

nationalgrid

Case study: developing talent

Ensuring women don't hit a mid-management glass ceiling

Following extensive research, National Grid found that its female employees wanted to progress but that promotions beyond a mid-management level were proportionately low. It appears a glass ceiling had been created and they were determined to give their employees the tools so that they could progress to more senior roles.

In March 2021, National Grid completed a pilot programme designed to do just this. "Strategies for Success", run in partnership with Edit Development, was aimed at developing women at mid-management level, targeting key attributes that are externally proven to have the biggest impact: **managing your brand, self-belief & resilience, and visibility & sponsorship**.

Over the course of six months, a cohort of 20 women came together virtually to understand how to navigate the unwritten rules and political landscape in the business and how they could spotlight their strengths to others. It provided an excellent opportunity for personal focus, learning and development, as well as connectivity with other participants. **The cohort found the networking element hugely valuable**, supporting each other beyond the end of the programme as they became friends.

And the numbers speak for themselves – the overall programme was rated 4.57 out of 5 with 91% of participants experiencing an increase in confidence and some going on to promotions or new roles.

Cathy Fraser, Business Continuity Manager at National Grid ESO, particularly enjoyed the ability to discuss things in smaller groups and to be able to take the time for self-reflection. Following the programme, she has been successful in applying for a new senior position.



"The programme was a real mix of facilitated group conversations, structured presentations, keynote speakers and working alongside buddies for targeted feedback."

Cathy Fraser, Business Continuity Manager



Her colleague on the programme, Susana, has been much more focussed on her own development and career aspirations since attending the course. She has been recognised as one of the Top 50 Women in Engineering in 2021 by WES and has been promoted.



The course was possibly one of the most important, eye opening and empowering programmes I ever attended. Some may underestimate the power of a course of this nature and content, but I have become a stronger individual and professional, I have

grown in self-belief, I have been able to address my own fears and doubts head on as I no longer feel alone on that journey.”

Susana Neves e Brooks,
Lead Construction Project Manager



The individual coaching session along with the smaller group coaching were extremely helpful. Considering these were during the pandemic, it helped massively by discussing personal development with peers.”

She also says: “Over the 12 years I’ve been at National Grid, I have definitely seen an exponential progress in gender balance either via recruitment or upskilling existing staff. We know there is definitely more we can do and programmes like this play a part in it.”

Sri Rao,
Optimisation Planning Manager

Since attending the programme 75% of the participants have made broadening or promotional moves within the organisation or have an elevated talent position; 100% of the women that joined the programme have been retained. Due to the results, Strategies for Success is now being introduced as a regular programme as part of National Grid’s work to improve gender balance within the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion agenda.

75% programme participants have made broadening or promotional moves within National Grid or have an elevated talent position