WOMEN IN SSTEM IMPACT LEADERSHIP PROGRAM case study

WOMEN IN SSTEM IMPACT LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The **Women in SSTEM IMPACT Program** was designed to accelerate the leadership capability, confidence and influence of mid-career women working in Security and STEM.

Delivered over six months, the program combined immersive workshops, individual coaching, leadership assessments, peer accountability and applied workplace integration to produce sustained, measurable leadership growth.

Across all learning themes, participants demonstrated significant increases in leadership knowledge, applied skills and confidence. Most notably, participants reported that their overall leadership capability more than doubled. Growth was strongest in leadership purpose and mindset, influence, adaptive leadership skills, coaching capability, emotional intelligence, resilience and network building.

"The Women in SSTEM IMPACT Leadership Program has provided me a leadership transformation: from hesitation to ownership, from self-doubt to self-assurance; I now own my space and influence as a leader. I have shifted my mindset to focus on my strengths and lived experience, identified personal sources of power and learned to speak up and contribute meaningfully."

WOMEN IN SSTEM IMPACT PARTICIPANT

Importantly, these gains were not theoretical; participants consistently described how they were actively applying tools, frameworks and strategies in real workplace contexts.

"I know my leadership strengths and can stand behind them confidently."

I have never felt more confident in my ability to lead a team."

WOMEN IN SSTEM IMPACT PARTICIPANTS

The deeper impact extended beyond individual capability. Women reframed leadership as intentional impact rather than role or title, developed confidence in their leadership voice, and learned to influence outcomes within complex, male-dominated security and STEM systems. Participants reported greater confidence navigating challenges, leading teams through uncertainty, and articulating their value as leaders.

By program completion, 100% of participants indicated they would recommend the program to others, reflecting both satisfaction and perceived return on investment.

The Women in SSTEM IMPACT Program demonstrates how structured, systems-based leadership development can shift not only individual careers, but the leadership capacity of security and STEM organisations.

case study WOMEN IN SSTEM IMPACT LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

CLARIFYING THE NEED

Security and STEM organisations rely on highly skilled technical professionals to drive innovation, operations and performance. Yet women in security and STEM frequently encounter structural and cultural barriers that limit their visibility, influence and progression into leadership roles. These barriers are rarely about capability; instead, they reflect misalignment between traditional leadership norms and how women often lead, communicate and influence.

Many women report uncertainty about how to translate technical expertise into leadership impact, how to navigate adaptive challenges, and how to influence decision-making without positional authority. Without targeted development, organisations risk losing capable women at the very point where leadership potential begins to emerge.

"I joined to learn specific techniques and skills that directly correlate to my job as a female leader in the STEM environment."

"I wanted clarity on my leadership direction and confidence in how I show up."

Participants entered the Women in SSTEM IMPACT Program seeking clarity, confidence and practical leadership strategies tailored to the realities of their environments.

The program addressed this need by creating a psychologically safe, structured environment where leadership capability could be intentionally built, practiced, reflected upon and embedded into day-to-day work.

"The frameworks have enabled me to organise and articulate what I think and feel about leadership."

"Analysing my thought processes validated my skillset – especially given most men I work with don't see things in the same light."

"Embracing self-belief had a profound impact: it gave me the confidence to speak with conviction, back myself in high-pressure situations, try new things and take more risks, and encouraged me to take bolder steps forward in my career."

PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The six-month Women in SSTEM IMPACT Program ran from March to September 2025, with supplementary activities extending into February and October. The program design balanced depth, reflection and real-world application through:

- Eight full-day online workshops
- Two leadership assessments and individual debriefs (Strengths Profile and MSCEIT Emotional Intelligence)
- Two individual coaching sessions
- Peer accountability groups
- Weekly learning integration activities
- An industry guest speaker session
- A structured Decision-Making Masterclass

Learning themes were sequenced intentionally to build leadership capability progressively, covering leadership mindset, communication, coaching, adaptive leadership, emotional intelligence, resilience, influence, networks, team performance and structured decision-making.
Evaluation data was captured across themes to measure shifts in knowledge, confidence and applied leadership capability.

RESULTS ACHIEVED

+ CLARITY, VOICE AND PURPOSE: Leadership Mindset and Communication

One of the most significant shifts occurred in **how participants understood themselves as leaders**. Understanding of leadership goals doubled, while clarity of leadership purpose increased by 138%. Participants also strengthened their awareness of how their values and beliefs shape their leadership behaviour and expanded their leadership impact through tangible shifts in how they applied their values daily.

As women clarified who they were as leaders, **communication became more intentional and effective**. Knowledge of how to build rapport increased by 82%, alongside improved perspective-taking and feedback capability. By naming leadership patterns, reframing limiting beliefs and practising feedback conversations, participants gained confidence to communicate with greater authority and authenticity in technical environments.

case study WOMEN IN SSTEM IMPACT LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

RESULTS ACHIEVED

+ EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE, RESILIENCE AND LEADERSHIP PRESENCE

Leadership sustainability emerged as a critical theme.

Awareness of emotional intelligence grew by 60%, while understanding how to intentionally regulate emotional responses increased by 78%. Knowledge of how to future-proof emotional wellbeing doubled.

Participants strengthened both individual and team resilience, with a two-fold increase in their knowledge of how to build team resilience. Confidence and leadership presence also grew significantly.

Women reported feeling better equipped to manage pressure, remain grounded during challenge, and role-model resilience for their teams.

"I hadn't realised how much emotion influenced my decision making."

"Learning that confidence is a skill – not a personality trait – was transformative."

PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

The Decision-Making Masterclass further strengthened leadership confidence, with a 69% increase in structured decision-making capability, supporting more rigorous and transparent decision processes.

+ EXPANDING IMPACT WITHOUT AUTHORITY, LEADING THROUGH COMPLEXITY

One of the most powerful shifts occurred in participants' understanding and application of influence.

Knowledge of influence strategies grew by 170%, while applied influence increased by 222%. Understanding of personal power sources and how to leverage them for influence in technical and strategic contexts more than doubled.

+ EXPANDING IMPACT WITHOUT AUTHORITY, LEADING THROUGH COMPLEXITY

Women reframed influence as a capability rather than a function of hierarchy, enabling them to shape outcomes more confidently and intentionally. They saw this translate to a stronger ability to speak up and re-shape conversations, lead upwards, influence decisions, and gain commitment from others.

"I now understand how to influence without formal authority."

"Having a clear goal for my influence strategies made the learning stick."

PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

+ BUILDING AND SUSTAINING HIGH-PERFORMANCE TEAMS

Participants improved their ability to build high-performing teams, with a 63% increase in team capability skills and an 87% increase in knowledge of strengthening team resilience.

Participants reported greater confidence addressing complex people challenges, distributing responsibility appropriately, and supporting team growth rather than absorbing pressure themselves.

Feedback confidence and capability also improved markedly, supported by their new skillsets around adapting their communication styles, employing neuroscience strategies and applying their emotional intelligence to effectively engage and motivate their teams. Participants embodied the skillsets of 'Leader as Coach' with coaching capability more than doubling. These gains translated into a shift from problem-solving for others to empowering teams through structured coaching conversations.

"I have developed the skills to empower rather than just lead."

"There is not a one-stop shop for feedback – having different models was invaluable. The frameworks for difficult conversations are immediately applicable."

PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

case study WOMEN IN SSTEM IMPACT LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

OVERALL IMACT AND FUTURE LEADERSHIP TRAJECTORIES

Participants consistently described the **Women in SSTEM IMPACT Program** as exceeding expectations and providing rare space for reflection, experimentation and growth.

"It has beaten my expectations – I can tangibly see changes in my leadership."

PROGRAM PARTICIPANT

+ Women emerged with clearer leadership identities, stronger confidence, and practical strategies to navigate the next stage of their careers.

"I feel confident articulating my strengths and my next career steps."

"It has empowered me to identify goals and steps I can take into the next part of my career."

PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

+ Individual coaching was rated highly valuable, reinforcing learning and accelerating application.

"I now lead with confidence, purpose and a broader toolkit – and my team is stronger for it."

WOMEN IN SSTEM IMPACT PARTICIPANT

ORGANISATIONAL AND INDUSTRY IMPACT

The **Women in SSTEM IMPACT Program** demonstrates how targeted leadership development can generate immediate capability uplift while also contributing to longer-term cultural change.

The program's true return lies in the visible shift in how women lead, speak and shape outcomes. Participants are leading with greater clarity, influencing more effectively, and building resilient teams in complex security and STEM environments.

As women apply these capabilities, organisations benefit from stronger decision making, improved team performance, reduced burnout risk and greater retention of experienced talent.

"I learnt to fully embrace my authentic leadership style, which is rooted in humility, openness and collaboration. I don't try to have all the answers. I seek input from the team, recognise the skills and perspectives of others and empower people by making them feel heard and valued. I focus on what really matters: people. I listen deeply, observe carefully and respond with empathy. The impact on my team has been the ability to build trust and psychological safety, unlock team potential and lead with intention, not ego. I now know this type of leadership is not just effective – it's transformative."

WOMEN IN SSTEM IMPACT PARTICIPANT

INVEST IN YOUR FEMALE LEADERS

The **Women in SSTEM IMPACT Leadership Program** demonstrates the power of targeted investment in female leaders: delivering measurable, impactful growth and cultural transformation. By unlocking communication, confidence, influence, and sustainable performance, the Security & STEM sectors gains leaders who are technically excellent, capable of shaping outcomes today and into the future.

To learn how you can partner with **The Asstembly** to invest in your leaders, and create diverse and inclusive organisations, visit our website: https://theasstembly.com/services/