More than the sum of its parts

10 years of the Leadership Development for Women Programme at UWA

Jennifer de Vries editor
The Leadership Development for Women programme has been extremely successful in improving the status and position of women at The University of Western Australia.

It has developed in its participants a greater knowledge of the University, stronger internal connections, greater confidence and increased self-awareness.

Furthermore, it has benefited the University, by ensuring more women make their mark within the institution by moving to senior positions and contributing to decision making. This is an extremely important outcome for the University as it seeks to attract and retain the best staff, while at the same time redressing any gender imbalance. It also means there is an established network of pro-active women leaders and others concerned with women’s opportunities across the campus.

Beyond these direct benefits, the programme has transformed the ‘culture’ of the University, particularly regarding equity in relation to recruitment and selection, promotion, equitable workloads, policy development, and inclusive curricula.

In addition, the fact that the programme is seen as an exemplar for women’s leadership development – drawing interest and queries from the public sector and other Universities – is another indicator of the high regard in which the programme is held.

However, while the Leadership Development for Women programme continues to produce outstanding results, we know that more can be done to ensure that all our female staff are provided with appropriate opportunities to contribute more fully to the activities of the University.

We need to continue to examine the cultures of our work environment to ensure that we are actively seeking the diverse inputs and perspectives of women. And we must ensure that in all its activities, the University reflects on where we need to change or modify current practices to be inclusive of women.

Finally, my congratulations to Jennifer de Vries, Claire Webb, the Leadership Development for Women Planning Group, and all those who have put much hard work into the programme over the past 10 years. May the programme continue to prosper and continue to produce positive results for the women who join the programme, and The University of Western Australia which benefits from their greater engagement.

**Alan Robson**
Vice-Chancellor
The University of Western Australia
This publication represents a team effort, which would not have come together without input, support and hard work from many others.

Information regarding the programme was gathered in many ways.

- The survey was designed, conducted and reported on by Dr Greg Marie, Mrs Christina Mills and Mrs Joan Kelly of the Institutional Research Unit (IRU). The IRU also conducted analyses of human resource data extracts.
- Mentor interviews and participant focus groups were conducted by Marie Finlay.
- LDW participants were interviewed for the story panels by Lindy Brophy, UWA journalist, with involvement from Victoria Zakourkina, an Arts practicum student. This work was undertaken with support from a Diversity Initiatives Fund grant. Most of the photos were also taken by Lindy Brophy.

Co authors include:

- Beverley Hill, Manager of the Equity and Diversity Office, who contributed Chapter 4.
- Marie Finlay, who provided the first draft of Chapter 6.
- Claire Webb, who provided material in Chapter 2.

Graphic design, layout and oversight of the printing process was provided by Steve Barwick, and Claire and I were grateful to have his good natured and patient assistance.

The LDW Planning Group have supported this project throughout, and many members have assisted in various ways, editing, checking tables, proofing, providing feedback and support, contributing title ideas. I have had the support of an ‘editorial team’, Barbara Goldflam, Jan Stuart and Joan Eveline. Another critical friend is Jodie Thomas who has provided input and support at all stages. Together they certainly have been ‘critical ingredients’ to the finished product.

Maggie Leavitt is a consultant who joined the programme in the late 1990s. Maggie has played a key role in the development and refinement of the programme as it is today, and I know that we enrich each others practice. Together with Claire we make a great team.

Most importantly, I thank the LDW participants who have made this programme come alive in their own lives, in the University and in other workplaces.

Finally, I thank Claire Webb who contributed to this publication in numerous ways. She and I learned long ago that we have a great combination of big picture and detail and practicality, which has been essential to getting this publication delivered, and delivered on time for the 10th Anniversary dinner. I do believe, however, that I’m not allowed to have any more good ideas for a while.

While Claire and I have ‘birthed’ the publication together, we had a great deal of support from our colleagues at OSDS and our respective ‘home teams’ who suffered what they called reflected stress!

I hope that we have been able to do justice in this publication, to 10 years of what I believe to be an exceptional and unique programme.

Jennifer de Vries
March 2005
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Thanks again for a great programme — I’ve never been to a programme where so many of the participants got so much out of it!

School manager, 2004 participant