



## American Management Association Sees Fast Growth in Women’s Leadership Center

American Management Association  
Best Advance in Women Leadership Development  
December 2018



### Company Background



<b>Headquarters</b>	New York City
<b>Year Founded</b>	1923
<b>Revenue</b>	\$87.6 million
<b>Employees</b>	322
<b>Global Scale (Regions that you operate in or provide services to)</b>	North America, South America, Europe and Asia.
<b>Customers/Output, etc. (Key customers and services offered)</b>	200,000 annually
<b>Industry</b>	Learning and development
<b>Stock Symbol</b>	N/A (nonprofit)
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.amanet.org">www.amanet.org</a>



## Budget and Timeframe

Number of (HR, Learning, Talent) employees involved with the implementation?	4
Number of Operations or Subject Matter Expert employees involved with the implementation?	4
Number of contractors involved with implementation	50
Timeframe to implement	Five weeks for WLC membership/six months for instructor-led training course development.
Start date of the program	September 2017

## Business Conditions and Business Needs

With the lack of women in senior and executive roles, pay inequality among genders and the rise of sexual harassment cases, there is a dire need within organizations to focus on the development of women. AMA discovered that one in three women claim inequality in their pay.

In response to this need, AMA created the Women’s Leadership Center (WLC), a women’s program inclusive of a diverse range of ages, ethnicity and level of experience within the working environment. AMA initially invited internal employees and solicited external clients who have recently taken an AMA class to join this initiative.

AMA developed, delivered and analyzed the results of two surveys and discovered that tools, resources and specific initiatives tied to learning and development are essential to equal opportunity in the workplace. Through customer feedback, AMA learned that women are seeking a safe environment to take risks, practice skills and learn from one another so that they have the ability to go back to work with confidence to rise to their full potential.

## Overview

The mission of the Women’s Leadership Center is to provide the tools and resources to support professional women towards the advancement of their careers. The goal is to provide a safe space where women of all ethnicities, backgrounds and management levels can build a supportive network, learn from valuable content and learn from each other.

AMA has leveraged internal resources (subject matter experts and thought leaders) to create new courses, events and networking opportunities specifically for women in business. In a short period of time, WLC has far surpassed the initial milestone goals and will continue to grow the membership base, seminar enrollment and impact within organizations.

Through the two initiatives detailed in the Design and Delivery section below, AMA has provided a critical resource for women in the following categories:

- Coaching and mentoring.
- Development of high-potential individuals.
- Competency-based training.
- Training for managers and supervisors.
- Establishing a safe network and community.
- Diversity and inclusion training.
- Job-sharing opportunities.

## Design and Delivery of the Program

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The American Management Association's Women's Leadership Center offers various professional development and networking opportunities through the following two initiatives:

- **Instructor-Led Training**
  - Women have chosen WLC to participate in instructor-led, experiential learning. Through American Management Association classroom enrollment trends and evaluations prior to launch, AMA gained insight into relevant topics and content that resonated with women.
  - AMA currently offers WLC classes in:
    - Leadership development for women.
    - Executive presence for women.
    - Negotiation for women: strategies for success.
    - Assertiveness training for women in business.
    - How to communicate with diplomacy, tact and credibility.
    - The voice of leadership: how leaders inspire, influence and achieve results.
    - Management skills for new managers.
    - Confidence-building skills for women.
- **Membership Program**
  - AMA surveyed its existing current client database through in-person focus groups and online digital surveys.

The data collected guided AMA's decision to incorporate membership inclusion. Further, the data provided feedback on topics pertinent to women and highlighted what women saw as valuable when selecting a membership program to join and prospective membership utilization. Learning was a key factor in the investment decision of the individual member.

AMA designed a membership program that not only met the individual needs of women but also the masses within organizations.

The membership program consists of:

- Leadership learning webinar series.
- Expert-led web events on relevant topics.
- Facilitated networking events.
- In-person evening workshops and talks.
- An online community and forum.
- Discounts on longer-term learning initiatives.

AMA has also delivered membership to corporations and has built custom development plans for gender and diversity programs.

In addition, AMA created a unique one-day "Connect, Learn and Thrive" professional women's event which included networking, expert panels, keynote presentation and a three-hour workshop on communication skills.

## Adoption of the Program

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The American Management Association has measured adoption through membership and program registrations, engagement and satisfaction surveys. Since the launch of the Women's Leadership Center membership program, in just seven months 15,000 women attended women's web events, more than 4,200 women attended instructor-led classroom events and more than 700 women became WLC members.

AMA has learned that many organizations have a women's initiative in place, however, most of these initiatives lack a true development strategy, budget and commitment by senior leadership. It is the objective of WLC to collaborate with members in all organizations and to understand the needs and goals of the individuals, thereby optimizing a support strategy designed to produce tangible outcomes. AMA's enterprise solutions range from providing digital content for global distribution to building a development strategy for high potential and to mapping out a year of meaningful learning outcomes, both off-line and online. AMA seeks to educate and provide support in every way that is impactful and valuable to an organization.



AMA has also learned that a key component to a successful organizational push for women's empowerment is the support of men in each step of progression, from advocating for and supporting the initiative to participation in the program.

Many organizations that support development programs for women are commonly in a traditionally male-dominated industry. There are not enough women in senior roles to support those emerging women leaders in the organization who need role models, mentors, coaching and sponsors. AMA has included men in WLC programs and membership programs so that the men are able to understand challenges that women face on a daily basis. Through this experience, men have become self-aware, supportive of women and the organization.

### **Measurable Benefits**

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The primary objective of Women's Leadership Center is to ensure that participants are engaged in the program and value the content provided as a trusted resource for their professional development. With every learning experience, the American Management Association surveys all attendees to gauge their experience, interest in topic, overall satisfaction and if the content was applied post-engagement. In addition, input on topics was requested from participants to drive future WLC programs.

As indicators of success, participants scored an overall star rating of 4.6 out of 5 stars and 96% stated that they have applied what they learned in the classroom.

With the recent focus on the #MeToo movement, WLC has seen a rise in the willingness of members during WLC discussions to disclose experiences from their respective work environment. The data from a recent survey of WLC members was referenced in a recent *Wall Street Journal* article. AMA has also received many positive written testimonials from participants in WLC events; a representative sample is included below:



Figure 1: Recent Testimonials (Seminars)

<p>"I thought the course was fantastic. The instructor was amazing bringing forth relevant and insightful feedback." — Jessica T. (Executive Presence for Women)</p>	<p>"This course was just what I needed! It was a perfect mix of items for self-reflection and follow-up and tips for immediate implementation." — Laura W. (Leadership Development for Women)</p>
<p>"This seminar was fantastic! ... The camaraderie that quickly developed absolutely enhanced the overall class, which was all due to [the course leader's] strategic kickoff. Every female should attend this session!" — Stephanie M. (Negotiating Skills for Women: Strategies for Success)</p>	<p>"Highly recommended by me and I will certainly use the tools provided." — Dehigh T. (Assertiveness Training for Women in Business)</p>

Source: AMA

Figure 2: Recent Testimonials (One-Day Events):

<p>"I walked away with action items I can implement immediately. It was a refreshing and inspiring day with a room full of supportive women." — Rachelle W.</p>	<p>"Amazing workshop! Can't wait to start applying all of the advice and tools that were provided." — Jill D.</p>
<p>"The event was fantastic, thank you! I learned a lot that I can apply at my job." — Danielle S.</p>	<p>"Awesome event!" — Christina F.</p>
<p>"So many take-aways that will propel me forward in my career." — Christina M.</p>	<p>"The facilitator was absolutely AMAZING!" — Shayna M.</p>
<p>"This was my first workshop with the Women's Leadership Center and I must say it was a great experience. I thoroughly enjoyed the entire event." — Yulanda S.</p>	<p>"This course was a nice breakdown of inspiring stories, interaction and facts that fueled my energy to make small changes towards my personal development and growth." — Amanda U.</p>
<p>"What a treat to be in the presence of such talented women!" — Dianne F.</p>	

Source: AMA

Additionally, in a short period of time, WLC has seen fast growth in membership with over 700 members in a seven-month period.



## Overall

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Listed below are the summaries of key findings from WLC:

- **Corporate Perspective** — Support at every management level is critical to the empowerment and advancement of women in leadership. Both men and women must become aware of the challenges and unconscious bias that women face and drive a women's initiative forward in their respective corporate environment. In a short period of time, AMA has connected women within the workplace and has empowered women to become leaders and role models for future generations.
- **Modality Perspective** — AMA has realized that both in-person and digital content are critical to personal growth and learning. While organizations may believe in experiential learning, there is also a need to reach the masses consistently through virtual learning. WLC has created a balance between the two modalities, offering value to everyone — no matter the location of residence.
- **Individual Perspective** — There is a need to network both internally and externally from an individual's respective organization. Diversifying an employee's support system is integral to thinking differently, learning from others with new perspectives and providing an opening to potential new opportunities.

## Conclusion

WLC plans on offering longer-term certificate learning program, shorter digital assets to utilize in-between in-person experiences and expanded offerings to corporate clients in the near future. AMA believes in the significant impact WLC can have in the advancement of future women leaders.



## About Brandon Hall Group

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Brandon Hall Group is an HCM research and advisory services firm that provides insights around key performance areas, including Learning and Development, Talent Management, Leadership Development, Talent Acquisition, and HR/Workforce Management. With more than 10,000 clients globally and more than 25 years of delivering world-class research and advisory services, Brandon Hall Group is focused on developing research that drives performance in emerging and large organizations, and provides strategic insights for executives and practitioners responsible for growth and business results.

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