



# Reverse Mentoring

Sharing Insights,  
Making Change



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# Reverse Mentoring



Enables people in more senior positions to gain insight from having regular, semi-structured conversations with staff who are likely to see the world from a different perspective.

These staff are invariably more junior...hence the notion of 'reverse' mentoring.

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# What Works and Why Reverse Mentoring?



“A number of companies have gotten consistently positive results...They apply three basic principles:

- engage managers in solving the problem,
- expose them to people from different groups, and
- encourage social accountability for change.”

“Why Diversity Programs Fail” by Frank Dobbin and Alexandra Kaley HBR  
<https://hbr.org/2016/07/why-diversity-programs-fail>

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# Reverse Mentoring

## Why *Reverse* Mentoring?



### **Mentors = Women**

Often more junior and having different perspectives.

### **Mentees = Men**

Often more senior and having responsibilities for talent decisions.

## Scope/Objectives

Through a series of regular, **semi-structured** series of discussions, pairs explore gender dynamics that create barriers to women's advancement and gain a shared understanding of these challenges.

Based on that understanding identify actions that will have a positive impact on achieving the Paradigm for Parity goals.

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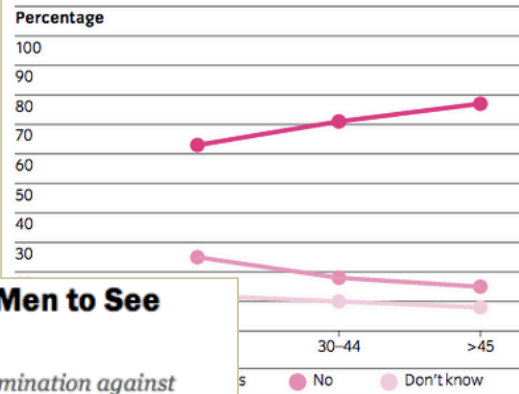
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# Why Semi-Structured?

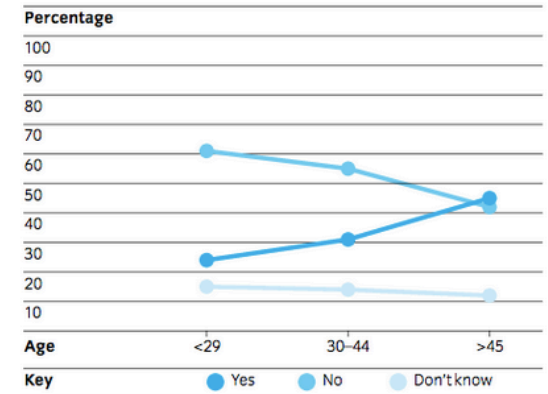
**Figure 1a: Belief in the glass ceiling, Women**

Do you believe there are still barriers to women progressing to top levels of management (a glass ceiling)?



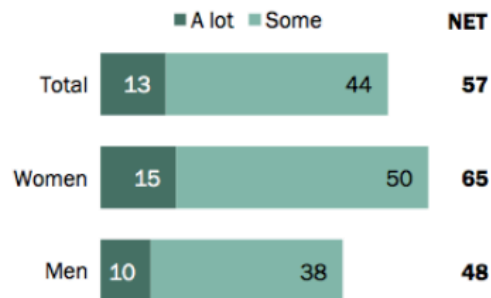
**Figure 1b: Belief in the glass ceiling, Men**

Do you believe there are still barriers to women progressing to top levels of management (a glass ceiling)?



## Women More Likely Than Men to See Gender Discrimination

% saying there is a lot or some discrimination against women in our society today



Note: "Net" was computed prior to rounding. "Only a little," "none at all" and "no answer" not shown.

Source: Pew Research Center survey, Nov. 12-21, 2014 (N=1,835)

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Q4a

1. Acknowledge Perception Gap
2. Grounded in Research
3. Truth to Power
4. Both are Learning
5. Critical Mass

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# Reverse Mentoring

## Impacts

- Increased retention (one company 96% of millennials retained)
- Women advanced
- Women reported feeling more confident in their relations with senior leaders, and understanding business
- The reverse mentoring process became a part of the talent development process. All managers with aspirations to get promoted had to be mentored by someone who was underrepresented in their current team or field of responsibility.
- The LT applied the process to other groups where their experience was limited (e.g. millennials, people from different racial and ethnic groups).



### The 5-Point Plan

1. ✓ Minimize or eliminate bias
2. ✓ Significantly increase the number of women in senior roles
3. Measure targets, communicate progress
4. ✓ Career progress based on outcomes, not presence
5. ✓ Identify women with potential, give sponsors and mentors

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# Reverse Mentoring

## Summary of Key Benefits



- Supports Paradigm for Parity®
- Informative, engaging and non-confrontational
- Action-oriented
- Engages women and men
- Develops #MaleAllies
- Works with virtual or face to face pairs
- Ease of implementation
- Reasonable cost



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# UTAS Reverse Mentoring Overview

## Reverse Mentoring

- 4 required meetings
- 6 topics based on research
  - 2 optional
- Each topic includes:
  - Links to related articles/videos
  - Discussion questions and action
- Each read  $\geq 1$  article and come to meeting prepared to summarize and discuss implications (actions to take and actions to recommend) (OK for both to read/view all)
- Expectation is that you will take action (or if a desired action is outside your scope, recommend action)

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# Topics & Pace

## Required Meetings

- 1 – Alignment with Paradigm for Parity
- 2 – Delivering Effective Performance Feedback
- 3 – Gender Dynamics for Women in STEM
- 4 – The Importance of Male Allies
- Make action commitments at end of each meeting
  - Follow-up on actions at start of next meeting

Recommend in person meetings. Virtual acceptable.

Suggest meeting every 3 weeks

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# Discussion Resource

[www.leadingwomen.biz/utas-reverse-mentoring](http://www.leadingwomen.biz/utas-reverse-mentoring)

Meeting Sequence

## Opening Meeting

**PARADIGM FOR PARITY**

**The S-Point Plan**

1. Minimize or eliminate bias
2. Significantly increase the number of women in senior roles
3. Measure targets, communicate progress
4. Career progress based on outcomes, not presence
5. Identify women with potential, give sponsors and mentors



United Technologies is a partner in the Paradigm for Parity® movement. As you've seen in the kickoff webinar, this Reverse Mentoring initiative aligns with the goals of the Paradigm for Parity movement. To better understand the company's commitment and your opportunities for action, read <https://www.paradigm4parity.com/problem/#the-facts> and <https://www.paradigm4parity.com/solution#plan>

Research from around the world: <http://www.leadingwomen.biz/blog/tracking-the-business-case-research-from-around-the-globe>

The case for gender initiatives: <http://www.leadingwomen.biz/blog/making-the-business-case-for-gender-initiatives>

### Discuss and Take Action

- What are your thoughts about the information in the articles?
- What are the action implications for managers and for women?
- If you haven't already, create the calendar for your upcoming Reverse Mentoring sessions.
- Determine how/whether you want to divide the readings for the next session. (Remember the suggestion is that one of you reads one article and is responsible for summarizing it at the next meeting and the other takes on the 2nd article.)

Articles/Videos

Meeting Sequence

## 2nd Meeting - Delivering Effective Performance Feedback



Double binds and performance reviews: <http://fortune.com/2014/08/26/performance-review-gender-bias/>

On the impact of vague feedback: <https://hbr.org/2016/04/research-vague-feedback-is-holding-women-back>

**Video:** For a dose of double standards (served with a touch of humor): <https://cdn2.hubspot.net/hubs/32089/Videos/Women%20in%20STEM/Women%20in%20STEM.mp4>

The video above was excerpted from this NSF [video](#) in which Michelle Botby breaks down gender disparities in STEM.

On asking for feedback: <http://www.leadingwomen.biz/tips-for-requesting-feedback>

### Discuss and Take Action

- When it comes to performance feedback what experiences do you have with giving and receiving feedback? How do your experiences relate to the research?

Discussion Qs & Action Prompts

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# Actions for Allies

**Allies use privilege to open doors for others.**

**EVERYONE can be an ally.**



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# Expectations & Effective Practices

## Mentees

- Represent your experiences – you're not being asked to speak for "all managers"
- Maintain confidentiality
- Be curious. Listen and ask open ended questions
- Test your assumptions – Don't be afraid to explore some of your own perspectives
- Keep your commitments

## Mentors

- Represent your experiences – you're not being asked to speak for "all women"
- Maintain confidentiality
- Listen and ask open ended questions
- Keep your commitments

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# Questions?

## Mentees & Mentors

**Q.** What do we do if it's just not working?

**A.** Contact Sheryl Sullivan  
[sheryl.sullivan@utas.utc.com](mailto:sheryl.sullivan@utas.utc.com)

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### About Leading Women

Leading Women is a premier global provider of innovative solutions for companies serious about achieving their goals for talent development and women's advancement. To fit the reality of today's workplaces our solutions are delivered live, virtually, online and in combination.

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