Executive coaching: participants are provided with a programme of 1:1 executive coaching sessions and they are able to personally choose from a curated panel of coaches to suit your people and unique culture. The outcome is a confidential and safe space to explore personal reflections, ambitions and choices for each participant increasing empowerment and self-direction.

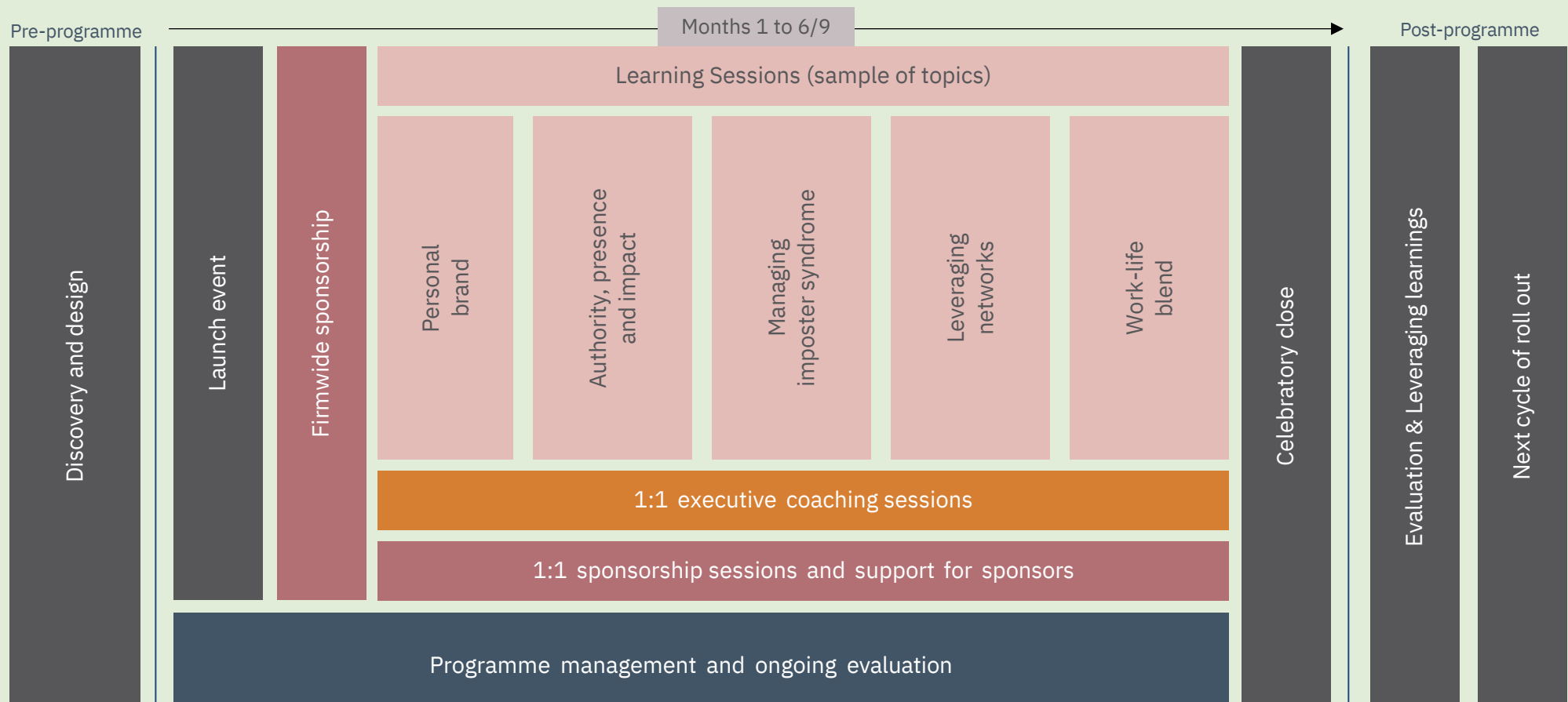
Sponsorship: a vital part of creating sustainable success – this typically takes the form of two parts: firstly a firm wide workshop to stimulate thinking and discussion around what sponsorship looks and feels like in your organisation and secondly a series of facilitated workshops with participants and a selected sponsor within the organisation. The outcome is a shift in behaviours and understanding around the importance of sponsorship in achieving change and in addition each participant is provided longer term public support to achieve their personal and professional goals.

In addition, we also leverage our deep expertise of what interventions can also add value for you in terms of the ‘wider organisational system’ in which women and Partners are operating in. This can be anything from written guidance, set up of networks and root cause consulting.

An example programme

Our best practice approach (illustrated below) is a starting point for working with you tailor the programme for your needs and includes:

1. A process of discovery and design to uncover what needs to be addressed through this programme and more widely.
2. Programme launch, well spaced interventions and celebratory close (underpinned by programme management).
3. Evaluation, leveraging of learnings and planning for next cycle of roll out.



Critical success factors

Our collective experience over many years of practice offers some lessons about designing and delivering women's development programmes. We have touched on some of these in our conversations to date and offer the following as food for thought.



The programme's objectives underpin everything that follows. Be clear on what you are looking for from this development programme and what will be different as a result of the interventions



This population likes to be given some choice in the content and delivery, and to feel a programme is highly bespoke to them.



Ensure the elements of support are knitted together into a programme that is more than the sum of its parts. Launch and close events, with check in points throughout the programme ensures there is a flow and a momentum to the individual components.



Establish a small programme steering group made up of representatives from across the business, with the aim of keeping the programme on track and assessing its impact.



Communicate an overarching vision for change in the organisation, incorporating other activities planned or in motion, including this programme, so that they are aligned under a unifying intent.



Be wary of overloading this very busy population with too many interventions: learning modules; 1:1 coaching; check ins. Extend the programme duration rather than pack too much into a short period of time.



Start with a pilot. When women's development programmes are a new concept in an organisation, run a pilot first to assess impact and incorporate learnings.



Provide a mix of group and individual work for participants. There is a powerful interplay between group learning and 1:1 coaching that helps amplify the impact of each.



Engage an overall programme sponsor, ideally at the most senior level within the business. This creates legitimacy, internal momentum and buy-in, which avoids the programme becoming "just an HR project".



Make senior sponsorship integral to the programme. It offers significant benefits both for the participants, but also the sponsors themselves (who are often senior men in your organisation) and your wider business culture.



“The quality of the programme exceeded my expectations in terms of content, relevance and style of delivery.”

PARTICIPANT

The TALLWALL

The impact of our programmes



90%

promoted in the 24 months
post-programme

100%

Increase or maintain
performance rating

80%

feel more supported by
the organisation as a
result of the programme

Potential to increase...

Attraction

of female talent, by signalling that
women and diversity are valued by
the business

Retention

of female
talent who feel valued and
invested in

“

*“I was amazed how much coaching
could unfold my thinking and bring a
refreshed perspective and mindset.”*

“

*“The most impactful training I
have ever had.”*

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*“The programme helped with my
confidence so that I could be a leader
in a way that felt authentic to me.”*

A group of seven women are seated around a large wooden conference table in a modern office setting. They are engaged in a meeting, with several laptops open in front of them. The room features large windows on the right side, a wooden door on the left, and a large white decorative object hanging from the ceiling. The overall atmosphere is professional and collaborative.

“Being invested in by the organisation in this way has totally shifted my levels of engagement, connection and feeling of belonging.”

PARTICIPANT

Contact us for an initial conversation to explore how we can work with you to design and deliver a women's leadership programme.

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