



Leveraging The Power of We

Why Fortune 500s are turning to a new approach based on peer-mentoring to fast-track gender diversity and advance more women into leadership roles.

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Real Women. Real Power.
Emerging
women

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Executive Summary

It's just not happening fast enough. In the past four years the US has seen only 2% growth in the numbers of women on executive boards of Fortune 500 companies, compared with 11% in Western Europe.

For at least ten years, boards and CEOs have been asking, "Where are the women?". At this rate, the World Economic Forum estimates it will take a discouraging 202 years to reach economic gender parity.

But we don't have 202 years! The urgency of these efforts has taken center stage with the Women's March and #MeToo, and as record numbers of women seek public office. While these movements have cast a welcome spotlight on women in the workplace and beyond, they have also showcased how far there is to go. Organizations and their employees have become increasingly frustrated at the slow pace of change.

It's not for lack of effort. Companies have not been idle; hiring more women, setting up mentoring, offering countless training sessions, reworking work/life balance practices. Some of these initiatives have made it easier for women to advance up the leadership pipeline. But with an estimated \$8 billion a year spent in this area, aren't we entitled to expect larger numbers of women reaching the top by now?

Should organizations just throw in the towel?

NOT AT ALL.

The essential benefits to organizations from achieving greater gender diversity and more women in leadership remain compelling. They include more robust succession planning, better customer alignment and lower employee turnover. Gender diverse teams have also been shown to reduce corporate risk and spark innovation. Taken together, these assets contribute to proven financial and competitive advantage.

Where current approaches fall short

Unfortunately, a number of popular gender diversity approaches have now been shown to lack effectiveness in rapidly increasing the numbers of women in leadership, and the jury is out on others. A specific limitation is failing to recognize that many women have a hard time seeing themselves as leaders. They therefore either never apply for promotions or suffer from “impostor syndrome” when given an opportunity. Simply slotting women into senior roles without adequate preparation and support is especially ill advised because any “failure” by a woman leader has a chilling deterrent effect on other women down the pipeline.

Given these risks, a crucial step for rapid and lasting ROI is ensuring any approach considers women specific leadership factors alongside the pace of advancement. It also makes obvious sense to focus time and investment on methods that are rated highly by women.

A new approach is smartly founded in what research shows works for women

A unique new format based on two such proven diversity approaches – **peer mentoring and sponsorship** – is already showing great promise at Fortune 500 companies. This solution is designed to create an advancement wave for women that cascades rapidly through an organization, while better preparing women – and corporate cultures – for women’s leadership.

The peer mentoring component here differs radically from informal or traditional forms of women’s networking or leadership training. Instead, the secret sauce of “We Power” is a highly intentional, externally facilitated program based on intimate women’s “Power Circles”. By mixing women of different statuses in the Power Circles, middle management is engaged, power is leveled and the organizational impact is sped up. By connecting women across different functions and locations (via video conference or in-person), women feel more connected to each other – and the company.

As the women proceed through a structured program, each participant is given the chance to learn to be both mentor and mentee. Guaranteed confidentiality allows for a vulnerability that forges lasting bonds.

Vitality, the women's Power Circles are complemented by a 1:1 sponsorship program led by senior manager volunteers of both genders. Sponsors actively advocate and network on behalf of sponsored women and have a personal stake in their progress. Sponsors have their own facilitated "sponsor circles" where they meet for mutual support and best practice training and advocate on behalf of their protégés.

In a successful program, women's Power Circles are a transformational experience that creates a lasting support network. As women start bringing their authentic "leader" selves to work, they inspire other women and men to do the same. As women thrive in current and new leadership roles, more women are incentivized to move up. This excitement is contagious which leads to an ever expanding "virtuous circle" that persists long after formal Power Circle sessions end.

Case Studies show "The Power of We" works

Results from recent programs with Fortune 500 clients of Emerging Women involving 286 female participants and 160 senior level sponsors, showcase the "Power of We" in action. A very high percentage of Power Circle participants report this approach gives them more confidence, helps them gain more clarity around their chosen career path, and makes them feel ready to plan their next move up with the company.

Melody Manley, Hewlett Packard, Inc.'s Program Management Office Head for Talent and Learning describes the effect,

"The impact has been faster and broader than we could have hoped. Women (who have gone through the program) encourage their circle members – and other women in their departments – to persist, speak up and go after promotions. Linking the participant training to training for sponsors whose main role is to actively "network up" on behalf of individual women has also fast-tracked results and is shifting attitudes across the board."

57%

Crucially, 57% of program participants reported, "My Power Circle gave me the confidence and support I needed to apply for a new position within my company".

28%

Even more compelling, within six months of completing the program, 28% of female participants had already applied for a new position within the organization.



Conclusion

After years of frustratingly slow progress, models based on “The Power of We” offer the greatest potential yet to speed up the numbers of women achieving and becoming role models of leadership. By combining effective and highly shareable forms of peer mentoring with sponsorship support from executives higher up in the organization, women and organizations can partner to overcome the obstacles that deter women from seeking advancement. An empowered spirit can then cascade through an organization, carrying much larger numbers of women to the very top.

To learn more about how new peer mentoring and sponsorship methodologies can set your organization on the fast-track to successful women’s advancement, contact:

thepowerofwe@emergingwomen.com
www.emergingwomen.com

The Power of We:

A timely game changer for gender diversity

THE ISSUES

- › Slow Progress on women's advancement
- › Low ROI on \$8 billion diversity annual spend
- › Many women need leadership identity shift
- › Popular existing methods often rated ineffective by women
- › Others, too costly to roll out to large employee numbers

WHY IT MATTERS MORE THAN EVER

- › Proven financial benefits
- › Talent shortages
- › Succession Planning concerns
- › Innovation pressures
- › Drive for greater impact and efficiency from diversity and development budgets

WHAT WORKS

ACCORDING TO WOMEN AND FORTUNE 500 CASE STUDIES

PEER MENTORSHIP IN
POWER CIRCLES
+
SPONSORSHIP

IMPACT

- | | |
|------------------|---------------------|
| ✓ Fast | ✓ Long-lasting |
| ✓ Cost-effective | ✓ Self-perpetuating |
| ✓ Deep | ✓ Global |
| ✓ Wide | |

About the Authors



Chantal Pierrat MBA

Chantal Pierrat is the CEO of Emerging Women. After a successful career in medical technology and women's and personal growth publishing, Chantal founded Emerging Women in 2012 with a mission of increasing women's leadership across the globe. Emerging Women is now a global women's empowerment and media platform serving over 70,000 women worldwide. It has graduated hundreds of women from individual Power Circles and hosted acclaimed international women's conferences featuring such inspirational speakers as Jane Goodall, Amy Cuddy and Brené Brown. In the corporate space, Emerging Women works with Fortune 500 clients such as Hewlett Packard and Oracle on women's leadership solutions based on peer mentoring and sponsorship. In the last year alone, 238 women participants and 160 sponsors have graduated from Emerging Women corporate programs.



Jennifer Simpson PHD

Jennifer Simpson is President of Integrated Work and founder of A Bolder Vision. Over two decades as an author, educator and strategic advisor, she has studied the relationship between community and diversity and helped organizations of all sizes – across sectors – translate their visions into practice. Integrated Work has been a leader in strategic impact consulting, peer leadership and applied leadership in both the for profit and not for profit spaces for over 20 years.



Leveraging The Power of We



The Problem: It's just not happening fast enough

Yes there has been some progress, but it has been slow going. In 2018 the percentage of companies in the Russell 3000 stock index with no female board members declined to 18% from 23% in 2017 and 22 companies achieved an equal board seat split between men and women (1). But 22 companies out of 3000 achieving board parity still seems dismally low. Catalyst Research ironically commented that in 2015 there were more men named John among the CEOs of the S&P 1500 than there were women (2).

At this rate the World Economic Forum estimates it will take a troubling 202 years to reach economic gender parity (4).

But we don't have 202 years!

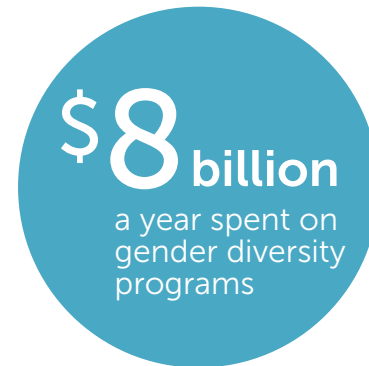
For organizations, the importance of these efforts has traditionally been driven by the known economic and strategic benefits of a gender diverse workforce (more on that later). They now have new urgency due to high-profile Women's Marches, the #MeToo movement and record numbers of women standing for public office. While these movements have cast a welcome spotlight on a wide range of women's issues, they have also showcased how far there is to go for women in the corporate workplace and given women new determination to have their real voices heard. In some high profile cases, they have become costly front page news for companies.

The truth is, large numbers of women – and men and organizations too – are losing patience with the painfully slow pace of change.

And we've been working so hard

CEOs, HR Directors, Talent and Learning Officers, Diversity and Inclusion Executives – and many other senior and middle managers besides – have not been idle. They have hired more women, set up mentoring, offered countless bias, culture change and sensitivity training sessions, changed recruitment and assessment practices, reworked work/life balance, attended diversity and women's conferences – and much more.

None of these efforts come cheap. It can be tough to extract figures for gender diversity efforts as they are often included within wider diversity initiatives, but Tech companies alone are estimated to have spent \$1.2 billion in the last five years (5). For total US business spend in this area, figures of \$8 billion a year (6) have been cited. With this level of expenditure, not to mention the number of wo(man) hours spent, aren't we entitled to expect more women reaching the top by now?



Where current approaches fall short

Men and women don't always agree – Surprise!

A major impediment to progress so far has been that men and women often disagree on the key challenges and therefore the best strategies for improving gender diversity. According to BCG's report "Hidden Gems in Gender Diversity" (2),

"Women cited obstacles to advancement as the main source of slow progress, followed by retention. But fewer than 25% of male senior leaders agreed. Instead, male leaders typically cited recruiting as the biggest challenge, with 35% saying that it was an obstacle" (2).

The same study found many still popular gender diversity approaches like mentorship, culture change or behavior edicts, one-time or mandatory trainings and public diversity debates, had little or no effect in "shifting the needle" for women. There is even some evidence that several of these tactics slow the pace of change due to resentment and backlash (or fear of these effects), among both men and women (6).



Other approaches failed to engage middle managers who play a key role in facilitating (or obstructing) women from advancing in organizations.

“If middle managers do not support gender diversity, it simply will not happen, no matter what the CEO says” (7).

It’s getting exhausting keeping up with diversity fads

As CEOs and HR Directors seek the magic bullet with ever greater urgency and frustration, an unfortunate by-product has been that gender diversity approaches increasingly cycle in and out of vogue.

Unconscious Bias Training is the latest methodology in the hot seat. As The Atlantic puts it,

“People resent being made to sit in a chair and listen to somebody telling them how to act. Forcing them to do so can provoke the fundamental human urge to do the opposite” (8).

Diversity fatigue?

Is it any wonder that The Economist even coined a disheartening new term, “diversity fatigue” (10).

Should organizations just throw in the towel?

NOT AT ALL.



The compelling business cases for gender diversity

The essential benefits to organizations from achieving greater gender diversity and more women in leadership remain compelling. They include more robust succession planning, better customer alignment and lower employee turnover. Gender diverse teams have also been shown to reduce corporate risk and spark innovation.

A quick reminder of the stakes and opportunities:

Succession Planning

Succession planning has been made even more challenging by the erosion of middle management over the past 30 years and today's tight labor markets. In many industries there are simply too few suitably skilled employees which makes preparing and advancing more women even more critical.

"Only 15% of companies have enough successors in the pipeline for key leadership positions" — *Harvard Business Review* (11)

Risk reduction

By better reflecting customer and employee diversity and offering different perspectives and leadership styles, gender balanced teams have been shown to avoid many of the pitfalls and risks that come from male exclusive or male dominated teams.

"Diversity is the "checks and balances" a people system needs; it's the way we insulate against that single point of failure. Without diversity we put our organizations at risk in the same way we do when we put all our financial investments in once place. If that one place fails, the whole system fails" — *HR Today/Payscale* (23)

Decision-making and Innovation

Decision-making may be simpler with fewer perspectives, but it is rarely better – and innovation has been shown to take off in teams that showcase more gender and racial diversity.

“Diversity means more debate and more perspectives and so better decisions. That leads to better business practices, more innovation and improved risk-taking” – Vivian Hunt, McKinsey (12)

The War for Talent

With record low unemployment and growing mismatches between the leadership skills employers need and those applicants possess, the talent wars are only forecast to get worse. Why then, would any business want to ignore a large slice of the talent pool – especially if they are capable current employees?

“If you haven’t got the best talent you’re not going to be the best. If you are not representing properly the available pool of talent, then you are missing an opportunity”

– Alex, Wilmot-Sitwell, Bank of America/Merrill Lynch (12)

Engagement

In 15 years of Gallup employee engagement surveys and after years of intense and costly HR motivation and morale efforts, the rate of engaged employees has never exceeded 32%. Logically, there has to be a direct correlation between this lack of engagement and the fact that two thirds of employees have no idea where their career is headed.

“Only 21% of employees feel highly valued and 66% do not see a clear path for their professional development”

– Tinypulse Employee Engagement Study (13)

High turnover of female employees

The “leaky pipeline” for women’s corporate career paths often turns into a gush in the middle career years due to work/life balance, “mommy tracking”, the greater perceived meaning of entrepreneurship, public office etc. Obviously, if women are constantly headed out the door, they are not going to make it to the corporate leadership ranks.

“Workplace conditions, a lack of access to key creative roles, and a sense of being stalled in one’s career” (are the main reasons women leave). “Undermining behavior from managers is a major factor” — *Center for Talent Innovation (14)*

Burnout

It’s not just the under engaged who leave. One in five of Gallup’s engaged employees are estimated to fall into the category of the “Engaged Exhausted” who burn out physically or mentally due to overwork, stubborn bureaucracies and lack of support. Women who often work a “second shift” at home are especially vulnerable.

“The psychological and physical problems of burned-out employees which cost an estimated \$125 billion to \$190 billion a year in healthcare spending in the US are just the most obvious impacts. The true cost to business can be far greater, thanks to low productivity, high turnover and the loss of the most capable talent” — *Harvard Business Review (15)*

Taken together, the potential for business from turning these liabilities into assets contributes to proven financial and competitive advantage.

In a study of 350 large public companies in North America, Latin America and the UK, those in the top quartile for gender diversity were 15% more likely to produce better returns than their local peers....the same applied to the bottom of the scale — *McKinsey (12)*



Strategies that women rate highly

Some key approaches have been identified by women as achieving meaningful results (2).

These include:

- involving men as gender-diversity champions
- offering executive coaching to women beyond senior management level (seen as particularly useful at key transition times such as before and after promotions or when changing role or department)
- women's networking forums
- sponsorship (as distinct from the more informal and inconsistent mentorship)

"Sponsorship programs – in which the company identifies promising women and matches them with senior leaders who can advocate for their promotions, team assignments and training and development – generate results. And the absence of such programs can hurt" – Boston Consulting Group (2)



The most effective approaches prepare women for leadership

If fast was all it took, women could simply be more actively urged to seek leadership or even slotted into senior roles en masse. In some cases that has been tried and worked well. In others, this strategy has backfired leading to adverse effects on the women and corporate cultures in question and producing a chilling deterrent effect on women further down the pipeline. The risk of a negative outcome is too great for organizations to ignore.

Effective approaches must get to the heart of what holds some women back and give them the mindset to thrive as leaders. Any initiative that aims to catalyze women's advancement must recognize that many women need to undergo a profound identity shift in order to view themselves as leaders.

"Organizations often advise women to proactively seek leadership roles without addressing the practices that communicate a mismatch between how women are seen, and the qualities and experiences people tend to associate with leaders" (16).



Academic research has described women in leadership roles as experiencing “impostor syndrome”, worrying that they did not deserve their high-ranking jobs and could be “found out” at any moment. Women worried much more than men about being disliked, outshining others or grabbing too much attention (17).

Such limiting mindsets discourage women from seeking leadership roles in the first place, and often mean they need more support than men in transitioning to and persisting in leadership. The fact that most Executive (and even many middle management) teams are dominated by men and typically enshrine male leadership styles and behaviors, is an extra hurdle women face in aspiring to and thriving in senior roles.

Even companies making faster than average strides in appointing more women to senior roles, routinely underestimate the support women need to transition and succeed long term. The emphasis is often on helping women fit into the culture, rather than helping them build lasting support networks and allowing them to create a new leadership paradigm which aligns with their personal values. Supporting women in this way is a doubly sound investment for organizations. It clearly helps the women in question advance and succeed, but it also makes other women more likely to take the risk of stepping up to leadership.

Simply moving faster to place more women into senior roles without thorough leadership preparation and support, is highly risky for organizations. It may actually backfire and slow-walk women’s advancement for years as any “failure” by a woman leader has a chilling deterrent effect on other women further down the pipeline.



Is there a combination of methods proven to be appealing and fast acting for women, that can also prepare women to transition into leadership and thrive long term?

INDEED, THERE IS!

A new approach which aligns closely with proven methods of **womens' networking and sponsorship** and engages middle as well as senior managers, is showing great promise. At its core is a company sponsored but woman-centric peer mentoring method linked to organizational sponsors. **This format is explicitly designed to catalyze a women's advancement culture rapidly through an organization.**

Peer Power: Overview of popular models

The power of peers has long been acknowledged,

"Peers – not money – are the #1 influence on their colleagues, and the source of 20% of all employees going the extra mile" (13).

Peer based approaches have been closely linked to creating more agile organizations that are more innovative and responsive to change (18). Peer mentoring and peer learning have also been described as the most effective way of overcoming the "knowing-doing" gap which makes much training ineffective and short-lasting (19).

Creating the optimal conditions for peer learning and mentoring in women's diversity and leadership initiatives requires specific experience with the range of women's motivations, emotions and learning styles.

To deliver measurable results in fast-tracking women into leadership, peer mentoring requires a very different focus and practices from informal self-organized groups or company-run women's employee resource groups (ERGs) or trainings. Such peer groups tend to face the following challenges:

- **Chaotic and inconsistent:** smaller self-organized groups may have some personal and leadership benefits but likely limited organizational or advancement relevance – and often fall apart.
- **Too large and diffuse:** groups such as ERGs can celebrate shared organizational experience but typically lack the intimacy, structure and consistent participants to provide deep and lasting development.
- **Lack of safety:** organizationally run groups sponsored by managers or HR struggle to create a safe space where women can speak up, show vulnerability or be truly authentic.

The secret sauce of the “Power of We”

What's different about Power Circle peer mentoring

An effective “Power of We” approach is fundamentally different from either self-organized or corporate driven peer networks. Instead, it honors the needs of individual women while linking those needs to their experiences with the organization within a formal structure and program. Meetings are held consistently and attendance by everyone in the group is expected. This approach is based on the belief that there is an important place for women only (and sometimes men only) groups. In “The Power of We” a safe single gender space – what Emerging Women calls a “Power Circle” – is the basis for achieving true mutual support, honesty and authenticity.

Power Circles comprise an intimate grouping of 6–7 women (or men) who meet either in person or virtually over an extended period of time to support and challenge each other to advance in the organization. They allow for a high degree of participant input and customization while moving through the milestones of a highly intentional program agreed in advance with the organization.

The Power Circles build on the 5C's of effective peer mentoring: **Connection, Content, Context, Confidentiality and Continuity** (21) to deliver rapid, authentic and lasting results.

Peer mentoring of this type empowers women participants to create a new leadership paradigm for themselves and envision their future with the organization. This means personally and collectively developing solutions that:

- Create a fundamental identity shift in women towards leadership
- Overcome limiting beliefs and the “impostor syndrome” that often deters women from seeking advancement or thriving in leadership roles
- Build authenticity and confidence
- Identify any skill gaps and share resources and approaches to fill them
- Reduce isolation
- Increase visibility and the power of their individual and collective voice
- Clarify career goals and identify pathways to achieve them within the organization
- Leverage the power of “we” to make better decisions

Why it works

As Integrated Work’s Founder, Jessica Hartung reminds us, the power of peer learning lies in community, connection, and accountability:



“Having friends or colleagues on the journey with us can connect us ... to peer communities where others are dealing with similar challenges. When humans face tough stuff, being connected and accountable to one another can mean the difference between moving past our fear or letting it undermine us.” (21).

By recruiting women of different levels, power is leveled in the Power Circles and the organizational impact is sped up. As the women meet over nine months or more, a supportive “hands up-hands down” dynamic evolves. By connecting women across different functions and locations, women become more aware of the scope of opportunities available and feel more connected to the company. In addition, to their immediate manager, women now have a deeply engaged support network committed to advocating for their success.



Do we really need a facilitator?

External facilitators have long been found to be a critical factor for effective peer mentoring and learning. Facilitators help set the agenda, provide structure, clarity and synthesis, manage peer interactions and allow every participant to be a peer (22).

In the Power Circle model, facilitators play a crucial role in ensuring the group moves through the essential milestones of the program while establishing an authentic and deep connection between participants. They assist with any status issues and suggest resources and exercises. Between sessions, they check in with participants 1:1 to make sure the program is meeting their needs and providing additional resources and exercises tailored to individual participants. Importantly, they allow every participant the time they need to be both mentor and mentee. Guaranteed confidentiality between the facilitator and participants and between the participants and each other, is another key ingredient, allowing for a vulnerability and authenticity that forges lasting bonds.

Sponsorship: A key part of the program

Ideally, Power Circles should be integrated with a 1:1 sponsorship program led by senior and middle managers of a higher level than the participants. Sponsors have their own facilitated “sponsor Power Circles” where they meet for mutual support and best practice training and advocate on behalf of their protégés. By participating in the program, sponsors are given a personal stake in the success of the women they sponsor. This helps spread the program effects wider and deeper and ensures men are involved. The pride and renewed engagement sponsors gain as they witness their sponsored women grow, is another key element that differentiates this approach from conventional peer learning or gender diversity initiatives.

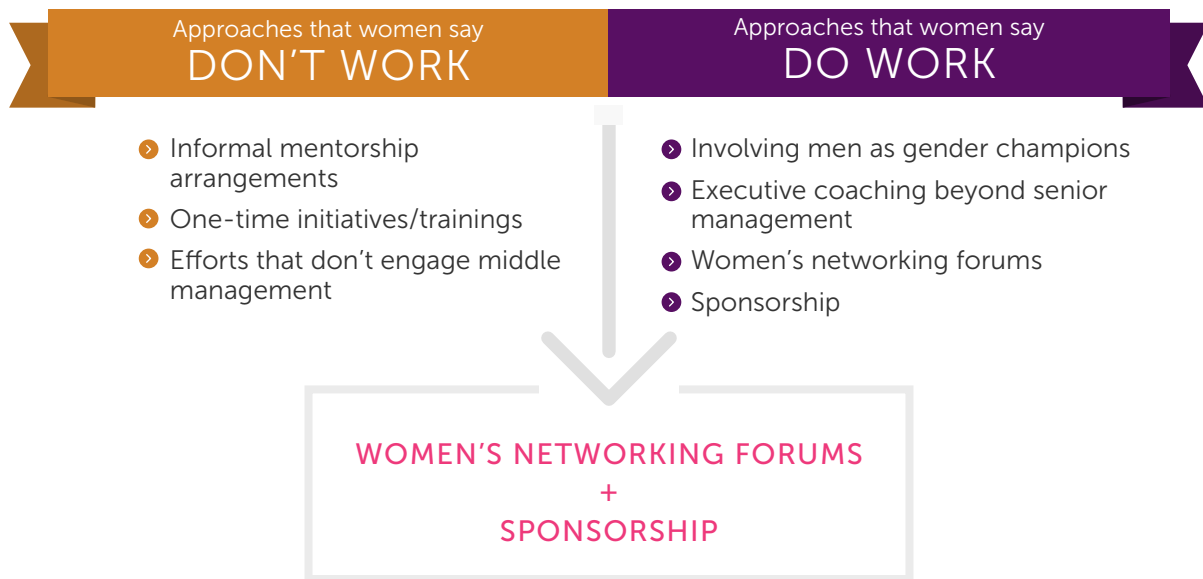


Why it spreads like electricity through organizations

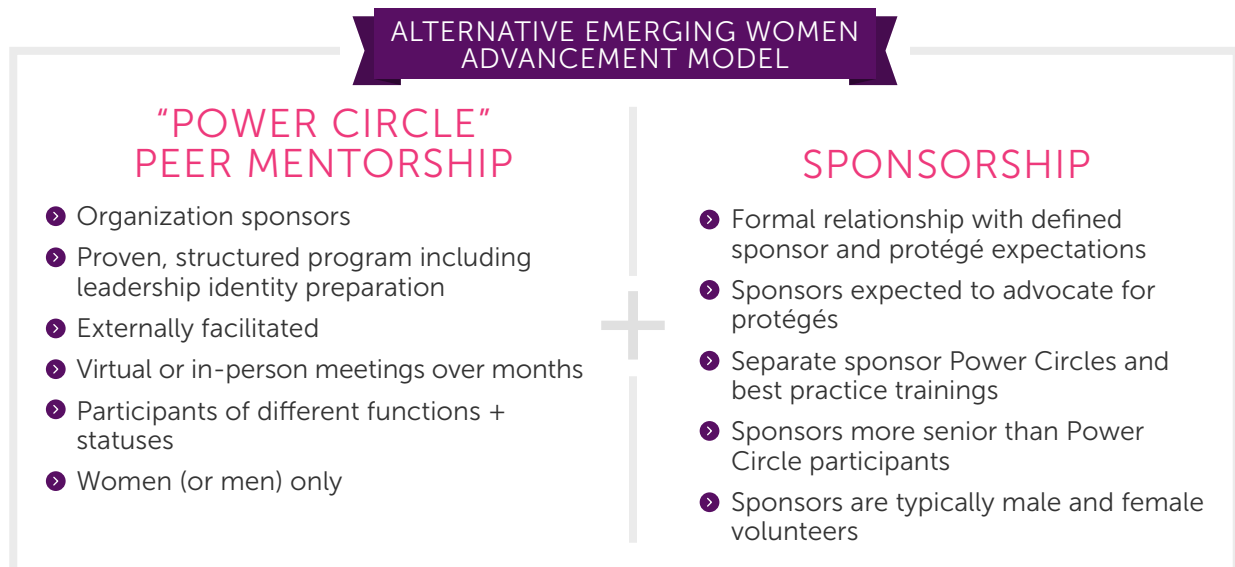
Configured in this way, the Power Circle and sponsor combination offers a transformational experience that creates a deep support network among women participants. It drives a fundamental identity shift in the way they see themselves as leaders, prepares them for success in their next role, and links them to organizational advocates of both genders who will support them in taking their next step.

This personal “reset” equips women with the tools to shine and advance in their own careers, bring their authentic selves to work and inspire female colleagues to follow their example. Such a purposeful approach can be expected to cascade rapidly through even global organizations, give women the boost they need to move in much larger numbers up the corporate ladder, and thrive when they get to where they are meant to be.

The Power of We Solution



Common Women's Networking Forum TYPES & LIMITATIONS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Small, self-organized › ERG › Manager or HR sponsored 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Lack organizational relevance, consistency, can be cliquey › Lack structure and intimacy › Lack safety and authenticity, can be costly





Conclusion

After years of slow progress, a cost-effective new women's advancement initiative founded in the most promising methodologies of women's leadership and development research, may well offer the greatest potential yet.

By combining woman-centric and highly shareable forms of peer mentoring and sponsorship, an empowered spirit can rapidly cascade through organizations, boosting much larger numbers of women to the very top – and giving them the mindset to succeed when they get there.

To learn how new peer mentoring and sponsorship methodologies can fast-track your organization's advancement of women, contact:

thepowerofwe@emergingwomen.com

www.emergingwomen.com



Case Study

"The Power of We" in action at Fortune 500 tech firms

We surveyed 287 women over 1 ½ years at two Fortune 500 companies which participated in Emerging Women's peer-mentoring Power Circle program. Both programs featured both Power Circles and Sponsorship.



WOMEN PARTICIPANTS

Before

Going into the Power Circles, participants were looking for connection with a wider network of women in the organization, deep leadership learning and sharing. A few mentioned feeling isolated. One wrote that she wanted to, “gain clarity on what I want and where I am going”.

After

After participating in 25–30 hours of virtual meetings with their Power Circles, as well as 1:1 “check in” time with other circle members, meetings with their sponsor and digesting a range of online personal development content and exercises, the participants were asked to evaluate the program.

95% said their peer-mentoring experience was a strong resource and support for their development as a leader

90% reported an increase in their confidence as a leader (a clear identity shift)

90% had directly applied what they had learned from their Power Circle at work

89% felt better connected with their women peers in the organization

82% reported an increase in their ability to represent themselves authentically

69% felt the program helped them overcome fears and limiting beliefs

Crucially:

57% felt the program gave them the confidence and support they needed to apply for a new position within their company

28% had achieved career advancement within one year of completing the program

Participant quotes

“

The biggest impact for me from this experience has been my growth in confidence. I have realized that while I'm inspired to grow and develop through what I've learned in this journey, I don't have to change anything about me to put my best foot forward now and go for new goals.”

“

My circle enabled me to find the strength and courage to tackle my new role, new team and new project. The women in my circle also gave me the support, encouragement and advice that I needed to keep me focused and navigate the challenges and obstacles.”

“

When I started the circle, I had already applied for a new position within XX. The circle helped me prepare for interviews and the transition process of taking on a management role...It changed my mindset around the stress I'm feeling – helping me to understand why I chose the role.”



ORGANIZATIONS

Before

Before the program, one organization's own internal research had shown that **men would apply for promotions with only 60% of the skills specified, while women would not apply unless they had 100% of the skills.** Another was concerned that its women in technical roles were so few and far apart that they felt isolated and lacked female support and role models.

A key goal for the first organization was helping women to overcome self-limiting attitudes so more women would pursue promotions. For the second, it was primarily about enhancing connection with each other and the organization. Both companies were interested in seeing if this new approach would deliver the rapid results it promised for women's advancement and retention.

"We operate with global development teams which means our technical women are scattered around the world, in different time zones working on a variety of different products. In order to give them the support they need while promoting strong bonds and an informal network, we realized that we needed a program which allowed them to learn about themselves and their fellow women in tech, in order to support their career path and their journey through our organization."

— Sarah Cowell, Director, Technical Projects, Oracle Corp.

After

Qualitative research reveals the new Emerging Women approach exceeding all initial expectations:

"The Emerging Women Power Circles are game-changing HP development experiences. They have elevated mindsets for both participants and sponsors, which has created a powerful ripple across the organization. Since the program started, we have seen a dramatic increase in participants getting new positions, while sponsors have become advocates for women and have positively influenced other leaders to do the same."

— Nikki Rivera, Head, Leadership and Key Talent Development at HP, Inc.

"The impact has been faster and broader than we could have hoped. Women (who have gone through the program) encourage their circle members – and other women in their departments – to persist, speak up and go after promotions. Linking the participant training to training for sponsors whose main role is to actively "network up" on behalf of individual women has also fast-tracked results and is shifting attitudes across the board."

— Melody Manley, Program Management Office Head for Talent and Learning, Hewlett Packard, Inc.

Quantifiable results of (Emerging Women) Power Circle and Sponsorship Program at Fortune 100 Tech Company

Source: Emerging Women client

ALL % rates increased and decreased were measured against the standard rate for this client.





About Emerging Women



Founded by Chantal Pierrat in 2012, Emerging Women is a global network working with corporations and individual women to fast-track more women into senior roles and create new leadership paradigms. We help organizations accelerate the pace of diversity and fill talent pipelines to strengthen business performance by catalyzing the power of feminine authority. Through international speaker events, networking “Power Circles”, sponsorship, corporate retreats and online content, our programs build community and know-how. Emerging Women has particular expertise in supporting advancement for women in male dominated teams and industries due to Chantal Pierrat’s leadership background in medical technology and manufacturing.

Over 70,000 women are currently part of Emerging Women’s online community. The company has been featured in Forbes, Huffington Post and The Street and over 600 women have participated in virtual and in-person Emerging Women “Power Circles”. In the last year alone, 400 Fortune 500 employees have taken part in corporate sponsored “Power Circle” and sponsorship programs designed and facilitated by Emerging Women.

Resources

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