

CIPD LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT MANUAL

**Chapter: Leadership Development for Women by Carol Pickering and Jean Woollard
Published March 2010**

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to share the learning and experience that has resulted from the work we have done to develop women at all levels within organisations so that they are better equipped to lead and make progress in their careers. It is based on our extensive experience of coaching women executives and designing and facilitating a wide range of both public and in-house women's development programmes, workshops and events in which, since 2004, some 900 women have taken part.

In this chapter, we:

- describe the key challenges facing women leaders and what is different about women-only leadership development programmes
- highlight some of the factors to consider for those wanting to offer women-only development in their organisation
- describe the essential aspects of our approach that we think have led to success
- include some case studies from women participants to illustrate the impact of our approach

Chapter content:

- Introduction
- The Context for Women Leaders
- What is stopping women rising to the top?
- Factors to take into account when developing women leaders
 - Women-only development: is there a case?
 - Does women- only mean anti-men?
 - Women can also be wary of women-only development
 - In-house versus open programmes
 - Different development formats
- Our approach
 - The inner and outer story
 - Important challenges for women leaders
 - Addressing 7 key areas for women
 - Case studies
- Conclusion
- References and further reading

Conclusion

- In this chapter we explore the special challenges that women face in becoming leaders and argue that this requires different development approaches and emphasis than is the case on mixed gender leadership programmes. The case studies illustrate how women- only development can make a big difference to individual women and their success in their organisations but we also show that it attracts attention and raises objections which will need to be addressed carefully. Strategic decisions will also need to be made about running in-house programmes or sending women on external development events.
- There are a number of development formats, including action-learning sets, leadership development workshops, network events and individual coaching, that can be used but a combination of these is likely to be the most successful. Whichever you choose, we have found that the 'both/and', inner and outer approach is essential for real and lasting development.
- Finally, in order to be credible, the tutors/facilitators should be women who have done the work themselves i.e. they need to be able to 'model' the process by drawing on real examples from their own lives and work.