

Impact Report

The Becoming Journey[®] for the BSA

Helping women to lead unapologetic lives



The Becoming Journey® with the BSA

A leadership development programme that challenges women to question the expectations and limitations that shape their leadership.

The Women's Leadership Programme - "The Becoming Journey®" is for women who are highly capable, senior leaders, with the potential to go further and achieve more. It is for women who do not need to be 'taught' more leadership skills, but would benefit from working alongside other women to reflect on themselves, their leadership style, and their impact.

In September 2024, the BSA promoted The Becoming Journey to women leaders across the BSA membership. This report summarises the impact for the women who took part.

Participants

9 Building Societies and Credit Unions sponsored women leaders to join the programme.

The 12 women who took part held senior roles in their organisations:

- 1 Board member / Director
- 9 Executives / Senior leaders
- 2 Senior Managers



"I would highly encourage anyone contemplating the Becoming Journey to take the leap! It's a transformative experience that empowers you to discover new strengths and an incredible opportunity to grow both personally and professionally, helping you gain the confidence to challenge yourself in ways you might not have expected."

Kelly Bixby, Head of Retail, Saffron Building Society

Facing the challenges

Before the programme began, the women were asked to share the challenges that they wished to work on.

In their words

The women who joined the programme were very attuned to the thoughts and feelings that hold them back or knock them off track.

They spoke eloquently about self-criticism and “worrying that I’m not good enough at work”.

They also described fear and anxiety when facing into challenges and taking risks.

Inevitably, many expressed a desire to feel more confident, and referenced the infamous ‘imposter syndrome’.

“I regularly doubt my abilities and experience huge self-doubt.”

“Working through my feelings of imposter syndrome will increase my self-belief and improve my confidence.”

They also acknowledged the connection between professional and personal life.

“It’s exhausting, I am pulled between work and home with guilt of not doing either well.”

However, alongside the challenges, the women were also clear about what they wanted to achieve.

Several women talked about wanting to ‘find their voice’.

“As a female working with mainly male executives, I want to be able to command the room and be listened to.”


“I’d also like to ensure that I am speaking in a way that really brings everyone on the journey with me.”

But the prevailing theme was their focus on how they wanted to *be* as a leader.

“I want to be fully comfortable and true to myself, making decisions with confidence and clarity, while balancing empathy and assertiveness.”

“I want to be the leader that I want to be, and stand in line with everyone else in that position.”

“I would love to have the ability to be bold, take calculated risks, and feel comfortable in the unknown.”



“I don’t have a clear understanding of who I am as a leader and what my “why me” is”

Anonymised

The impact for the women

We asked the women how they would describe the Becoming Journey® and its impact on them.

Participants rated the Becoming Journey® as 'Excellent' giving it an average score of 9.3 out of 10

Personal benefits

- 82% of participants felt better equipped to face their personal challenges at work
- 73% increase in the number of participants who feel their actions will be effective in addressing their challenges at work, after having attended the Becoming Journey®

Career benefits

- 70% of participants are likely to apply for a promotion in the next 3 years
- 100% of participants are likely to take on additional responsibilities in their role in the next 3 years

"The Becoming Journey has truly been the most impactful development programme I've ever been on - it really has been game changing for me"

Kim Roby, Customer Services Director, Chorley Building Society.





In their words

The women described the impact of the Becoming Journey® as “profound”, “a breath of fresh-air”, “insightful” and “thought-provoking”.

They recognized the value they took from it.

“The course has had a truly positive impact, equipping me with valuable skills and techniques that have enhanced my personal and professional growth.”

“I thought I was coming on the journey to address the “imposter” syndrome, but it was actually to show the next management team my authentic self.”

“The course has boosted my confidence, helping me approach challenges with a more strategic mindset and a greater sense of purpose”

They acknowledged that it is not always an easy journey to take.


“It wasn’t always comfortable. It pushed me to look at things differently, to challenge my assumptions and question beliefs that were deeply entrenched.”

And perhaps one of the most valuable benefits for them personally was the connection to other women across the Building Society Association membership.

“A network of supportive peers who share a commitment to growth”

“A network of women I wouldn’t have had before the course began.”

“The networking opportunities and collaboration with like-minded individuals helped with perspective and fostered valuable connections that will offer continued support”



“The experience has changed me. It has given me new perspectives, deeper insights and pushed me to think and behave differently. I have left the Journey with so much more than I started with but in reality I had that knowledge, those skills and the strength all of the time; I just hadn't realised it.”

Leanne Ryan, Strategic People Partner, Newcastle Building Society.

The impact for their organisations

We asked the women what benefits they believe their organisation has gained from them completing the programme.

Organisational benefits

- 100% of participants feel fully energised to give more to their organization, twice as many as at the start.
- 100% say they feel able to operate at full potential for their organisation, twice as many as at the start.

In their words

The women recognised the benefit of their learning and development for their organisations.

"I feel like I am approaching working with a renewed focus, which can only benefit my organisation. I am sharing the lessons learnt, both informally through my mentoring relationships, and more formally through our women's network."

"The benefits are that I will be much more thoughtful about my impact and ripple effect and how I can help and nurture individuals. I think another benefit will be that I will put myself out there where I am uncomfortable"

"It's been quite difficult to articulate the impact the programme benefits and the resulting organisational benefits to anyone who hasn't completed the course as it's so unique and personal. However I believe the programme has helped me understand my own blockers, values and has made me so much more comfortable in my own skin as a leader and director - this will make me a stronger and more authentic leader which can only be of benefit to the Society"

"I have left the programme as a more confident leader, ready to support my organisation on some of the more strategic challenges it is facing."

Emily Morton, Head of Legal, Principality Building Society

"The difference to our businesses if all our female leaders were supported through this course would be immense!"

Kim Roby, Customer Services Director, Chorley Building Society.



A message to other women

We asked the women what they would say to anyone contemplating taking the Becoming Journey®.

In their words

The message that the women wanted to pass along was simple.

“Be brave, be bold and go for it.”

“Be open minded.”

“100% go for it”

And they had words of advice to share..

“I would encourage people to participate without reservation, to do it and benefit from it you would have to put your whole self in and be honest with a want to change and try new/alternative ways of working or approaching situations.”

“I genuinely couldn't recommend it more - you do need to be prepared to step outside of your comfort zone, be open, reflective and honest but in return you will understand so much more about yourself by the end of the Journey.”

“If you can approach the programme with an open mind, you will leave it with an enhanced degree of self-awareness, and some simple but very effective tools to support you in your career journey. It has been really quite enlightening to know that I have everything I need within me, it's just about learning how to channel it and use it.”



“Jump in and embrace it.
Be comfortable with
not being comfortable
as its worth it in the end
for how you will move forward.”

Kate Ashfield-Smith, Head of HR, Buckinghamshire Building Society.

About Becoming International

We are a boutique consultancy specialising in leadership skills and personal development for women, at work and for life.

Our mission is to help women to lead unapologetic lives. We believe that women are not 'broken'. They simply get stuck or knocked off track by circumstance. As such:

- We explore who women are and how they think about themselves, their purpose, identity and their impact on the world. We do not focus on what women 'do' in the workplace.
- We walk alongside women on their journey, offering them support as they explore and discover their own solutions. We do not 'tell' women how to address challenges.
- We focus on the things women can control and the legacy they can create. We do not make them responsible for the larger cultural issues that hinder their progress.

Our work builds a global movement of women who together believe we can create the ripples which will make the world a better place.

What we do

The Becoming Journey®

We deliver an online, virtual leadership journey for women who are stuck or knocked off-track in their leadership careers.

Network support and development

We support the design, set-up and implementation of internal and cross-company gender networks.

Consultancy and Research

We deliver bespoke consultancy to help organisations, networks and leaders maximise the impact of DEIB and development.

Coaching

We work with individuals and teams to help them on a personalised journey of discovery to address their leadership and career challenges.



Contact us

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