

Case study: leadership training



Charting a course to gender balance

Employees in Shell's Shipping and Maritime business ensure it can continue to provide its products and services worldwide. From optimising the journey of a ship delivering liquefied natural gas from Australia to Japan, or fuels from Rotterdam to Singapore, Shell knows its people make the difference.

But in a traditionally male-dominated, hierarchical industry, where many leaders started their careers at sea before moving to shore-based roles, gender balance has for a long time seemed out of reach. Shell set out to change that.

In today's rapidly changing business environment, Shell recognises that having gender balance is essential to ensure the business thrives. So the company is looking at everything it does, from changing the way it recruits, to setting clear ambitions on diversity in the annual performance measurement of its leadership.

But making sure it has the right working environment matters too. Shell's leaders require the skills to lead a workforce that welcomes everyone, fosters diversity of thought and ensures safety and care for its people.

For this reason, the company put in place leadership training to develop these skills. The programme focused on four key aspects of training:

1. **Inclusion:** creating clarity, inspiring colleagues and building common ground
2. **Diversity:** focusing on benefits of gender diversity and identifying and eradicating existing biases
3. **Talent development:** ensuring diversity is consistently considered throughout the recruitment process at all levels, including experienced hires, graduates and cadetships
4. **Coaching:** a peer-to-peer coaching programme for senior leaders, to develop core team leadership skills

Shell is aiming to build a culture that cares for all people. "**Respect in the Workplace**" and "**Conscious Inclusion**" training is mandatory for all line leaders and employees.

The company has also rolled out the Big White Wall across its Fleet organisation, which allowed people to anonymously raise any mental health issues they are concerned about. Shell believes that these types of initiatives are an important way of building a culture of care and inclusion.



"While we recognise that there is no quick fix, we are already seeing improvements. Shipping and Maritime achieved a 50/50 gender balance in our Leadership Team of 12 colleagues for the first time in our 125-year history. We have achieved this success in an industry where female executives are traditionally under-represented. Additionally, 110 men and women joined our Women in Maritime networking event in London, showing the real energy from across our business to make our workplace more representative of the societies in which we operate. I'm very proud of our commitment to date, and I look forward to our continued progress."*

Catherine Hall
Commercial and Strategy General
Manager, Shipping and Maritime

50 / 50
gender balance achieved
in Shipping and Maritime
Leadership* [*Data from 2019]