

Beiersdorf accelerates Finance leadership pipeline with 60% of women promoted

Beiersdorf, whose well-known brands include household name Nivea, has the ambition of achieving gender parity across all management levels. Designed by Shape Talent, Beiersdorf's bespoke '**Female Leadership in Finance**' programme is empowering talent and exceeding gender equity targets. And for many of the women involved, it's not just changing career trajectories – it's changing lives.

KEY FACTS

35

Women

3

Cohorts

7

Workshops

12

Hours of coaching

An individual development plan

60%

Promotions – compared with 17% across the function more broadly

THE CHALLENGE

Much done, much still to do

Beiersdorf has long believed in girls and women as leaders of change. With a bold ambition to achieve gender parity across management levels by 2030, and an Executive Team committed to advancing women's careers globally, their dedication to gender equity was clear.

Yet despite women holding 50.3% of managerial roles globally, women remained under-represented at senior levels. With more than 20,000 employees across 160 offices worldwide, Beiersdorf also wanted to ensure their top talent better represented their global presence and diverse customer base. The Finance team was the first to seek to address the under-representation of women in the leadership pipeline.

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I have loved partnering with Shape Talent. Their deep understanding of our organisation and their personable and personalised approach created an environment where women felt supported to grow and thrive. The programme not only boosted their confidence and leadership skills but also fostered lasting connections and a sense of community among participants. This sort of partnership changes women's careers – and for some, it has been life-changing too.

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Sybille Wasmuth,
VP Finance Pharmacy & Selective Brands





Our partnership with Shape Talent has been instrumental in our gender equity progress. The return on investment is clear, with improved leadership capabilities contributing directly to our overall success. Shape Talent's tailored approach not only helped us accelerate our leadership pipeline but also empowered our female leaders to realise their full potential. The results speak for themselves, driving significant commercial impact by strengthening our talent pipeline and enhancing company culture. I'm confident the ripple effects of this partnership, both organisationally and personally for the participants, will be felt for a long time. We are extremely thankful for our partnership with Sharon and her team. Their passion, enthusiasm and professionalism are exceptional.



Astrid Hermann, Global CFO

THE SOLUTION

Collaboration, community, and candour

Starting with a pilot in the global Finance function, Beiersdorf partnered with Shape Talent, to design and implement the 'Female Leadership in Finance' pilot programme. The pilot was targeted specifically to enable an increase in women's representation in Finance leadership in line with organisational targets, and to give visibility to those women's talents across Beiersdorf. In addition to these organisational objectives, the programme sought to enable participants to better recognise their own potential and enable them to create a strategic network to support the leadership journey.

A deep understanding of the organisation, gained through a series of impactful focus groups and individual interviews, enabled the creation of a tailored programme with a minimum of 48 hours of programme development time for every participant. This included:

- Immersive workshops
- Short workshops
- Group coaching circles
- Fireside chats with inspirational senior leaders
- Allocation of a sponsor from within the business
- Creation of a bespoke individual development plan
- Peer learning opportunities.

The programme content was aligned with Beiersdorf's business goals and grounded in Shape Talent's **Three Barriers** research on the societal, organisational and personal barriers impeding women's career progression. Starting with the end in mind, topics and group coaching themes were carefully selected to complement strategic objectives, and included:

- Authentic leadership
- Career vision
- Strategic networking
- Eliciting feedback
- Navigating power and politics
- Presence and impact
- Influence
- Visibility
- Confidence and self-belief
- Career resilience

THE RESULT

Tangible and transformative

Following the success of the pilot programme, a further two Finance cohorts have been run and the programme has been extended to the Supply Chain and Commercial functions.

The partnership between Beiersdorf and Shape Talent yielded impactful results – both for the organisation and on a deeply personal level for the participants.



I found it to be a valuable experience for both my personal and professional development. Through self-reflection and interaction with my female colleagues, I gained a deeper understanding of myself. Meeting other women who shared similar experiences and aspirations was like meeting different versions of myself. The programme provided a unique opportunity to connect with different persons and learn from their experiences.

Programme Participant



Promotion and responsibility increases:

In the first cohort alone...

40% of participants were promoted

30% took on roles with increased responsibility

Subsequent cohorts saw even higher rates of advancement.

100%
of participants were 'Very Likely' to recommend the programme to others

100%
agreed that they increased their effectiveness at work as a result of the programme

Leadership confidence:

- The programme empowered and enabled participants to tap into their potential by breaking down the societal, organisational and personal barriers that can get in the way.
- Participants reported greater self-awareness and confidence, a more strategic approach to building their networks and a powerful sense of community and camaraderie.

ADDED VALUE

A close-knit community

Beyond the primary goals, the programme delivered several additional benefits:

Enhanced cross-functional visibility:

Women finance leaders gained increased global visibility across the wider organisation, highlighting their far-reaching potential.

Strategic networks:

Participants built strong professional networks that acted as scaffolding, supporting their leadership journeys, and fostering a culture of mutual collaboration.

Trusted friendships and loyalty:

For many, these new networks were a real game-changer. Strong bonds created a sense of camaraderie, community and care that helped colleagues feel more connected to each other and more loyal to Beiersdorf.

