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Fixing the “Broken Rung”: Encouraging women to take their next step on the leadership ladder

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1. Executive Summary

In today's modern world the pressure to have a workforce that can evolve to meet the changing needs of its environment is increasing. The drive to have a more diverse workforce is paramount to achieving this, yet we still see a gender gap in all levels of leadership. Understanding how to bridge this gap is a challenge for leaders. This report explores the connection between confidence and career progression for our future female leaders. It aims to understand how we can instil confidence in our future female leaders to encourage them into their next role.

This report reviews literature on the subject and then compares it to key themes that arose from interviews with present and emerging female leaders.

Key Findings

- Developing a safe work environment, where people can question, challenge and attempt tasks without fear of repercussions is key to building confidence.
- Resilience within leaders is a key skill. Having the ability to take risks, fail safely and learn from these mistakes, aids tremendously in building confidence.
- Our emerging leaders need to be able to relate to our current leaders. Creating an environment where open and honest discussion can occur, particularly around challenges is important.
- Relatability is important to reassure future leaders that they are not the only ones who have dealt with a particular issue.
- Embrace the different leadership styles, unique to each leader. This increases confidence through being able to bring their authentic self to work.

Recommendations

- Complete an honest audit of the team and environment in which leaders are operating. Identify and rectify issues that may be impacting the development of confidence.
- Assess your own leadership style and biases. Are any of your behaviours impacting your team?
- Encourage your emerging leaders to understand themselves and what this may mean for their leadership style.

If we do this well, will we see the “broken rung” repaired? I hope so.

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3. Introduction

With the rapidly evolving world that we live in today, the pressure to have a workforce that can evolve to meet the changing requirements of their industry is increasing. The proliferation of diversity and inclusion programs in many of the top corporate companies is testament to this. However, the gender gap in senior leadership remains. According to Women in the Workplace 2022, a study by McKinsey & Co, males hold 74% of the C-Suite roles, compared to the 26% held by females (Krivkovich, et al., 2022). This discrepancy is evident across all levels of management. Bridging this gap is a challenge facing many of our leaders today. A contributing factor may be a lack of confidence, which prevents women from stepping up into their next role. This report delves into the impact of confidence, or lack of confidence as a barrier to leadership in women. It will then look at ways in which confidence can be instilled into our future female leaders to encourage them to take the next step in their career.

4. Project Scope and Objectives

The aim of this report is to understand and highlight the ways in which existing leaders can instil confidence in their future female leaders in the workplace.

This report aims to understand what confidence is, how confidence is built, and what role leaders can play in increasing confidence. It will investigate both internal and external factors that have an impact on confidence.

The desired outcome from this report is to provide leaders a guide for what may build confidence in their future leaders and steer them away from factors that may negatively affect confidence.

5. Methodology

To complete this report a literature review and nine semi structured interviews were conducted. A thematic analysis was then undertaken to compare the key themes that arose from these. The candidates for the semi structured interviews consisted of two groups, emerging leaders, and current leaders. The question sets for both varied slightly. For emerging leaders, the emphasis was on what they feel like they require to progress in their careers. For current leaders, the emphasis was on what had allowed them to succeed in their careers so far. From here themes were compared against the literature and evaluated as to how they would apply in a workplace.

6. Literature Review

Confidence and the multiple factors that feed into confidence make up the focus for this literature review. These factors are things such as, competence, resilience, relatability and gender stereotypes.

Confidence can be defined as “one's belief in their ability to accomplish a number of goals and achieve success” (Martin & Phillips, 2017) . The idea that women are less confident than men is not restricted to one subset of the population. (Carlin, et al., 2018). An internet-based study conducted by (Bleidorn, et al., 2016) sampled nearly 1 million individuals over 48 countries. The participants were asked to identify the extent to which they agreed with the statement “I see myself as someone who has high self-esteem”. In all countries, men rated themselves higher than the women when it came to this statement. Lower self-esteem impacts on confidence as it effects a person's belief that they have the ability to accomplish their goals. Women will not apply for a role if they do not meet all the criteria listed, whereas men will apply even if they only meet a few of the criteria listed (Dickerson & Taylor, 2000).

A lack of confidence can hold women back in the workplace even if they may be competent and have the skills to succeed in their role. Research has shown that individuals who have high self-confidence are perceived to be more competent than their quieter colleagues. (Martin & Phillips, 2017). In this it can be argued that confidence is more important than competence if a person wishes to succeed in the workplace (Kay & Shipman, 2014). Overconfident people seldom run into issues as they truly believe that they are as good as they think. They are not perceived negatively by their peers as their confidence appears to be genuine. (Kay & Shipman, 2014). True confidence is often less rewarded than displays of confidence. (Anderson, et al., 2012) (Kay & Shipman, 2014)

Resilience or the ability to succeed through failure is another factor that links into confidence. Creating the ability or safety for people to 'fail fast' is critical in building confidence (Kay & Shipman, 2014). Risk taking helps to build resilience by providing diverse experiences in preparation for your next career step (Sandberg, 2013). In today's modern world, careers very seldom follow the traditional ladder, they are more like a jungle gym (Sandberg, 2013). People need to be prepared to switch jobs, take sideways steps and take more risks. (Sandberg, 2013). Perfectionism is the antithesis of resilience. When people are scared to make a mistake or fail at a task, their ability to build confidence or learn from mistakes is compromised (Kay & Shipman, 2014)

Achieving a critical mass of women in any situation assists in building confidence. It creates an environment of support, it prevents women from feeling like outsiders and creates more opportunities for women to support each other (Konrad, et al., 2008) (Carlin, et al., 2018). In a

board situation one woman is the invisibility stage, two women are seen as conspirators however when three or more women are present the situation becomes normal (Konrad, et al, 2008). Encouraging women to openly discuss challenges and successes increases a sense of relatability for emerging talent who view these women as role models (Kay & Shipman, 2014). This may help women feel more comfortable to share their career ambitions within their peer group and potentially beyond this, which may help their ambitions to become reality (Konrad, et al, 2008).

Gender stereotypes are potentially one of the bigger barriers to confidence in women. Studies have shown a difference in the way men and women are perceived when exhibiting the same behaviour. Women who self – promote or self-advocate often face backlash in the workplace for not conforming to the stereotype that women should be modest (Carlin, et al, 2018) (Eagly & Koenig, 2014). This can cause women to forgo opportunities if they feel that the fallout is not worth the gain (Eagly & Koenig, 2014). Sometimes this may lead women to believe that having confidence can prevent them from succeeding. (Carlin, et al, 2018). Another aspect of gender stereotyping is the belief that the woman should be a homemaker. Although times are changing many women are more likely than men to be responsible for the housework and childcare while in a leadership role (Krivkovich, et al., 2022). True equality between partners is essential to allow women to succeed in leadership roles (Sandberg, 2013).

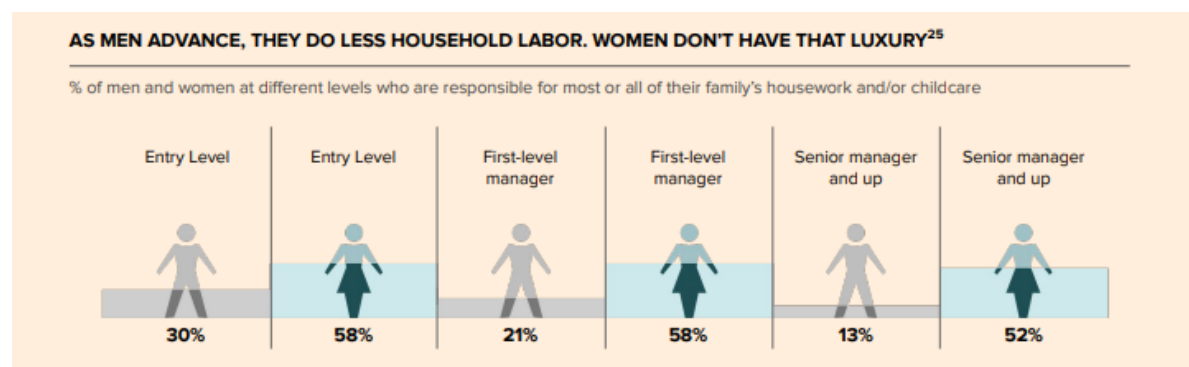


Figure 1: Responsibility for Household Labour (Krivkovich, et al., 2022)

Our gender stereotype bias begins at a young age. Girls are rewarded for being “good”, that is being quiet, compliant and well behaved whereas boys are encouraged to be rowdy and take risks (Kay & Shipman, 2014). When the rules change in adulthood, women are not equipped to adapt to this change (Kay & Shipman, 2014). This feeds into the difference in the way women are perceived compared to men for behaving in the same way. In Lean In, Sheryl Sandberg talks about the Heidi vs Howard study. This was a study where a story was presented to two groups of people, the only difference was the name of the main character. Both men and women found that Howard was more likeable whereas Heidi was

too driven and pushy (Sandberg, 2013). This highlights the inbuilt bias that dictates how women should behave in order to be liked (Sandberg, 2013).

The literature on this topic is consistent, with key themes apparent throughout. Confidence appears to be multi-faceted, with no one single action responsible for increasing it. Action in a variety of areas is required to build confidence.

7. Semi – structured Interviews

As part of this research, nine semi structured interviews were conducted. Key themes were identified from these. The insights from these interviews will be shared anonymously as part of this report.

7.1 Safety

The concept of psychological safety and its effect on confidence was a common theme across all interviews. Creating an environment where people, not only women feel, comfortable to take risks and extend themselves without fear, is considered critical for confidence growth. The concept of safety goes right back to childhood. When a child forms a secure attachment to a parent, they have created a 'safe space' to return to. It is this attachment that lends confidence to the child to then engage with and explore new experiences. If a person does not feel safe in their workplace, the ability for them to grow and develop confidence will be severely limited.

In order to create a sense of safety there are three key steps that leaders can take.

- 1) Be consistent – a team member should know what to expect from interactions with their leader.
- 2) Be non – judgemental – understand that everyone manages situations differently.
- 3) Never threaten someone's position – if a person feels that they are at risk, they will never feel safe to speak up.

7.2 Failure, Risk and Perfectionism

The second key theme that arose from the interviews was around failure and how essential failing is in order to build confidence. The appetite for failure needs to be encouraged from a young age. It is a mindset change to enable lessons to be learnt in failure. Today the drive for perfectionism has had a huge impact on confidence. At some point people have been convinced that to be successful they need to be perfect and not make mistakes. This is a dangerous space to operate in. It creates very risk averse people, who then lack the confidence to act or make a decision in case they are wrong. Encouraging failure links back to creating a psychologically safe environment where people are free to make mistakes and 'fail fast' in order to learn. A key factor in building confidence is being at peace with failure

as you know it will bring you a lesson. Understanding that no one is perfect, and we should avoid striving for perfection, will assist with increasing confidence. "If you aren't in a position where you may fail, you're not pushing yourself hard enough" – industry leader. Failure and learnings from it, need to be actively shared in order to change this narrative.

7.3 Relatability

Confidence is often believed to be an innate behaviour which cannot be learned. People think that those who are confident do not suffer from anxiety or fear. Leaders or people who appear to be confident can sometimes be a perceived barrier for future leaders as they feel that they could never attain that level of confidence. Breaking down this barrier is key in enabling future leaders to build confidence. This can be achieved through being approachable, sharing experiences and a willingness from leaders to be vulnerable. This relatability also breaks down the misconception that the future leaders are the only one who experience feelings of fear or uncertainty. Relatability does not end just with confidence. A barrier to some female emerging leaders is the perception that they will have to choose between a family and a career. Having examples or leaders who are willing to be open and share their experiences around this will assist in breaking down this barrier. Find a way to share the things that do not make it into your biography is another way to remain relatable. All too often all that is shared are the successes, however sharing the failures or the learnings from situations are more valuable in increasing confidence. "People are different – you can't be that person, but you can learn from what they've done and follow their path in your own way," – industry leader.

7.4 Support

Support is a significant contributing factor when it comes to instilling confidence. Support is also multi-faceted and needs to come from more than one source. Three key areas became apparent throughout the interviews which will be explored below.

7.4.1 Work

Support from line managers, leaders and the organisation should never be underestimated. Investing in people within the organisation leads to a greater sense of engagement with the organisation. It also increases confidence through the feeling that the organisation really values this person. This support can come in many different forms, from providing formal training, wellbeing support, or just being there to encourage the development of people. For some emerging talent it may be providing some external validation, that they are capable of fulfilling a role, that constitutes support. For others it may be providing a space that allows them to try new things and experience failure. 'Allow your staff to wobble safely' – psychologist. This all links back to safety, creating an environment where people have support to try new things allows for confidence to be built.

7.4.2 Home

Support at home was something all the current leaders mentioned as a key enabler to their success. Having a partner or family that supports you and enables you to say yes to opportunities is critical. Having equal or shared responsibilities when it comes to household and childcare is essential, especially if you want to balance both career and family. An emerging leader identified that a barrier for her is balancing the family and career, especially when her partner is equally aspirational. Working through this and what the support network looks like for everyone is key to overcoming this barrier. Having a partner who supports your success assists in building confidence by instilling a belief that your goals can be achieved.

7.4.3 Personal

Outside of work and home, having a personal support network was also identified as a key confidence builder. This group may be small, consisting of a few people who know you well and are not afraid to be honest with you. This group will often act as a sounding board to allow you to stretch ideas and may even ask the questions required to get you to consider new opportunities.

7.5 Self

The final theme from the interviews was around Self. Self is often the biggest barrier to success for female leaders. There are several aspects to this theme, self-awareness, compassion, belief and esteem all of which impact on confidence in different ways.

7.5.1 Self – Awareness

Know where you are at and how you show up for yourself and others. Understanding your personality, values, strengths and weaknesses is critical to creating your brand. Having this knowledge assists with decision making which is a building block to confidence. It also allows for true authenticity to come through, by not pretending to be someone else in order to fit external expectations.

7.5.2 Self – Compassion

This is the process of turning compassion inwards or being kind to ourselves. All too often women tend to berate themselves for something they have said or done where if another person had said or done it, we would show them kindness. This is a skill that needs to be developed to assist in combating the negative narrative or voice that tells us we are not good enough.

7.5.3 Self – Belief

This is believing that you can do something. This is linked to competence and experience. Self – belief can grow by doing a task and succeeding in it. Having belief that you can do something builds confidence to try new things however, belief on its own is not always enough to encourage someone to step forward. This is something that can be improved through feedback from others however, the greatest leap forward comes when a person decides to push themselves out of their comfort zone and finds out that they can succeed.

7.5.4 Self – Esteem

This is knowing that you are worthy of something. Self – esteem can be difficult to build as females tend to attribute success to external factors, such as luck or timing. Utilising your support network can assist with building self – esteem through highlighting the true reason for your success.

All of these are critical elements to building confidence according to current industry leaders. These are not so easily taught however are elements leaders need to be aware of when developing key talent.

7.6 Thematic Analysis

The thematic analysis in this report was conducted in several rounds. The first-generation themes were identified through reviewing the completed semi structured interviews. These were then collated into broader categories with similar concepts or ideas. This process was repeated until the five broad themes that have been discussed above were determined. An example of this process is shown in Figure 2. Across these themes the responses from interviewees were tightly clustered. This meant that these factors were commonly agreed to impact confidence. There were no ideas that were raised that were unable to be attributed to one of these themes.

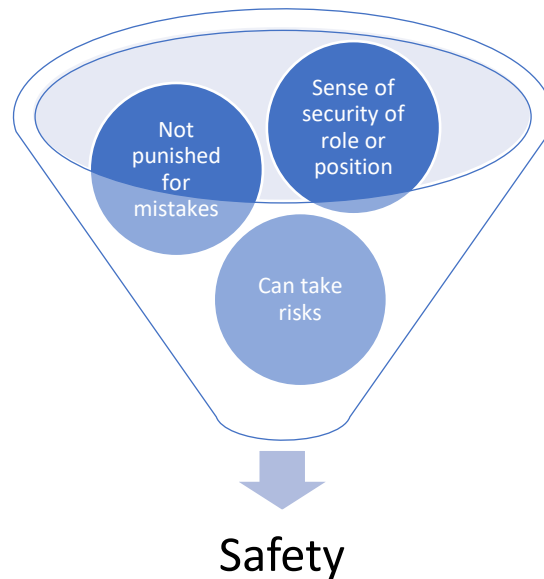


Figure 2 Example of the thematic analysis process.

When considering the literature that was reviewed above, the theme of psychological safety, did not appear to be a key factor. However, aspects of safety were suggested through ideas such as resilience, when it was discussed that creating an environment where people can 'fail fast' and feel safe to do so, is a key step in building confidence. This meant that safety was an area of interest that needed more exploration in order to discover its link to confidence.

8. Findings and Discussion

Confidence is defined as "the quality of being certain of your abilities or of having trust in people, plans, or the future" (Cambridge Dictionary, 2022). When it comes to confidence in the workplace, we can view it as the ability to take action, make decisions and do the work.

When the confidence of men and women in the workplace are compared it is not unusual to note that men generally appear more confident. Where women tend to underestimate their abilities, males will generally overestimate theirs (Kay & Shipman, 2014). Men often expect and believe that they deserve higher salaries whereas, women will often expect and believe they deserve less (Kay & Shipman, 2014).

Confidence is important as without it a person will not act, even if they have the desire and the skills to do so (Kay & Shipman, 2014). If women are lacking confidence in themselves, their ability to succeed in their career can be greatly reduced. The literature highlights the fact that this gap exists, and that it is likely to be the rule rather than the exception (Carlin, et al, 2018). Consequently, if leaders are not aware or do not address this gap, there is a risk of losing key talent, not allowing people to reach their full potential and reducing the talent

pool willing to work with such an organisation (Carlin, et al, 2018). Confidence has also been shown to increase the feelings of engagement and satisfaction when it comes to a workplace (Kay & Shipman, 2014).

Emerging female leaders today are more discerning than ever when it comes to organisations that they wish to work for. They are not afraid to leave companies if their values do not align with the organisation, and they are not afraid to deter from the linear career pathway. However, if the focus for promotion continues to be on confidence over competence, organisations will struggle to retain these young women. Conversely, if organisations do not work to increase the confidence within their staff, then the likelihood of these women putting their hand up for promotion is slim.

Creating confidence within a person can never have a one size fits all approach. There are many nuances related to individuals however there are some key factors that should be considered when creating confidence. The literature tells us that confidence stems from a variety of sources. Some may be biological, some may be genetic, other aspects of confidence come from a persons' upbringing (Kay & Shipman, 2014). For the purpose of this report the focus will be on factors that can be influenced by leaders of people.

Resilience was a key factor identified in the literature to increase confidence in people. Risk appetite and the ability to fail appeared as theme throughout the semi structured interviews. The convergence of these themes highlights that this is potentially a key area that needs to be explored. Stepping away from perfection is often daunting for high achievers however, being comfortable with mistakes and failure often provides greater opportunity for learning. As leaders, the challenge is determining how to create an environment within the workplace that allows for this. It may be something as simple as sharing experiences of times when things did not go well. It may be rewarding attempts at a solution rather than only rewarding the successes. It may just require a little less solution jumping and instead letting your team solve it for themselves. Allowing your team to wobble safely and learn on the job is one way to build resilience. An opportunity to build resilience within a person is through development discussions. Creating the idea that a career needs to be viewed as jungle gym, rather than a ladder (Sandberg, 2013), generates resilience by allowing other options to be considered if the first option fails. Leaders should help their team to build resilience by allowing them to take the small hits, providing the support required to work through it but not providing the padding to prevent the hits. Building this resilience also helps to increase a person's appetite for risk. Understanding that you can make a decision and if it is not the right one, that you can handle the outcomes is a key step in building confidence.

Resilience and acceptance of failure can also be determined by the culture of the organisation. An adaptive organisation that creates a culture where mistakes are treated as

a learning opportunity, inevitably instils confidence in their staff. This is due to the creation of a safe working environment. The concept of safety was a common theme in the interviews however it was not as predominant in the literature. The link between psychological safety and confidence may still be an anecdotal connection at this point. There has been research into how encouraging psychological safety promotes a “playing to win” culture, by encouraging people to share ideas and speak up (Edmondson, 2018). However, the link between this and confidence is still to be determined. The theme of safety came up throughout the interviews and it warrants a discussion. An environment where people are encouraged to share their ideas, speak up when something is wrong, and try new things without having to fear for their job or position within the company, would appear to naturally encourage confidence within staff. Safety is a basic human need as highlighted in Figure 2: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (McLeod, 2022). If anything is perceived to threaten this security, it does not take long for people to retreat and for confidence to take a plunge. This may be something as small as a throwaway comment from a leader, that the employee may take as a threat to their role. The concern here is that it can take a lot to reverse this and create that safe environment. Leaders create ripples so it is very important to ensure that the desired behaviour is modelled, and that this environment of safety is promoted. In a safe environment all staff have a voice, ideas are heard, and no one is punished for making mistakes. This creates a culture where failure is acceptable, people are willing to try new things and gain new skills. As mentioned previously, confidence grows by doing the task so the more individuals can be encouraged to try new things the more their confidence will grow. This culture will also help to meet the other needs on Maslow's hierarchy which then leads to a more engaged, high performing team and individuals.



Figure 3: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (McLeod, 2022)

Relatability was another key theme that arose from the interviews. This linked back to the literature, through the critical mass of women. When senior roles are not occupied by women

it can be very challenging for emerging leaders to see a pathway to these roles. If these roles are occupied by women, sometimes these women appear to be very confident or have some other attributes that may make the roles appear unattainable to emerging leaders. Encouraging women to have open and honest discussions about the challenges they have faced, assists in building confidence (Kay & Shipman, 2014). It is important for successful leaders to leave the ladder down behind them, to encourage these discussions. Relatability also extends to seeing leaders who manage children and leadership, highlighting the fact that having children should not be a barrier to aspiring for a leadership role. Female leaders, whether intentional or not, become models for the next generation of leaders. Therefore, it is important that they are aware of how they portray themselves. If leaders can bring their authentic selves to work, rather than trying to adjust to fit the societal expectations, these barriers begin to fall, and emerging leaders begin to see a pathway. This builds confidence as they realise that the barriers, they have perceived for themselves, no longer exist. If these conversations are encouraged and occur, emerging leaders begin to see that confidence is a skill that can be learned.

Gender stereotypes are being challenged as the world changes however, they can still form a barrier for leaders. Gender stereotypes relate to the societal expectations that differ between men and women. Historically women have been expected to be the homemaker, and men to be the money earner. As times are changing so is this narrative however, the ingrained expectations around behaviours still exist. A woman who adopts traditionally male traits (competitive, assertive) as a leader is often viewed as bossy or pushy whereas a male displaying these same traits would be considered a good leader (Eagly & Koenig, 2014). In the past, if women were to embrace their personality and portray more affectionate and compassionate traits, they were considered weak leaders. It was really a no-win situation. Women who engaged in self – promotion were considered less ‘likeable’ than their male counterparts who did the same thing (Eagly & Koenig, 2014). However, in the changing world of today, the traditionally feminine skills are becoming the expectation from our leaders (Eagly & Koenig, 2014). These stereotypes, although changing, do provide additional challenge for our emerging leaders. Encouraging these future leaders to lean into their strengths and what makes them unique will help increase confidence.

As highlighted above there are many different factors that can have an impact on confidence. Some of these factors are easier to influence than others, such as relatability. Others, such as gender stereotypes are more difficult to alter however it is something that needs to be attempted in order to make progress. An understanding of all of these factors is necessary in order to increase confidence in our future female leaders.

9. Conclusions

Overall confidence is a multi-layered challenge facing our future female leaders. Increasing confidence does not come with a one size fits all template that can be rolled out to everyone. It is made of a series of small components that combined will assist in building confidence. Instilling confidence in our future female leaders will require a dynamic approach that encompasses some or all of the aspects covered in this report.

Creating an environment that generates resilience within a team is a key step to creating confidence. Resilience relies on the ability to learn from mistakes and try again. This builds confidence by allowing individuals to learn, increasing the chances of success the next time. It also reduces the hesitancy to take risks by providing opportunities for small failures.

Psychological safety is an underpinning element to create an environment in which to improve an individual's confidence. Understanding that their roles or livelihood will not be at risk as a result of speaking up and sharing ideas is pivotal to building psychological safety and in turn, confidence. A conscious effort is required from leaders to adopt this approach as it needs to be modelled from the top and in some cases requires a change in mindset. Creating a safe team culture allows people to build resilience as well as confidence. This is the starting point from which we can begin to build confidence within the organisation as well as within the individual.

Whilst gender stereotypes remain a barrier for effective leadership, the way the world is changing and adapting means that future leaders need to understand themselves and their personalities. They will then be able to lean into their strengths and lead a team in a way that is uniquely theirs. This builds confidence as leaders no longer need to alter the way they behave to meet the perceptions of a leader. Everyone is different, and so are the paths to leadership.

Breaking down the walls that surround our leaders is essential in encouraging women to pursue their career aspirations. Being able to share experiences, challenges, opportunities and failures is a critical step in creating confidence. Understanding that what is shown on stage or in front of people is not the full story. Encouraging the discussions to help women realise that they are not the only one who struggles with confidence is a way to change the narrative. As time goes on and we see more females in leadership roles, the critical mass comes into play. No longer are we invisible, or the conspirators but we will be just normal. Promoting women into these roles whilst leaving the ladder down for the next generation, provides the relatable role models required to give our emerging leaders confidence that they can achieve similar success.

Support in the workplace for our emerging leaders is key to building confidence. Whether this is taking interest in their professional development, shoulder tapping them for a role that would suit them or just taking the time to talk with them, it is a small thing that can have a large impact on their confidence. Creating the feeling that they are valued, and their contribution is important to the company can be a significant confidence booster.

Understanding self is something that the emerging leader needs to take responsibility for. As leaders, the responsibility here lies with creating the space and awareness for them to learn about themselves.

Competence vs Confidence – as leaders differentiating between the two when considering promotions or career progression is something to be aware of. Confidence is not always overt, and if it is, perhaps we need to consider their competence levels as well.

Just remember, “Confidence is a skill that can be learnt, just like any other” – Industry Leader

10. Recommendations

For leaders who have an interest in increasing the confidence in their future female leaders the following steps should be considered.

- Evaluate the culture and environment of your team and ask yourself the following:
 - o Does it foster a safe environment?
 - o Do people speak up willingly without fear of reprisal?
 - o Are people willing to try new things even if they may fail?
- Assess your leadership style and biases
 - o Do you expect people in your team to behave a certain way?
 - o Are you open with sharing your experiences with your team?
 - o Do you take time to invest in your people?
 - This may be development conversations or just taking the time to get to know them
- Encourage your team to understand themselves, increase their sense of self.

These are steps leaders can take to instil confidence within our future female leaders. To do that effectively the first step is to understand the current situation and how this needs to change to allow confidence to be passed on to our future leaders.

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12. Appendix

12.1 Interview Questions

Emerging Leaders

1. Tell me about your career so far?
2. What are your career aspirations?
 - a. What would prevent you achieving this?
3. What do you consider when contemplating your next career step?
 - a. What encourages/ inspires you?
 - b. What would stop you applying?
4. What is important to you in a workplace?
 - a. What are your expectations?
5. What do you perceive as barriers to your success?
6. What are your expectations from your leaders/managers when it comes to your career progress?
7. What does confidence look like to you?
 - a. How is confidence built?
8. What are 2 key attributes you feel current & future leaders require?
9. What does success mean to you?
10. What challenges do you feel face emerging leaders today?

Experienced Leaders

1. Tell me a little about your career so far.
2. What prompted you to explore this pathway?
3. What do you feel were your biggest barriers to career success?
 - a. How did you overcome these?
4. What were/are your biggest enablers for success?
5. What does confidence look like to you?
 - a. As leaders how do we increase confidence in our emerging talent?
6. Tell me about a previous leader who had a significant impact on your career?
 - a. What was it that they did or didn't do the shaped your direction?
7. What attributes do you think our future female leaders need to succeed?

8. What do you see as the biggest challenge facing our emerging female leaders?
9. What would be a key piece of advice you would give them?