



PAGES FROM OUR PLAYBOOK:

The Astonishing Power of **Allies, Mentors, & Sponsors** *Fueling Employee Growth and Engagement*



her new standard
THE PLAYBOOK FOR WOMEN LEADERS

Thank you for downloading our guide on how allies, mentors, and sponsors address top challenges in employee growth and engagement.

As an integral part of our Advancing Women Leaders Series, designed for HR, Talent Development and DEI professionals, this comprehensive guide delves into the pivotal roles that allies, mentors, and sponsors play in driving both individual and organizational success.

Immerse yourself in actionable insights, expert perspectives, and tangible strategies that will empower you to foster inclusive cultures and propel exceptional talent development. Gain the knowledge and tools to unlock the full potential of your organization.

HNS PARTNER PERSPECTIVE



Karen Kirchner

CO-FOUNDER



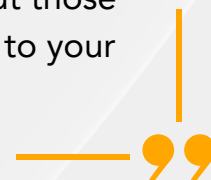
We encourage our HNS participants to create a web of support around them as they advance in their careers.

Mentors are invaluable in sharing insider advice and helping to navigate politics.

Allies make sure they are heard in meetings and give them credit for good ideas.

Sponsors speak on their behalf when great opportunities are on the line.

But none of this happens unless women widen their networks and share their accomplishments. The women in our programs are often doing amazing work but very few people know about it. The reality is that unless you seek out those allies, mentors and sponsors and tell them about your unique approach to your work, you're not going to advance.



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1

Why Are Men 45% Ahead?

2

Mentors and Sponsors

5

5 Common Mistakes Sponsors
Make (And How to Avoid Them)

14

How Men Can Support Gender
Equity

18

Inkspiration Book Picks

23

Allies, Mentors, & Sponsors:
Solving HR Challenges for Success

26

About HNS

WHY ARE MEN 45% AHEAD?



Because they have SPONSORS.

According to a report by The Center for Talent Innovation (CTI), men are 45% more likely to have a sponsor than women.

At Her New Standard, we deeply appreciate the undeniable power of sponsorships in shaping the success of women in the workplace.

Having an advocate in the room where promotion decisions are made makes all the difference. Sponsorships in the workplace break down barriers and create unparalleled opportunities for women to advance in their careers.

It's time to rewrite the rules, challenge the status quo, and ensure that men are no longer 45% ahead.

The Transformative Power of Sponsorship and Mentorship in Driving Organizational Success



Ready to dive into the world of sponsorship and mentorship? We know you're eager to unlock the full potential of your workforce and drive organizational success. So, let's demystify the distinctions between these two powerhouses and discover how they can work their magic in your organization.

Understanding Sponsorship in the Workplace

Let's start with sponsorship in the workplace. Picture this: you've got an influential advocate in your corner, propelling your top talent to new heights. That's the power of sponsorship at work! It involves senior leaders rolling up their sleeves and actively championing the career advancement of promising individuals. This can happen formally, where companies proactively match senior leaders with talented high-potential women, or informally, where women take the initiative to connect with potential sponsors on their own. Either way, once sponsors are sold on what their proteges can do, they can use their power and connections to create impressive opportunities, promotions, and accelerated growth. Successful sponsorship allows your workforce to catapult careers with a network that expands faster than you can say "opportunity."

The Role of Mentorship in Professional Growth

Now, let's turn our attention to mentoring. It's the realm of nurturing relationships that foster growth and development. Mentoring is all about creating a safe space where experienced professionals can guide and support emerging talent. It's a beautiful dance of wisdom, knowledge, and personalized guidance. Imagine watching your mentees build essential skills, overcome obstacles, and blossom into their full potential under the watchful eye of trusted mentors. It's like witnessing a garden flourish, but with professionals instead of flowers.

Sponsorship vs. Mentorship: What's the Difference?

Now, here's the real gem: understanding the core differences between sponsorship and mentorship gives you a strategic advantage in propelling your talent forward. When you enable advocacy, opportunity creation, and the cultivation of high-potential individuals through sponsorship, your talent is on the fast track to success. And don't forget about the transformative impact of mentorship. It's all about fostering a culture of growth, resilience, and continuous learning. When you combine these forces, you've got a winning formula that can move the needle on engagement and retention, taking your organization to new heights.

Mentors vs. Sponsors

MENTORS

VS

SPONSORS

- ✦ Informal Relationship
- ✦ Knowledge & Guidance
- ✦ Skill Development
- ✦ Emotional Support
- ✦ Holistic Development

- ✦ More Formal Relationship
- ✦ Power & Influence
- ✦ Advocacy & Recognition
- ✦ Networking & Exposure
- ✦ Career Advancement

5 Common Mistakes Sponsors Make (And How to Avoid Them)

BY **TRACY TSAI**, PCC, CPC



As a leader in your organization, you may be approached by a colleague to be their sponsor at work. It's flattering to be asked, but it's also important to understand what being a sponsor entails before you jump in, as this is an opportunity to make a significant impact on an individual's career journey.

What does it mean to be a sponsor? In her TED Talk on the importance of sponsorship, Carla Harris, Managing Director at Morgan Stanley and renowned author and speaker, described sponsorship as “a relationship where someone is advocating for you behind closed doors, promoting your work, and positioning you for greater visibility and opportunities.”

Sponsorship Versus Mentorship

Sponsorship is often confused with mentorship, but they are not the same. Here are the key differences:

- A mentor is someone who uses their knowledge and experience to support you by listening to your career vision, offering feedback and giving advice.
- A sponsor is a senior-level executive who uses their position and power to advance your career by advocating for you to receive key assignments and promotions.

Both are important, but sponsorship can have a bigger impact and usually comes with higher stakes. As a sponsor, you are actively invested in facilitating your protégé's advancement and championing their success. To do this, you need to become familiar enough with their accomplishments to believe in their potential so that you can effectively advocate for them. While it may be daunting to put your reputation on the line, the benefits far outweigh the challenges.

The Importance of Sponsorship in Women's Career Development

Women outnumber men at almost every educational level and hold over half of all professional-level jobs, yet they make up only 31% of senior management roles and just 10% of Fortune 500 CEOs.

In an environment where white men hold the majority of senior-level executive positions, women – especially women of color – often face the barrier of being excluded from critical networks. This means they have fewer meaningful interactions with senior leaders and are more often overlooked for high-impact assignments. This is why sponsorship for women leaders is so important. According to research by Catalyst, women start out behind men in the talent pipeline and tend to remain there, even with mentoring. However, when women have sponsors, they're just as likely as men to be promoted.

Sponsorship becomes even more important for women in leadership seeking to make it to the executive level. While women in more junior roles may progress by doing exceptional work, as they move up the ladder and the number of spots for senior roles gets smaller, having someone with a seat at the decision-making table to actively advocate on their behalf is critical.

How Sponsorship Benefits the Overall Organization

Sponsorship benefits not only the individual, but the organization as a whole. At HNS, we find that when we help women connect to senior leaders in their organizations during our Fast Track program, they get reassurance that they are valued and have opportunities for growth. As a result, they tend to stay with the organization.

Research by Catalyst supports this, as they found that: Sponsorship programs resulted in more effective leaders and teams, as well as increased job satisfaction, commitment to the organization and desire to stay with their current employer.

How to Avoid Common Sponsorship Mistakes

Here are the five top mistakes that sponsors tend to make, and how to avoid them:

Common Mistake	Tips to Avoid Making Mistakes
Overlooking Diversity and Inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Actively seek out and support a diverse range of proteges to avoid perpetuating gender and racial disparity.• Acknowledge unconscious bias and consciously expand relationships beyond lines of similarity.
Not setting Clear Expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Align goals, outcomes, roles, and responsibilities upfront to prevent misaligned expectations and frustration.• Establish guidelines for communication and regularly check in to make ensure progress and accountability.
Thinking "There's Nothing in it for Me"	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recognize the personal benefits of sponsorship, such as developing leadership skills and expanding networks.• Understand that sponsoring someone from a different background provides valuable learning experiences and exposure to unique perspectives.
Undervaluing Their Potential Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Collaborate with other sponsors to expand resources and networks for meaningful introductions and advocacy.• Embrace the sponsorship role regardless of seniority and actively champion the growth of proteges within the organization.
Lack of Commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Get to know proteges and their capabilities through regular check-ins and feedback.• Increase commitment by witnessing their accomplishments and seeking validation from others.

1. Overlooking Diversity and Inclusion

Sponsors may unconsciously gravitate toward protégés who remind them of themselves, or who share similar backgrounds. This implicit bias causes relationships to form along lines of similarity, and ends up perpetuating gender and racial disparity. Research from Cogual (formerly the Center for Talent Innovation) found that 71% of sponsors have protégés whose gender and race match their own.

The “like me” bias perpetuates the status quo and keeps those who need the most support from getting it. For example, McKinsey’s 2022 Women in the Workplace report showed that Asian and Black women are less likely than white women to say that senior colleagues have taken important sponsorship actions on their behalf, such as publicly praising their skills or advocating for a raise.

By acknowledging that this bias exists, potential sponsors can leverage this awareness to actively seek out and support a diverse range of protégés, rather than only those who are similar to them.

2. Not Setting Clear Expectations

When entering a sponsorship relationship, the sponsor and protégé may each have a different understanding of what the sponsorship entails. This can lead to misaligned goals and priorities, and can leave the protégé feeling frustrated when it seems like little progress is being made. That's why it's important to align on expectations upfront. This may include:

- Defining the goals of the sponsorship relationship
- Agreeing on desired outcomes
- Understanding time commitment and level of involvement
- Setting guidelines for communication (e.g., regular check-ins, ongoing dialogue)

Sponsors should be careful not to over-promise what they can deliver to their protégés to prevent erosion of trust if results aren't attained quickly.

3. Thinking “There’s Nothing in it for Me”

Because sponsorship requires spending one’s reputational currency, some leaders may hesitate to take the risk. However, there are many benefits that make sponsorship an investment with worthwhile returns—not only for the protégé, but also for the sponsor.

- Sponsoring someone provides an opportunity to develop leadership skills. Sponsors can practice their communication and coaching skills while guiding and supporting their protégés.
- When sponsors introduce their protégés to their network, they may also establish new connections for themselves, as new opportunities could arise through these introductions.
- Sponsoring someone from a different background or area of expertise provides a valuable learning experience, exposing the sponsor to unique perspectives and skillsets.

In addition, research shows that successful sponsors are more highly regarded within their organizations, due to their demonstrated commitment to recognizing and developing talent. In Sylvia Ann Hewitt’s book, “The Sponsor Effect: How to Be a Better Leader by Investing in Others,” she notes that:

Senior-level managers who have a protégé are 53% more likely to report having received a promotion in the previous two years. Entry-level managers who have a protégé are 60% more likely to have received a stretch assignment.

4. Undervaluing Their Potential Impact

Sponsors are expected to utilize their networks, influence, and resources to help their protégés advance their careers. However, some individuals may feel like they don't have the resources or influence to do this successfully, and may pull back from the sponsorship relationship. For example, sponsors with smaller or less diverse networks may worry that their network isn't robust enough to provide meaningful introductions. Others may feel they lack the title or seniority to create opportunities for their protégés.

These limiting beliefs can prevent a sponsor from fully embracing the sponsorship role and can result in missed opportunities for their protégés. Before throwing in the towel, take a moment to challenge those limitations.

For example:

- Sponsors with smaller networks can team up and collaborate with other sponsors in their organization or industry. By joining forces with those who have different strengths and connections, they can expand their collective resources and networks to benefit their protégés even more. For example, they can pool their connections, make introductions to each other's networks, and collectively advocate for their protégés' advancements.
- Effective sponsorship isn't just about seniority or title. It's about the sponsor's ability to actively advocate for their protégé and champion their growth within the organization. Sponsors at various levels can do this by finding ways to raise the visibility of their protégés' work and accomplishments, advocating for their protégés to be involved in high-impact projects, and providing opportunities for them to gain exposure to senior management. This support can help protégés build their reputations and open doors for further opportunities.

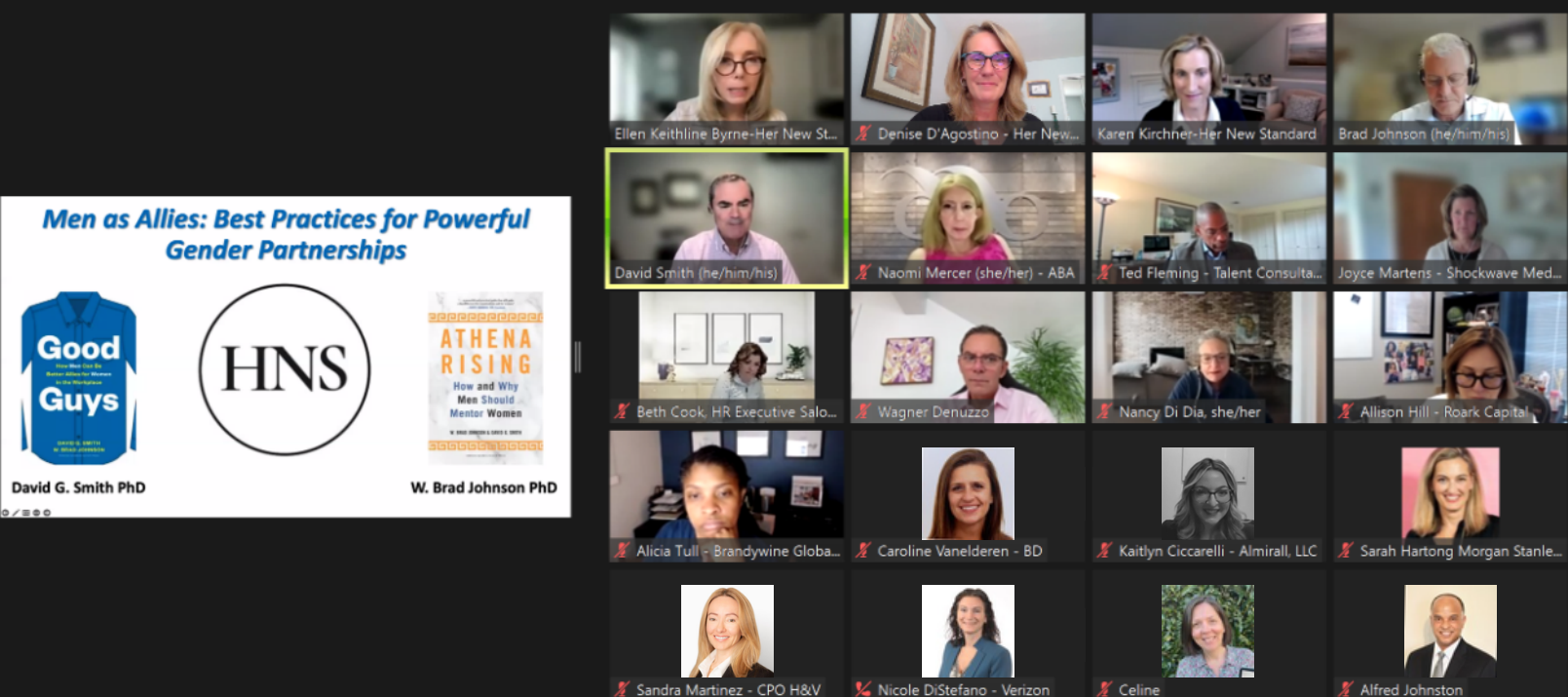
5. Lack of Commitment

Sometimes, sponsors can fail to follow through on their commitments or become disengaged over time because they aren't truly sold on the capabilities of their protégés. This puts both parties in a bind, with protégés feeling unsupported and sponsors unsure how to proceed. This is a particular risk when the pairing of sponsors and protégés happens as a result of a company initiative.

One way sponsors can increase commitment is to make a real effort to get to know their protégés. Having regular check-ins to find out about their accomplishments helps. It's also valuable to look for opportunities to see them in action as well as solicit feedback from others about their capabilities and potential. Getting more validation increases a sponsor's willingness to go to bat for this person and spend their own relationship capital.

As a sponsor, you can have a profound impact on the growth and success of your protégés, especially women leaders and those in other underrepresented groups. By understanding and avoiding these five common mistakes, you can enhance the effectiveness of your sponsorship, ensure those who need advocacy the most receive it, and demonstrate your commitment to the future of your organization.

How Can Men Help with Gender Inequities?



At Her New Standard, we believe in the power of allyship to drive meaningful change and create a more inclusive workplace. That's why we were thrilled to have W. Brad Johnson, PhD and David G. Smith, PhD from Workplace Allies join our HNS Women's Leadership Development Roundtable to share their insights on Men as Allies: Best Practices for Powerful Gender Partnerships. Inspired by their expertise and the valuable contributions of our community of Talent, DEI, and HR leaders, we've compiled these 7 Tips for Men to Support Gender Equity in the Workplace...

7 TIPS FOR MEN TO SUPPORT GENDER EQUITY IN THE WORKPLACE

- 1 Ask Women What They Need
- 2 Pay Attention to Inclusion
- 3 Mentorship for Women of Color
- 4 Share Household Responsibilities
- 5 Lead by Example
- 6 Engage Men in Diversity Events
- 7 Disrupt Bias Immediately

1. Ask Women What They Need

Instead of making assumptions, seek input from women to understand how you can support them effectively. Listening to their experiences and perspectives is crucial in driving positive change.

2. Pay Attention to Inclusion

Take notice of who is present and who is absent in meetings or discussions. Be mindful of who dominates the conversation and who gets interrupted. Encourage equal participation and create space for diverse voices to be heard.

3. Mentorship for Women of Color

Shockingly, 59% of Black women have never had access to interact with upper management. Actively promote mentorship opportunities for women of color, as it has been shown that women receive more raises and promotions when mentored by men.

4. Share Household Responsibilities

Help break the gender imbalance by doing more at home. Women often bear the burden of double the amount of housework, which can hinder their career growth. By sharing domestic responsibilities, you enable women to have more time and energy to focus on their professional goals.

5. Lead by Example

Senior leaders can make a significant impact by openly embracing their roles as caregivers. By “leaving loudly” and being transparent about family commitments, they reduce the stigma associated with sharing childcare responsibilities and create a more supportive environment.

6. Engage Men in Diversity Events

Invite men to participate in women’s Employee Resource Group events. Involving men in discussions about gender equity fosters understanding, collaboration, and collective action towards a more inclusive workplace.

7. Disrupt Bias Immediately

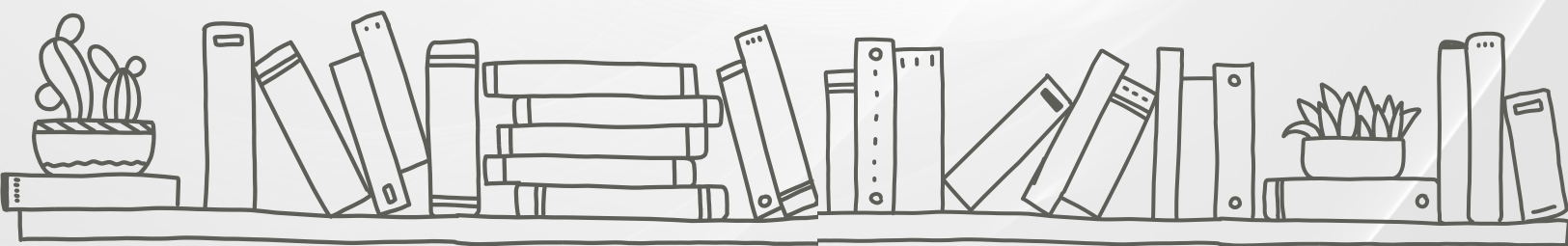
Act swiftly when you encounter bias. Within two seconds of hearing biased comments, interrupt and express your discomfort. A simple “Ouch” can signal your disapproval and prompt others to reflect on their language and behavior.

By implementing these tips, men can actively contribute to creating a more equitable and inclusive workplace for everyone. Let’s come together to drive positive change, break down barriers to gender equity, and empower women to reach their full potential.

Inkspiration: Monthly Book Picks

Join us as we embark on a transformative reading journey. Together, let's find inspiration, discover new perspectives, and empower ourselves to reach new heights.

Here are our recommendations on the topic: Sponsors, Mentors, and Allies...



Forget a Mentor, Find a Sponsor

by Sylvia Ann Hewlett



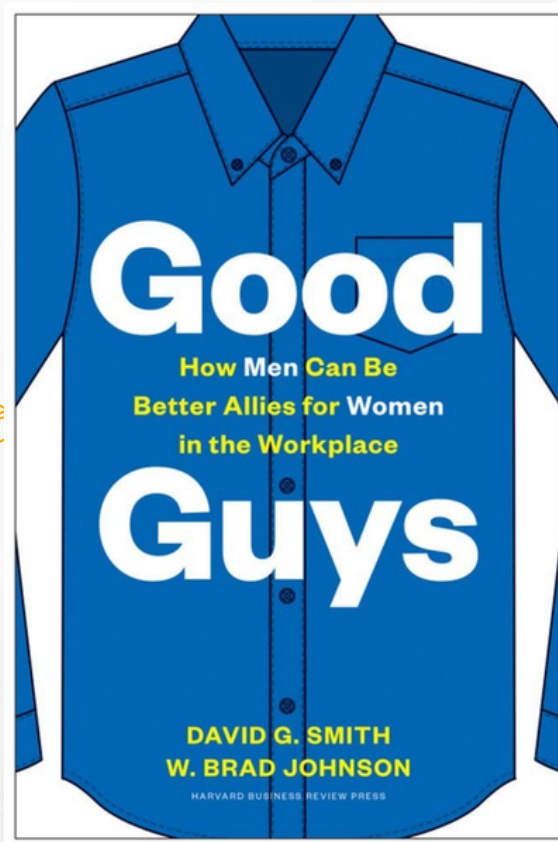
Women of Color in Tech: A Blueprint for Inspiring and Mentoring the Next Generation of Technology Innovators

by Susanne Tedrick



Good Guys: How Men Can Become Better Allies for Women in the Workplace

by David G. Smith & W. Brad Johnson



Client Testimonial



HNS is a valued, **trusted partner for developing women leaders** at Almirall. The outcomes I have seen from participants are elevated and enables the company to ensure we have a robust talent bench. I see it in their **leadership presence** and the behaviors they demonstrate. Many talent development programs have been around for a while. **It's time for a non-traditional model that works.**

Dom DiCindio

Head of People & Culture at Almirall

By leveraging allies, mentors, and sponsors effectively, HR professionals can address some of today's top challenges and create a more supportive, inclusive, and high-performing organizational culture.

Challenges for HR Professionals	Role of Allies, Mentors, and Sponsors
1. Talent Development and Retention	Support employees' growth, enhance skills, and contribute to job satisfaction, leading to increased retention and talent development.
2. Diversity & Inclusion Efforts	Actively advocate for diversity and inclusion, support underrepresented employees, and help create a more inclusive culture.
3. Leadership Development	Identify and groom emerging leaders, addressing the leadership development challenge.
4. Employee Engagement & Well-being	Provide emotional support, career guidance, and a sense of belonging, positively impacting employee well-being and engagement.
5. Succession Planning	Help identify high-potential employees and ensure a smooth leadership transition during succession planning.

Continued:

6. Overcoming Barriers for Career Advancement	Provide support, advocate for advancement, and promote equal opportunities to break down barriers hindering career advancement.
7. Knowledge Sharing and Learning	Share knowledge and expertise with employees, contributing to a culture of continuous learning.
8. Organizational Performance and Productivity	Motivate and guide employees, leading to increased productivity and improved overall performance.
9. Addressing Skill Gaps	Bridge skill gaps by offering targeted training and guidance to employees.
10. Building Strong Interpersonal Relationships	Help employees forge meaningful connections and build a supportive community within the organization.

Ready to **join us** on this exciting journey?

Together, we're rewriting the rules and setting a new standard of success.

Join us in our mission to build a better future, one where gender equity is the standard.

Contact us to learn more about our diverse selection of women's leadership development programs and workshops.

LET'S TALK

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About HNS

Her New Standard **sets a new norm for women's leadership** by helping organizations accelerate the leadership potential of their female talent and drive business results.

Our award-winning, research-based leadership development programs equip women with the latest leadership skills and strategies needed to break barriers and establish their own new standard.

HNS Programs



ACCELERATE

ACCELERATE is our flagship innovative 6-month program for women managers that combines executive coaching, skill building, and the power of peer accountability to unlock potential and accelerate career development.



FAST TRACK

FAST TRACK is a 4-month streamlined leadership intensive program for women who are on the fast track for greater responsibility. This virtual program is your sure-fire, turn-key solution that catapults women to new levels of influence and impact.



Women of Color

HNS offers innovative, 4- or 6-month programs for women from diverse cultural backgrounds. By combining a psychologically safe learning environment with executive coaching, skill building, and the power of community, women unlock their greatest potential.

HNS Programs

▶ Executive Coaching

HNS offers 3-and 6-month executive coaching engagements for rising leaders and senior executives to enhance leadership capacity and facilitate higher levels of performance.

▶ Workshops

HNS offers a range of workshops, both virtual and in-person, designed to address the unique challenges faced by women in leadership roles. These workshops provide insights into overcoming obstacles, developing leadership presence, presenting a strong leadership brand, managing inner critic, championing careers, and managing stress for women leaders.

▶ Custom Solutions

HNS understands that every organization has its own distinct culture, challenges, and goals. Through customized solutions that embody our essential elements of sustainable change, feedback-rich programming, and accountability and support, we work in partnership with you to address your specific needs and help you achieve your talent goals.

HNS Founders



Ellen Keithline-Byrne, PhD

Ellen is an executive coach, social scientist and leader who develops people to be mindful, courageous and innovative so they can thrive in their roles. She believes with guidance, individuals and teams become more aware of how their thoughts, feelings and behaviors influence their outcomes. Ellen holds a doctorate in Organizational Development and Change and has over 18 years of experience working both on a global learning and development team, and as a consultant servicing Fortune 500 companies like Morgan Stanley, Walmart and Microsoft, smaller firms, and non-profits including Save the Children. Ellen is a contributing author to Harvard Business Review, Forbes and Mindful.org.



Denise D'Agostino, CEC

Denise, CEC, HR Leader and Executive Coach brings practical approaches and a high level of energy enabling leaders, teams and organizations to perform and deliver. Her 25 years of real-world experience as the Head of HR for both Bayer HealthCare and Ciba Specialty Chemicals offers a powerful advantage for her clients. Leaders value her creativity, ability to challenge the status quo and design comprehensive solutions that build talent at all levels of an organization. Equipped with her extensive HR experience and certifications in multiple psychometrics, Denise is well poised to help clients, ranging from Fortune 500 to start-ups reach their fullest potential. She is an adjunct instructor at Cornell University, the ILR School of Human Capital Development.



Karen Kirchner, MS, PCC

Karen Kirchner, MS, CPCC is an executive coach who challenges and supports women to amplify their voices and increase their impact. She has a 20-year track record of catapulting clients to greater levels of leadership effectiveness. Her years of HR at Citigroup and Reader's Digest provide a business-savvy perspective, which combines powerfully with her optimism around people's potential for change. Karen's unique blend of intelligence, insight and creativity has made her a trusted partner to an impressive list of organizations, from Fortune 500 companies like Aetna to technology start-ups like Datto. Executives report that working with Karen helps them to elevate their presence and make better decisions, resulting in enhanced reputation and results.

Interested in learning how HNS can support your **women leaders**?

Here at Her New Standard, we're all about empowering decision makers like you. We've got the expertise and tools to help you propel your talent management strategies to the next level.

Our women's leadership development programs are engaging, measurable, and tailored to resonate with your organization's goals.

Together, let's revolutionize your approach to unleashing the true potential of your workforce.

Contact us to learn more about our diverse selection of women's leadership development programs, executive coaching, and workshops.

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