
Women in Leadership Development Programme

18 – 22 January 2027
Cape town





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Ref: 1006_379 **Date:** 18 – 22 January 2027 **Location:** Cape town **Fees:** 4800 GBP

Programme Summary

Organizational pipelines frequently experience substantial attrition of high-potential female talent at critical junctures toward executive accountability. The Women in Leadership Development programme confronts structural advancement barriers, organizational power dynamics, and the psychological dilemmas that disproportionately impact female progression. Participants investigate evidence-based frameworks to balance assertiveness with organizational expectations, overcome double-bind biases, and cultivate strategic networks that generate executive sponsorship. This focused masterclass is presented by Mars Training Centre UK.

The Business Case

Enterprises with gender-balanced executive representation demonstrate superior governance metrics, enhanced employee retention rates, and improved strategic agility. However, informal corporate politics and outdated evaluation heuristics often hinder upward mobility for qualified women. Establishing targeted interventions enables organizations to address systemic pipeline leakages, retain key female decision-makers, and institutionalize equitable succession structures.

- Pipeline Retention: Mitigates attrition among high-performing female directors by providing structured upward pathways.
- Corporate Governance: Broadens perspective within governance committees, improving holistic risk management.
- Sponsorship Acceleration: Formalizes strategic alliances that convert passive mentorship into active career advocacy.
- Organizational Equity: Dismantles unwritten cultural criteria that obscure transparent assessment and executive promotion.

Principles and Evidence Base

- Social Identity and Double-Bind Theory: Examines the systemic communicative traps confronting women between perceived competence and warmth.
- Herminia Ibarra's Career Transition Framework: Explores identity evolution, outgrowing operational comfort zones, and cultivating external network circles.
- Strategic Network Architecture: Details the differential utility between informational advice networks and high-impact sponsorship alliances.



Intended Participants

- Women directors, vice presidents, and division heads preparing for enterprise-wide or board roles.
- Female functional chiefs in finance, legal, technology, strategy, and operations driving business transformation.
- High-potential female managers stepping into expansive profit-and-loss responsibilities.
- Principals in multi-generational family businesses and female executives within regulated public bodies.

The syllabus supports female executives determined to break through career plateaus and steer strategic organizational agendas.

Learning Outcomes

1. Participants will be able to dissect institutional advancement hurdles and formulate counter-strategies against implicit workplace bias.
2. Participants will be able to construct an influential executive presence rooted in personal authenticity rather than behavioral imitation.
3. Participants will be able to map organizational power dynamics and secure active sponsors who advocate in closed succession discussions.
4. Participants will be able to execute high-stakes negotiations for budgets, strategic remits, and executive remuneration.
5. Participants will be able to navigate the warmth-competence trade-off during high-pressure stakeholder briefings.
6. Participants will be able to formulate a comprehensive ninety-day advancement blueprint to secure measurable enterprise impact.

Programme Structure

Day 1: Structural Barriers and Career Architecture

How do female directors diagnose institutional career hurdles and map transparent progression trajectories?

- Systemic Pipeline Dynamics and the Broken Rung Phenomenon
- Navigating Double-Bind Dilemmas and Shifting Attribution Biases
- Deconstructing the Confidence-Competence Conundrum in Executive Circles
- Auditing Career Capital: Reputational Assets and Operational Overload
- Strategic Identity Transitions from Functional Specialist to Enterprise Director

Day 2: Organizational Power Dynamics and Sponsorship Networks

How are informal power networks decoded to convert passive mentorship into executive sponsorship?



- Formal Authority Versus Informal Influence: Decoding Corporate Coalitions
- Constructing High-Yield Professional Networks Across Siloed Functions
- The Mechanics of Executive Sponsorship: Finding and Engaging Advocates
- Navigating Micropolitics Without Compromising Professional Integrity
- Strategic Coalitions: Aligning Agendas with Key Organizational Gatekeepers

Day 3: Authentic Executive Presence and Gravitas

How is authentic authority projected effectively in high-stakes governance arenas?

- Deconstructing Executive Gravitas: Poise, Decisiveness, and Emotional Self-Command
- Vocal Authority and Non-Verbal Communication Dynamics in Boardroom Settings
- Overcoming the Likability Trap While Projecting Decisive Direction
- Strategic Narrative Framing: Articulating Visionary Enterprise Solutions
- Managing Visibility Across Hybrid and Traditional Executive Forums

Day 4: High-Stakes Negotiation and Resource Advocacy

How do female decision-makers negotiate aggressively for functional capital and career recognition?

- Gender Nuances in Corporate Bargaining and Negotiation Strategy
- Advocating for Enterprise Budgets, Strategic Projects, and Headcount
- Negotiating Remuneration, Executive Titles, and Board Appointments
- Managing Defensive Counter-Pushback and Hostile Questioning
- Creating Collaborative Value While Enforcing Uncompromised Boundaries

Day 5: Enterprise Impact and Advancement Strategy

How is executive momentum sustained to shape organizational strategy and develop future female pipelines?

- Cultivating Psychological Capital and Resisting Executive Burnout
- Institutionalizing Sponsorship Pathways for Emerging Female Talent
- Translating Functional Achievements into Enterprise-Level Value Propositions
- Constructing an Auditable Ninety-Day Career Acceleration Roadmap
- Presenting the Executive Advancement Blueprint to Senior Stakeholders

Methodology

The course employs an applied executive learning methodology combining psychometric network diagnostics, experiential negotiation simulations, and peer consulting circles. Participants evaluate real-world workplace scenarios, dissect power dynamics, and refine self-advocacy strategies within a confidential, high-calibre setting.



- Suggested activity: Performing an organizational network audit to identify sponsorship deficits and influence choke points.
- Suggested activity: Participating in a recorded negotiation simulation focused on securing funding for an enterprise initiative.
- Suggested activity: Peer-reviewing personal gravitas and communication delivery during an executive pitch exercise.

Capstone Output

Each participant formulates an Executive Advancement Portfolio comprising an audited organizational stakeholder map, a targeted sponsorship acquisition plan, and a strategic ninety-day action framework. This capstone portfolio serves as a concrete operational tool that enables participants to secure critical enterprise assignments and accelerate their career trajectories.

Frequently Asked Questions

How does this course differ from general executive programmes?

This masterclass concentrates specifically on the gendered organizational dynamics, covert biases, and structural barriers that female professionals encounter when seeking top-tier executive roles.

Does the curriculum address industry-specific workplace challenges?

Yes. The strategic influence and negotiation frameworks are adaptable across corporate, financial, technical, and regulatory environments.

What balance is maintained between theory and applied practice?

The syllabus pairs academic research on organizational behavior with practical negotiation role-plays, executive presence practice, and peer network analysis.

How are confidential organizational challenges handled during discussions?

All cohort discussions and peer-review exercises operate under strict non-disclosure conventions to ensure open, candid dialogue regarding corporate dynamics.