



Our Watch



Preventing violence
against women

NAWO GEM Program Male Allies for Gender Equity

Module 3: Extending Opportunities

13 May 2026



Acknowledgement of country



Our Watch **acknowledges the Traditional Owners** of the land across Australia on which we work and live. We **pay our respects** to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples past and present.

Program Overview

1.

What is allyship?

Gender inequality,
privilege & stereotypes

2.

Speaking up

Being an active bystander and
challenging microaggressions

3.

Extending opportunities

Opening doors

4.

Changing systems

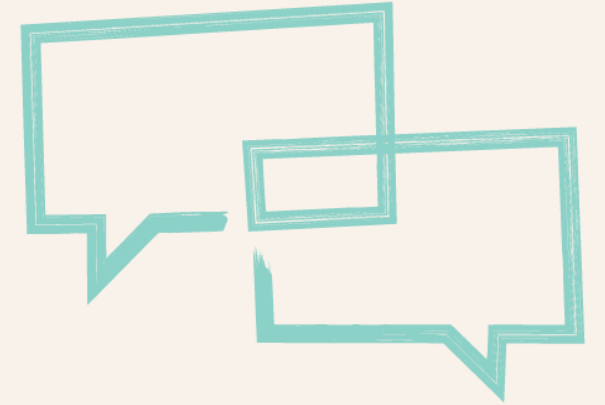
Knocking down barriers

5.

Making it happen

Being accountable project proposals

Opening Share – GEM Circles



- At the commencement of each session, we will ask Mentors from 2 selected circles to briefly share some of the **themes of their last breakout mentoring circle discussion** and/or their discussion and between sessions
- Today: **Mentors Kate & Rene and Mentors Charisma & Darren**
 - What themes, ideas, learnings or actions did your circles discuss during and following last week's session on Speaking Up?

Extending Opportunities

1.

Access to networks

- Help women tap into the networks we have access to.

2.

Sponsorship

- Advocate and accelerate careers.

3.

Create visibility

- Advocate for high-visibility projects.
- Pass up and pass on.
- Publicly celebrate others.

What is Sponsorship?

Sponsorship "is a strategic and proactive relationship developed between a senior leader and a high-potential team member. The senior leader sponsors the high-potential individual by providing tactical counsel, access to power networks and advocating on their behalf, gaining them access and exposure to high-profile projects and promotional opportunities within the organisation".¹

¹ <https://cultivatesponsorship.com/training/>

² <https://hbr.org/2019/08/a-lack-of-sponsorship-is-keeping-women-from-advancing-into-leadership>

A sponsor is a person who has power and will use it for you.²

Sponsor vs. Mentor

What's the difference?

*Image credit Centre for Talent Innovation

SPONSORS ACT

Sponsors...

- connect protégés to career opportunities.
- advocate for protégé's advancement.
- support risk-taking.
- publicly endorse protégés.
- expect high performance in return.
- help protégés confront and interrupt bias.

MENTORS ADVISE

Mentors...

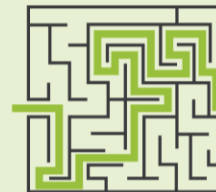
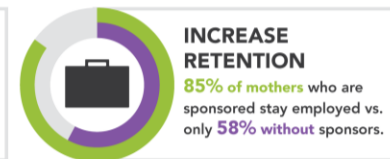
- reduce isolation and stress.
- navigate unwritten rules.
- build confidence.
- provide tips and strategies.
- promote inclusion to company.

WHY IT MATTERS FOR WOMEN AND FOR BUSINESS

“ Women are over-mentored and under-sponsored relative to their male peers (Ibarra, Carter, & Silva, 2010). ”



Men are **45% more likely** to have a sponsor than women across industry sectors (CTI, 2015).



Mentoring helps traverse the organizational maze but **sponsoring** helps to **change it**.

Sponsorship as a Spectrum

A New Way of Thinking About Sponsorship

Sponsorship is not an either/or role—either committing fully or not at all. It's a spectrum of different kinds and degrees of support.



Source: Herminia Ibarra



- **Mentor**: Shares their professional journey and expertise to help guide someone through their next career steps.
- **Strategizer**: An executive shares their 'insider knowledge' about how to advance in the organisation. They strategise with their mentee about how to get ahead and how to fill any developmental gaps that might block her progress.
- **Connector**: An executive makes introductions to influential people in their network. They talk up their mentee with peers, and use those interactions to learn more about how she is seen by others.
- **Opportunity giver**: An executive gives their protege a high visibility project or promotion, within the scope of roles under their control.
- **Advocate**: Actively connects their own reputation with the person that they are sponsoring; fights for them, promotes them, hones them as a protégé.

<https://hbr.org/2019/08/a-lack-of-sponsorship-is-keeping-women-from-advancing-into-leadership>

What can Sponsors Do?

The ABCDs of Sponsorship

Sponsorship tactic	Example behavior(s)	Intended goal
Amplify	Being aware of and talking up a protégé's accomplishments	Create or increase perceivers' positive impressions of the protégé
Boost	Formally nominating a protégé for specific opportunities; writing letters of recommendation, attesting to the protégé's future potential	Increase others' expectations of the protégé's potential and readiness for advancement
Connect	Introducing a protégé to high-status individuals; inviting a protégé to exclusive events or meetings	Create or enhance perceivers' positive impressions of the protégé; increase the protégé's visibility
Defend	Challenging others' negative perceptions of a protégé; providing an alternative explanation for poor performance; protecting a protégé from harmful exposure	Reverse or neutralize others' uncertainty or negative perceptions of the protégé

Amplifying

Amplifying is the sponsorship equivalent of self-promotion. When sponsors amplify, they share protégés' accomplishments with others in a bid to create or increase an audience's positive impressions of them.

To advance in our careers, we need others to know about our achievements and accomplishments. But most people don't like braggarts. When a sponsor trumpets a protégés' achievements, they sidestep the self-promotion and its potential downsides. This is particularly important for women since female stereotypes dictate that they be self-effacing and humble.

<https://hbr.org/2021/06/dont-just-mentor-women-and-people-of-color-sponsor-them>

Sponsorship also matters to women because, as research from Catalyst and others shows, women who advocate for themselves can be penalized in the workplace. Because sponsorship involves speaking up on behalf of others, it offers a solution for navigating the double bind women face.

https://www.catalyst.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/sponsoring_women_to_success.pdf

Boosting

Boosting is the sponsorship equivalent of self-assurance. When sponsors boost their protégés, they stake some portion of their own reputation on an implicit guarantee about the protégé's future success. They underwrite it.

If you've received a letter of recommendation from a teacher or benefited from a referral made by a friend, you've experienced boosting.

<https://hbr.org/2021/06/dont-just-mentor-women-and-people-of-color-sponsor-them>

Connecting

Connecting is the sponsorship equivalent of impression management through association — that is, claiming a relationship with a highly regarded individual or group so that some of the positive feeling others have toward them is transferred to the person claiming the association. This is often referred to as a “halo effect.”

For example, a sponsor might invite a protégé to an exclusive event or meeting in order to increase their visibility to important individuals who might prove instrumental to a future career."

<https://hbr.org/2021/06/dont-just-mentor-women-and-people-of-color-sponsor-them>

Defending

Defending is the sponsorship equivalent of justifying or making personal excuses in an attempt to change others' perceptions of them from negative to positive. In the same way, when a sponsor defends, they address an audience who dislikes or dismisses the protégé and works to persuade them to change their opinion. Defending is quite possibly one of the most effective sponsorship tactics.

<https://hbr.org/2021/06/dont-just-mentor-women-and-people-of-color-sponsor-them>

Extending Opportunities

GEM Mentor Panel Discussion

Tabz Malik –
Executive Manager People
and Culture, Local
Government.

Tabz's career spans Walmart UK,
Woolworths Group, Wesfarmers,
AMS and Club Assist.

Matthew Brierley –
Operational Reliability
Improvement Project Lead,
Chevron Australia.

Matthew's career spans Oil, Gas
and Mining including Woodside
Energy and Newmont Australia.

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Thank you

For more information:

Visit the Our Watch website

www.ourwatch.org.au

Or email equalityandrespect@ourwatch.org.au



NAWO: Recognise A Woman in Operations!

Nominate now: <https://survey.nawo.org.au/zs/KFCIQm>

Join our campaign by nominating women and non-binary (they/them and she/her identifying) people in your business to be celebrated and profiled on NAWO's social media and website.

Your nomination not only recognises your nominee's success publicly (which is awesome for boosting self-efficacy and confidence), it breaks down pesky stereotypes about who performs operational roles and also draws attention to your employer brand and the exciting opportunities your business offers for people of all genders.

Complete the short form above - Your nominee will then be sent an email inviting them to participate in a way that works for them.



The screenshot shows the NAWO website header with navigation links: About Us, Our Members, What's On, GEM Mentoring, Mentoring, Everyday Inclusion, 100 Women, Contact, Portal, and a 'BECOME A MEMBER' button. The main content area features the title 'Celebrating Women in Operations' and a large grid of diverse women's portraits. Below the grid, text reads: 'Launched on International Women's Day 2024, NAWO's 100 Women in Operations campaign was created to amplify the stories of women working in operational roles across the industries that build, power, manufacture and move our nation.' A 'Subscribe' link is visible in the top right corner of the content area.

2026 GEM Circle Breakouts

<p>Room 1 Anita & Ben (+Kirstan W)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scott• Gareth A• Ben R• Brad• Dylan	<p>Room 2 Charisma & Darren</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Kuntalsinh• Leslie• Tom• Peter• Mike W• David R	<p>Room 3 Kartini & Andy (+Renee B)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lawrance• Daniel• Chris• Aaron• Shannon	<p>Room 4 Kate & Rene</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jeremy• Michael S• Rajiv• Fernando• Alberto
<p>Room 5 Gaynor & Daniel</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sean• Johann• Nicholas A-N• Kyron	<p>Room 6 Tania & Tabz (+Matthew B)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Noah• Adam• Ebin• Nick C• Richard B	<p>Room 7 Carolyn & Gareth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mike O• Shane• Joshua• Eric• Andrew W• Rob	<p>Room 8 Wern & Tim</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Andy Y• Ben X• Heath• Steven• Blake• Trent