

Stanford | VMware Women's Leadership Innovation Lab

Women Initiative Foundation May 2025 Curriculum

Sparking Innovation: Inclusion, Collaboration, and Teams

Overall: Unleashing the power of diverse, global teams is the leadership challenge of our times. We are often clear of the prize: more innovation, solving complex and thorny issues, and engaged teammates. Yet, we are often less clear about the barriers and how to overcome them. In this workshop we will explore the dark and bright spots of team dynamics and learn research-based strategies in order to foster innovation in today's ever-changing world.

Frameworks, Skills and Tools for Leaders

Proposed number of total participants: 70-75

Program Faculty:

[Lori Nishiura Mackenzie](#), Co-Founder, Stanford Women's Leadership Innovation Lab

Guest Faculty:

[Melissa Jones Briggs](#), Lecturer in Organizational Behavior and Larsen Lam Family Lecturer 2022-2023, Stanford Graduate School of Business.

Guest Expert Speaker:

[Jacqueline Jones](#), Head of Strategic Partnerships - Diversity Equity and Inclusion, at LinkedIn

Format: 5 sessions (60 minutes)

Session #/ Date	Session Description	Pre-work/Homework	Blurbs
<p>1: Framework and Skill</p> <p>May 15th Session Time: 8:00 - 9:00 AM (PT) / 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET) / 5:00 - 6:00 PM (CET)</p>	<p>Diversity Drives Innovation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Learning goals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Link between diversity and innovation ○ Introduction to when diversity is thwarted from having impact ● Topics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The value of diversity ○ Perspective taking ● Outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Create a cohort ○ Create goals for participation ○ Practice cognitive empathy 	<p>How Diversity Makes Us Smarter</p> <p>The Cost of Fitting In</p> <p>Working together is easier if you can distinguish perspective taking from empathy</p>	<p>“If people think alike then no matter how smart they are they most likely will get stuck at the same locally optimal solutions. Finding new and better solutions, innovating, requires thinking differently. That’s why diversity powers innovation.” -- Professor Scott Page. In this session, we will get to know each other, explore Page’s quote and then establish your goals for the series.</p>

<p>2: Framework and Skill</p> <p>May 20th Session</p> <p>Time: 8:00 - 9:00 AM (PT) / 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET) / 5:00 - 6:00 PM (CET)</p>	<p>Unleashing Team Effectiveness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Learning goals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Engage across differences ○ Growth mindset ○ Establish team norms and practices ● Topics ● Foundations of culture ● Psychological safety ● Habits of effective teams ● Outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Practice establishing team norms 	<p>Research: To Excel, Diverse Teams Need Psychological Safety</p> <p>What Google Learned From Its Quest to Build the Perfect Team</p>	<p>Diversity is not guaranteed to unleash innovation. The ecosystem and context matter. Learn powerful tools to foster a sense of belonging and create conditions for team success. Practice concrete exercises to identify practices to unleash the power of teams.</p>
<p>3: Skill</p> <p>May 22nd Session</p> <p>Time: 8:00 - 9:00 AM (PT) / 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET) / 5:00 - 6:00 PM (CET)</p>	<p>Strategic Networks: Why they're important and how to build them, with Jacqueline Jones and Lori Mackenzie</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Learning goals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Position yourself and others for meaningful connections through social media ● Topics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The power of language ○ Social branding ● Outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A revitalized LinkedIn profile ○ Expanded ability to use language to advocate for expertise 	<p>Why Strategic Networks are Important for Women and How to Build Them</p> <p>To Succeed in Tech, Women Need More Visibility</p> <p>Vague Feedback is Holding Women Back</p>	<p>Strategic networks help you deliver more and have more impact. Women often face barriers to gain visibility in networks. Discover the power of language and networking to expand what is possible.</p>

<p>4: Skill</p> <p>May 27th Session</p> <p>Time: 8:00 - 9:00 AM (PT) / 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET) / 5:00 - 6:00 PM (CET)</p>	<p>Acting with Power with Melissa Jones Briggs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Learning goals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Increase one’s influence by understanding the body language of power ● Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Power dynamics ○ Body language ● Outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Get comfortable with power by adopting an actor’s mindset ○ Identify and leverage the power one holds in a variety of situations 	<p>Using a Mantra to Be a More Inclusive Leader</p> <p>The Authenticity Paradox</p>	<p>Your performance of power and presence affects not only how others see you, but also how you see yourself. The ability to move gracefully between different hierarchical roles is in large part what it means to be an effective social actor - but most people find they have limited range. This highly interactive session is based on the popular Stanford University Graduate School of Business course and supported by leading social, psychological and gender research. In this interactive session, we will examine three dimensions of performing with power: delivery, status, warmth. We will explore and experiment with physical, vocal, and mindset techniques trained performers use to play authoritative characters, which can make it easier for others to trust your capabilities and visualize you taking charge, and easier for you to calibrate your impact.</p>

<p>5: Tool</p> <p>May 28th Session</p> <p>Time: 8:00 - 9:00 AM (PT) / 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET) / 5:00 - 6:00 PM (CET)</p>	<p>Sustaining Change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Learning goals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Change agency ○ Strategic networks ● Topics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Small wins approach to change ○ Growing impact for yourself and others through strategic networks ● Outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Tools to build one’s networks ○ Practices to continue the journey 	<p>Reducing Gender Inequality at Work, One Small Step at a Time</p> <p>If GoDaddy Can Turn the Corner on Sexism, Who Can’t?</p> <p>Assignments Are Critical Tools to Achieve Workplace Gender Equity</p>	<p>In the final session, we will reflect on our work thus far in order to keep the momentum going far after the end of our work together. We will explore the role of stretch assignments in building the foundation for advancement and cultural change. Attendees will receive a Women Initiative Foundation certificate of completion signed by Lori and Sandra.</p>
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