

Background

Building a pipeline of talented women in male-dominated industries is one critical step in developing diverse executive teams capable of the best thinking and highest performance. Research shows that the intelligence of a team is not contingent upon the collective IQ of the team members, but rather upon factors such as the presence of women.

Research such as a recent study by the Australian government also shows that women continue to face many challenges in advancing in the workplace.

The Australian Pipelines and Gas Association, Women's
Leadership Development Program was initiated in 2019 to
address a lack of diversity in the Australian pipeline industry.
The program was based upon a successful women's
leadership program at the American Gas Association, and
provides high value to the members of APGA and to APGA as
an association by supporting these purposes: 1) to build a
pipeline of talented women in our industry; 2) to provide
these women with the skills and capabilities they need to
progress in their careers; and 3) to create a support and
mentoring network that fuels their advancement in the
workplace and their personal well-being.

To date, seven cohorts of women totaling 175 participants have successful completed the program with outstanding results for both the participants and our industry.

Program Description

Step 1: Initial In-Person Kick-off -1.5 days

The purpose of this meeting is to introduce the participants one another, deliver initial content on leadership and personal development, and solicit participant input on future topics.

Participants explore their current skill sets and desired learning objectives in areas such as communication, leadership/management, strategizing, mentoring and being mentored, and personal branding.

Step 2: Two Virtual Meetings 90-minutes each, spaced three to six weeks apart The content for each of these meetings is developed based upon the feedback received in the first meeting, typically includes guest speakers, and includes topics such as:

- Personal Branding and Confidence Building
 - Implementing Strategies in a VUCA World
 - Confidence/Imposter Syndrom
 - · Negotiation Skills
 - · Having Difficult Conversations
 - Communication Skills
 - Leadership and Motivating Employees
 - Creating an Agile Culture
 - High-Performing Teams
 - · Sponsors and Mentors

Step 3: Culminating In-Person Meeting - 1.5 days
The cohort meets in-person to close-out the program with
content and guest speakers on topics developed with their
input.

<u>Program Deliverables</u>

This program provides high value by supporting the achievement of the following deliverables:

- Supporting the core purposes of attracting, retaining, and promoting women in our industry.
- The development of specific skills that enable each participant to achieve higher levels of performance within their organization.
- The establishment of a women's support network that increases the probability that participants will remain in the industry.
- The creation of a pipeline of talented women that have the skills required to progress to positions of greater responsibility within their organizations.

Program Outcomes

Since this program commenced in 2019, APGA has increased their female membership from 18% to 23%. The "face" of the association is changing, with any more women attending association events. I heard a male attendee comment at a APGA dinner, "wow, there are a lot of women here"!

The women have articulated a significant positive impact from this program. During one evaluation 90% reported an increase in confidence, 85% of participants rated the program extremely valuable and 15% rated it very valuable.

One participant stated "I've had two promotions in two years after 10 years of a stalled career. This program has transformed my life." Additional comments - "APGA's Women's Leadership Development Program has proven to be a tailored, thought-provoking training which has challenged me & greatly enhanced my understanding of leadership."

"The flexibility with the topics covered and the supportiveness of the group and presenters made this one of the best professional development courses I been to. The skills and knowledge I have taken away will help me be a better leader."