

Coaching to enable gender diversity

EWIRE's recent paper challenges governments, regulators and companies to make gender diversity a priority in order to accelerate the transformation of the energy sector. The paper shines a spotlight on some of the women driving the energy transition and their ideas for female success in the sector.

One thing is clear; achieving gender diversity requires us all to act. Action is needed by women and men alike. Action is needed on a collective basis to change our sector and companies' cultures. Action is needed on an individual basis to support ourselves and others to champion female talent. Yet, it can be challenging to determine the action to take and even more challenging to sustain the change required.

Coaches offer a partnership to support change. Coaching provides the space to clarify vision, goals and actions, to test and challenge potential options and to hold us to account when effecting change. It allows us to understand our view of the situation, our impact and what might be stopping us from achieving the desired outcomes. This understanding unlocks new ways of working and enables us to sustain the change required.

The premise of the partnership is that we are each the experts in ourselves, our careers and our companies; the coach is our champion and facilitator. Like mentors, who advise and share their experience, coaches invest in our success. Coaches do this by acting as a trusted, honest partner, who supports us to tailor our own actions. Coaches do this by:

- Creating a safe, non-judgmental environment so that we can be honest about the challenges we face, how we perceive ourselves, others and the situation;
- Asking open questions to support us in determining appropriate actions and assessing the challenges;
- Making observations, providing challenge and 'acting as a mirror' to allow us to be aware of how others perceive us;
- Supporting us to use this knowledge to develop new ways of working; and
- Holding us accountable for our actions.

Coaching enables action. It can help us to create a diverse and inclusive workforce to drive the energy transition by supporting us to:

- Transform team, company and network cultures;
- Evolve careers, whether with a promotion to non-executive positions, C-suite opportunities, senior and middle-management roles or a change in career direction; and
- Succeed in our current role by overcoming challenges.

The Powerful Women Annual Conference on 16 May 2019, which will focus on inclusion in the energy transition, offers an opportunity to learn more about coaching. https://www.energyinst.org/whats-on/search/events-and-training?meta_eventId=P1%20902701

Pamela Taylor is a qualified executive coach with 15 years' experience in the energy sector. A former Director in public and private organisations, she understands the context and challenges facing

leaders, organisations and regulated sectors. She founded her coaching practice, Taylor Macpherson, to support leaders and their teams to transform their thinking and ways of working, to make a difference to themselves and their organisations. [linkedin.com/in/pamela-taylor-44087432](https://www.linkedin.com/in/pamela-taylor-44087432).

For those interested in learning more about coaching, please contact pamela@taylormacpherson.co.uk.