

# FEMIN-ICT EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM

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## Introduction

The Femin-ICT Empowerment Program modules were designed while having in mind that they will be in a webinar form. The material included in this document has been tested in National Webinars conducted by organizations addressing audience in Belgium, Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Spain and Sweden. The Program has also been presented during a Femin-ICT European Webinar.



The purpose of this program is to provide women working in the ICT sectors and women wishing to enter the ICT sector, including students in any of these fields, with knowledge and skills that will make them able and empower them to overcome obstacles that have been put into their way by gender bias and other factors.

Each module has been prepared by an expert project partner in the discussed theme. Some modules, such as Module 1 and Module 5, include sections that reflect the way this material can be used in a webinar, and therefore become a trainer's tool. The document, therefore, is both a stand-alone, educational program that can be either used as reading material or turned into an interactive webinar. This form serves the purpose of the content that is practical since it includes material in skills development.

## Module 1: How to tackle gender bias & stereotypes in the ICT

### Introduction

Throughout this workshop, we will explore the underlying issues of gender bias and stereotypes, understanding their impact, define and explain main terms and identify strategies to address them effectively.

We will look into the compelling statistics and research findings that highlight the presence of gender bias within the ICT sector, as these are the facts that help us shed light on the urgent need to address this issue and create more inclusive work environments.

Participants will be encouraged to share their own experiences and reflect on their impact, fostering a deeper understanding of the issue(s) at hand.

Last, but not least, we will have the opportunity to present, as well as discuss, strategies, tools and initiatives that can play a great role in supporting women working in the ICT sector, students in the ICT field, as well as entrepreneurs to tackle gender stereotypes and bias. We will also have the opportunity to discuss what are the steps companies can take to foster more inclusive environments, making sure to highlight the importance of organisations



designing and implementing relevant procedures and assessing their effectiveness, as well as the needs of their employees.

## Module Objectives

The objectives of this module are to:

- Raise awareness about the presence and impact of gender bias and stereotypes in the ICT sector.
- Understand key terms and create a shared glossary.
- Share personal experiences and discuss the impact of gender bias and stereotypes.
- Identify strategies for individuals, particularly women, working or studying in the ICT sector to combat and overcome gender bias.
- Identify strategies for companies to address and eliminate gender bias and stereotypes in the ICT industry.
- Provide an opportunity for participants to reflect on their key takeaways and commit to actionable steps to address gender bias in their professional lives.

## Unit 1 | Introduction

Welcome and opening remarks

Short trainer's introduction

Workshop's agenda

An interactive plenary exercise | Setting the objectives and expectations for the workshop

## Unit 2 | The importance of addressing gender bias and stereotypes in the ICT sector

Statistics and research findings highlighting the presence of gender bias in the ICT industry.



## Gender representation

Currently only around 17% of the almost 8 million ICT specialists in Europe are women.

[https://eige.europa.eu/publications-resources/toolkits-guides/work-life-balance/women-in-ict?language\\_content\\_entity=en](https://eige.europa.eu/publications-resources/toolkits-guides/work-life-balance/women-in-ict?language_content_entity=en)

However, the percentage of female ICT experts (21%) in Greece is above the EU average (17%).

<https://digital-skills-jobs.europa.eu/en/latest/opinions/digital-jobs-women-and-young-people-snapshot-through-greek-national-coalitions>

In Greece, women represent 22.8% of the self-employed professionals in the fields of Science & Engineering and ICT. This share is lower than the European average (24.9%), and Greece ranks 12th among 24 EU member states and associated countries where similar data were available.

<https://www.ekt.gr/en/news/27181>

According to a report by the National Center for Women & Information Technology (NCWIT), women hold only 27% of computing-related occupations in the United States.

<https://ncwit.org/resource/bythenumbers/>

## Bias in hiring and promotion

A study conducted by researchers at Yale University found that both male and female scientists were more likely to hire a male candidate for a lab manager position and offer him a higher starting salary compared to an identical female candidate.

<https://news.yale.edu/2012/09/24/scientists-not-immune-gender-bias-yale-study-shows>

## Gender pay gap

The World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report 2020 states that the global gender pay gap in the ICT sector stands at around 20%.

[https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF\\_GGGR\\_2020.pdf](https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2020.pdf)



## Unit 3 | Understanding Gender Bias & Stereotypes in the ICT Sector

Defining and explaining key terms:

Gender stereotypes, gender bias, gender discrimination

Equity vs Equality

Diversity & Inclusion

Glass ceiling, glass cliff, glass elevator

Sexual harassment

An interactive group exercise | Sharing our own experiences and their impact

## Unit 4 | Strategies for Tackling Gender Bias & Stereotypes

The importance of individual and collective efforts in combating gender bias

**6 strategies in 2 phase for women working in the ICT sector & ICT sector students |**

### **Preparation**

Awareness | Gathering information on systemic inequalities and how they affect individuals and groups.

Acknowledgment | Recognising your own biases and managing them to prevent them from influencing your behaviour.

Advocacy | Acknowledging the privilege you may have due to luck and position, and use it to support other individuals and groups.

### **Empowerment**

Impact | Intervene when you observe any inequality or oppression and amplify the voices of those who are unheard.

Investment | Invest money, time, and energy to support the work and needs of vulnerable groups.

Inclusion | I incorporate individuals with different characteristics into your network, considering their safety.

## **2 tools for companies to tackle gender bias and stereotypes in the ICT sector**

### **Preparation**

Awareness | Data collection | Active listening

### **Empowerment**

Commitment | Think twice | Procedures

An interactive plenary exercise | What is the one step I can commit to starting tomorrow to tackle gender bias?

## Unit 5 | Recap & key takeaways

Trainer's recap

An interactive plenary exercise | What is my key takeaway from today's session?

### Conclusions

In conclusion, the workshop on "How to Tackle Gender Stereotypes and Bias in the ICT Sector" aims to shed light on the pressing issue of gender bias and stereotypes prevalent in the ICT sector.

It is important that we are not only aware, but also tackle these biases, as they prevent progress, perpetuate inequalities, and limit the full potential of individuals, especially women, and the industry as a whole, as amongst other things, they restrict innovation, creativity, and the overall advancement of the ICT sector. Through the strategies, tools and actionable steps explored and discussed in this workshop, our aim is to highlight the significance of individual and collective efforts in combating gender biases. Creating and



sustaining inclusive work environments and embracing diverse perspectives can contribute to thriving individuals, as well as organisations.

## Module 2: Negotiation & Assertiveness

### Introduction

The "Negotiation and Assertiveness" module is meant to give students pursuing ICT studies, recent graduates, and current or prospective employees in the field of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) the necessary tools for effective communication, conflict resolution, and successful negotiation within the dynamic worlds of technology and business. This curriculum explores approaches to bargaining in business settings as well as assertive communication skills, teaching students how to articulate their ideas clearly and convincingly. This curriculum is useful for people looking to succeed in their endeavors or jobs in the ICT area because it addresses the difficulties faced by the ICT sector and equips learners to successfully navigate difficult encounters, speak up for their interests, and foster fruitful collaborations.

The module focuses on the crucial abilities of assertive communication and skilled bargaining in an industry that is constantly changing and characterized by complicated collaborations, sophisticated projects, and quickly shifting dynamics. The program offers advice on assertively presenting ideas, fighting for one's own and one's organization's interests, and navigating the complex conversations that frequently go along with technical

initiatives for people hoping to succeed in ICT roles. ICT industry entrepreneurs stand to gain from developing their negotiating skills, learning how to create fruitful collaborations, obtaining funding, and promoting business expansion. Students and recent graduates have the fundamental skills necessary to persuasively present their qualifications, haggle over employment offers, and establish themselves as important players in the ICT industry.

### Module Objectives

The following are the primary goals of the negotiation and assertiveness module:

-Mastering Negotiation Techniques: Participants will have a thorough understanding of negotiation techniques that are adapted specifically to the ICT environment. They will learn how to recognize typical negotiation scenarios, be ready for discussions, and come to advantageous agreements, whether they are dealing with project management, vendor partnerships, or team collaboration.

-Developing Effective/Assertive Communication Skills: The program teaches assertive communication methods to improve participants' communication skills. Participants will gain the ability to communicate their views, ideas, and issues in the ICT business with clarity and assurance, strengthening professional ties and reducing misconceptions.

### Unit 1 | Negotiation

#### Negotiation skills: Definition(s)

These definitions emphasise that negotiation is a method for coming to agreements, a helpful skill for resolving problems, and a tactical instrument for getting the desired outcomes.

***Negotiation as a Process:*** Negotiation is a planned and interactive communication process between two or more parties seeking to resolve disagreements over interests, objectives, or points of view. It entails a sequence of debates, exchanges, and concessions designed to identify common ground and produce an advantageous result for both parties.

***Negotiation as a Skill:*** Using active listening, communication, persuasion, and problem-solving strategies, negotiation is the art of successfully negotiating disputes,

differences, or disagreements. Finding solutions that satisfy all parties involved entails having the capacity to comprehend both one's own perspective and those of others.

***Negotiation as a Strategy:*** To achieve certain goals, negotiation is a strategic tactic that is employed in a variety of situations, including commerce, diplomacy, the law, and interpersonal relationships. It comprises the purposeful manipulation of facts, strategies, and concessions to sway the other party's judgment and behavior with the ultimate goal of obtaining advantageous terms or results.

### **What is it, and when it's used, what is the aim?**

#### **How does negotiation work?**

A dynamic process of contact and communication between two or more parties having divergent interests, objectives, or points of view is called negotiation. It includes talks and interactions with the goal of coming to an understanding or solution. In a variety of contexts, including commerce, diplomacy, legal issues, interpersonal relationships, and more, negotiation can take place. It is a technique for reaching consensus, settling disputes, and coming to conclusions that consider the needs and interests of all parties.

#### **-When should you negotiate?**

Every time there is a need to resolve disagreements, disputes, or divergent goals between parties, negotiation is utilized. The following are some situations where negotiating is frequently used:

***Business Transactions:*** Contracts, partnerships, mergers, and sales agreements all include some form of negotiation. To establish agreements that are advantageous to both parties, businesses negotiate terms, prices, and conditions.

***International relations and diplomacy:*** To resolve disputes and handle global challenges, nations negotiate treaties, trade agreements, and diplomatic solutions.

***Labor Relations:*** The pay, benefits, and working conditions that employees get are negotiated through collective bargaining agreements between labour unions and companies.

***Legal Disputes:*** Before going to trial, attorneys negotiate plea deals or settlements to end legal disputes.

**Personal Relationships:** People bargain over decisions including home issues, disagreements with others, or shared duties.

**Real estate transactions** involve negotiations between buyers and sellers about the terms and pricing of the properties.

### **What Purpose Does Negotiation Serve?**

The goal of negotiation is to arrive at a solution that is suitable to all parties and acceptable to both. Although precise objectives may change depending on the situation, negotiation aims to:

**Reach an Agreement:** The main goal is to reach an agreement that takes into account the interests and worries of all parties, finding a compromise that meets as many requirements as feasible.

**Preserve connections:** Negotiation places a strong emphasis on keeping constructive connections between parties, especially when they are at odds. For continued conversations and teamwork, this is essential.

**Optimise Results:** Negotiators work to get favourable terms and circumstances that are consistent with their goals and interests. This may entail looking for extra benefits or concessions.

**Minimise Conflict:** Negotiation assists in minimising disputes and preventing their escalation by encouraging open dialogue and compromise.

**Better Understanding:** Through negotiation, parties may better comprehend one another's goals and points of view, which promotes empathy.

**Promote Fairness:** The process strives to make sure that everyone involved feels the final agreement is reasonable and fair.

In conclusion, negotiation is utilised in a variety of situations to resolve disagreements and come to agreements. Its goals are to satisfy each party's interests and concerns while locating common ground, maximising results, and maintaining strong relationships.

## **Foundations of negotiation**



The essential ideas, beliefs, and methods that guide negotiation practise are referred to as the foundations of negotiation. These ideas offer a framework for comprehending how negotiations operate and navigating them successfully.

- **Decision analysis:** When faced with ambiguity and a wide range of potential outcomes, decision analysis is a methodical method for selecting a course of action. Decision analysis in negotiation is evaluating the possible outcomes of various decisions and actions. It assists in choosing tactics that are in line with their objectives by assisting negotiators in evaluating trade-offs, risks, and advantages associated with alternative possibilities.
- **Behavioral decision-making:** The study of behavioural decision-making focuses on how psychological variables, prejudices, and emotions affect people's decisions. Understanding behavioural factors is essential in negotiations since people don't always act rationally. Cognitive biases, emotional responses, and social dynamics all have an influence on the negotiation process and results.
- **Game theory:** A mathematical framework known as "game theory" is used to examine interactions between "players," or decision-makers, who are trying to maximise their outcomes depending on the actions of others. Game theory may be used in negotiations to forecast how various tactics and actions can affect the result. It helps negotiators comprehend the dynamics of collaboration, rivalry, and the interaction of parties' interests.
- **Negotiation analysis:** To understand the underlying dynamics of a negotiation, negotiation analysis requires methodically analysing each component of the discussion. Analysis of the parties' interests, available options, sources of influence, and prospective agreements are all part of this process. By breaking down these elements, negotiators may build strategies that are suited to the negotiating setting and make better informed judgments.

In conclusion, these ideas make up the basis of negotiation. Taken together, they aid in comprehending the decision-making procedures, behavioural effects, tactical exchanges, and analytical considerations that impact effective negotiation results.

## Other classifications of theories of Negotiation

- **Structural Analysis:** Building analysis Theories of negotiation place a strong emphasis on the fundamental structure and traits of the negotiating process. This entails looking at the negotiating process's structure, context, and formal norms. These theories frequently consider elements like the number of parties participating, the distribution of power, and the order of the negotiation movements.
- **Strategic Analysis:** Theories of strategic analysis place a focus on the strategic choices and activities that negotiators make to accomplish their objectives. According to these beliefs, negotiation is a strategic game in which participants make deliberate movements to affect one another's actions and results. This category includes strategies including confrontational behaviour, teamwork, and the use of leverage.
- **Process Analysis:** The actual dynamics and phases of the negotiation process are the focus of process analysis theories. They aim to comprehend how parties interact, share information, present offers, and react to suggestions as negotiations progress. These ideas emphasise the significance of clear communication, framing, and action sequencing.
- **Integrative Analysis:** Integrative analysis theories place a strong emphasis on adding value and raising the likelihood that all parties to a negotiation will profit. These ideas support a cooperative strategy in which negotiators actively look for chances to reach amicable agreements. Finding common interests and original solutions that address the demands of many stakeholders is the goal.
- **Behavioral Analysis:** The psychological and behavioural components of negotiation are explored through behavioural analysis theories. These ideas acknowledge that cognitive biases, emotions, and social dynamics have an impact on negotiators. Negotiators may predict and control behaviours that may affect the negotiating process and results by being aware of these aspects.

In conclusion, these theoretical divisions offer several perspectives through which to view and evaluate agreements. They discuss the structural environment, strategic choices,

dynamics of the negotiation process, potential for value creation, and behavioural factors that affect negotiation results.

## Phases of Negotiation

- **1. Preparation:** Negotiators gather data, specify their goals, and evaluate their own strengths and weaknesses during the preparation phase. They also discover prospective alternatives, anticipate the interests and attitudes of the opposing side, and develop a clear negotiating strategy.
- **2. Information Exchange:** This happens when two sides start engaging, sharing information, and identifying the needs of the other party. The parties' initial communication takes place during this period. They provide details about their requirements, worries, and top priorities. Gaining a deeper understanding of one another's viewpoints and identifying areas of agreement and potential compromise are the objectives.
- **3. Bargain:** When the “give and take” takes place. We need to create value and capture value – Communication skills are important during this stage. To establish a deal, negotiators have a series of interactions during the negotiation stage. The "give and take" happens at this point when offers, counteroffers, and compromises are made by the parties. Negotiators are working to generate value by investigating solutions that benefit both parties while attempting to capture value for themselves, therefore, effective communication skills are essential during this stage.
- **4. Conclude:** The point where an agreement is reached. When an agreement is established, it is known as the closing phase. The terms are finalised by negotiators, who also specify the pricing, terms, deadlines, and any other pertinent elements. To make sure that the terms are acceptable to both parties and that the agreement supports their individual objectives, this step frequently necessitates close attention.

- **5. Execute:** The stage where the execution of the agreement happens. The negotiated agreement is put into effect during the execution phase. Both parties fulfil their obligations in accordance with the terms stated in the contract. This entails carrying out any agreed-upon activities, payments, or deliverables. Effective execution guarantees that the agreed-upon conditions are followed and that both parties' profit as anticipated.

In conclusion, the negotiation process progresses through these stages, beginning with planning and ending with the agreement's execution. Each stage is crucial in helping negotiators arrive at a solution that will satisfy both parties while controlling information flow, and effective communication.

### Skills that are needed in Negotiation

- **1. Communication:** In negotiations, clear communication is essential. It entails making sure that information is shared correctly, clearly stating your arguments, and carefully listening to the opinions of the other person. Building rapport and fostering clear communication are both necessary for successful negotiating.
- **2. Persuasion:** Presenting your arguments and ideas in an appealing and convincing way is a key component of persuasiveness. It involves arguing rationally, appealing to feelings, and emphasising the advantages of your plans to sway the other party's judgment and behaviour.
- **3. Planning:** For a negotiation to be successful, preparation is key. This ability entails extensively investigating the negotiating setting, comprehending the interests of the opposing side, and seeing points of agreement and disagreement. You can manage the negotiating process more successfully if you have a well-thought-out plan.
- **4. Strategizing:** Creating a strategy requires coming up with a plan to accomplish your goals. This entails thinking through several negotiating strategies, predicting the other party's movements, and modifying your plan in reaction to their answers. Your chances of achieving favourable outcomes are increased by effective strategy.



- **5. Cooperating:** Cooperation abilities are essential for producing win-win outcomes and establishing trust. Approaches to negotiation that incorporate collaboration look for areas of agreement and shared interests that are advantageous to both sides. Positive negotiating outcomes are influenced by displaying a desire to work together and considering mutual benefits.

These abilities—communication, persuasion, planning, strategizing, and cooperating—play a key part in successfully negotiating and obtaining favourable results.

### Some practical examples of how to apply the theories above in the ICT sector

- **Real-life examples:**

Tech Startup Mergers and Acquisitions: Integrative analysis might be helpful in a merger or acquisition agreement between two tech firms. To make a deal that maximises value for both businesses and guarantees seamless integration of personnel and technology, the two parties might investigate synergies and shared objectives. The Facebook acquisition of WhatsApp is one instance of a merger and acquisition involving a software company.

Example: WhatsApp was purchased by Facebook

1. Background: Due to its user-friendly UI and end-to-end encryption, the messaging program WhatsApp has become extremely popular. The social media behemoth Facebook understood the potential of WhatsApp's user base and its dominance of the messaging app industry.
2. Negotiation and Justification: Facebook regarded the acquisition of WhatsApp as a chance to broaden its influence and enter the expanding mobile messaging market. Jan Koum and Brian Acton, the creators of WhatsApp, were also interested in joining up with a bigger organisation that might offer resources and support for the app's continuing growth.
3. Facebook tried to allay any possible worries of WhatsApp's founders and other important stakeholders during discussions by ensuring the independence of the service, protecting user privacy, and preserving the primary elements of the platform that initially drew in users.
4. Result: In February 2014, Facebook said that it had purchased WhatsApp for almost \$19 billion in cash and shares. By incorporating WhatsApp's sizable user base into its ecosystem

through the acquisition, Facebook strengthened its position in the mobile messaging industry and its competitive advantage.

5. Implementation: Following the acquisition, WhatsApp carried on as a stand-alone application, preserving its user interface and dedication to user privacy. Over time, various Facebook services were integrated into WhatsApp, but WhatsApp's fundamental character mostly remained unaltered.

6. Impact: Facebook's acquisition of WhatsApp served as a model for a successful merger and acquisition of a software firm. It showed how a bigger business may deliberately purchase a startup with a valuable user base and technology to improve its market position and offers.

In conclusion, the Facebook purchase of WhatsApp is a great illustration of how tech startup mergers and acquisitions may be motivated by the need to acquire cutting-edge technology, get access to a sizable user base, and utilise the capabilities of both firms for mutual growth.

▪ ***How to negotiate: E.g. How to negotiate with your boss for a higher salary:***

1. Prepare by looking up compensation ranges for your position and sector to get a sense of what's fair. Describe your accomplishments, contributions, and new duties that support the rise. Be prepared to respond to any potential objections or worries your supervisor may have.
2. Information Swap: Arrange a meeting with your manager to talk about your pay. Describe your accomplishments, your duties, and any market research you've done. Be receptive to their viewpoint about the company's financial restrictions and performance standards.
3. Negotiate: Take a calculated approach by highlighting your dedication to the prosperity of the business and your readiness to take on more responsibility. By offering a range for a wage rise, you may demonstrate your adaptability. Consider possible non-financial advantages like improved training possibilities or flexible work schedules.
4. Summarise: Come to an agreement that satisfies both your goals and the financial constraints of the organisation. Confirm the conditions in writing, including the increased pay, any adjustments to duties, and the date that they will take effect.

5. Execute: Once an agreement has been reached, follow through on any commitments made, such as taking on more duties or hitting certain performance benchmarks. Maintain a favourable career trajectory by continually demonstrating your value to the business.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, the ICT industry may use negotiation theories to effectively handle software licensing, outsourcing IT services, and mergers and acquisitions. Like other negotiations, negotiating a higher wage requires planning, sharing information, smart bargaining, coming to an agreement, and carrying out the conditions to get the result you want. In the ICT industry, negotiation skills are essential since they enable the alignment of varied interests and viewpoints within cross-functional teams, resulting in more original and cogent solutions. Effective negotiating ensures advantageous terms, cost efficiencies, and access to cutting-edge technologies in vendor relationships and procurement, ultimately boosting the competitiveness and capacities of ICT-driven initiatives.

## Unit 2 | Assertiveness

### What is assertiveness, and how do assertive people act:

The quality of being assertive is the capacity to state one's demands, wants, and limits in a confident, clear, and courteous manner while also considering the rights and viewpoints of others. Respecting others while standing up for their own interests is a delicate balance that assertive people manage to achieve. The traits of assertive behaviour are:

**Clear Communication:** Assertive people express their wants and views clearly and without ambiguity or hostility. They make it simpler for others to comprehend their viewpoint by using "I" expressions to explain their thoughts and feelings.

**Respectful Listening:** Assertive people show empathy and interest in the opinions of others by actively listening to them. They are aware of other viewpoints and eager to take them into account.

**Establishing limits:** Assertive people are at ease creating and upholding personal limits. When required, they can say "no" without feeling bad or being unduly accommodating.

**Assertive behaviour is a sign of confidence.** The right to express oneself and one's thoughts without concern for rejection or conflict is something that assertive people hold dear.

**Solving problems:** Assertive people look for answers rather than lingering on issues. They are willing to address disagreements and work together to find solutions.

**Adopting a non-aggressive stance:** Being assertive differs from being confrontational. Respecting other people's feelings and ideas, assertive behaviour stays away from harsh or combative methods.

**Positive Self-Image:** Assertive people have positive views of themselves. They respect others without diminishing themselves or their achievements.

**Managing Emotions:** Assertive people are good at controlling their feelings and remaining calm even during difficult talks. They try to maintain a balanced emotional state and refrain from responding impulsively.

**Ownership of sentiments:** Assertive people own their sentiments and express them honestly without blaming others. They convey their reactions to events without blaming or criticising.

**Flexibility** is a necessary component of assertive behaviour. As they state their wants, assertive people are willing to negotiate and compromise to get to solutions that are acceptable to all parties.

Assertiveness entails successfully, boldly, and politely expressing oneself. People who are assertive strike a balance between speaking out for their own wants and being considerate of others' needs and feelings.

## Why is assertiveness important?

- **Clear communication:** Being assertive makes it possible for people to convey their needs, wants, and opinions in a straightforward and effective manner. Assertive communication reduces misconceptions and misinterpretations, resulting in more beneficial encounters and stronger interpersonal bonds.
- **Setting boundaries:** Being assertive enables people to create and uphold personal limits. This is essential for preserving one's self-respect and preventing others from crossing the

line. Assertive people foster a more respectful and balanced atmosphere by respectfully stating their boundaries.

- ***Standing up for ourselves in a non-aggressive way:*** People who are forceful are more capable of defending themselves without resorting to violence. They can discuss problems, raise issues, and stand up for their rights while still being respectful to others. This strategy promotes healthy relationships and self-confidence.
- ***Protects us from bullying:*** Assertiveness functions as a deterrent against bullying and manipulation, protecting us from it. People are less likely to become objects of disrespectful behaviour when they assertively establish their limits and express their feelings. Assertiveness is a useful strategy for self-defense since bullies frequently target those who come across as meek or unsure.

Assertiveness improves the clarity of communication, creates appropriate boundaries, enables people to stand up for themselves without being confrontational, and protects against bullying and manipulation.

### Benefits of being assertive

- ***From a psychological perspective:*** 1. Assertive people experience less Depression and anxiety. Even in the presence of pressure, assertive people tend to have fewer worried thoughts. Lower levels of anxiety and despair are a result of their capacity for self-expression and emotion control. 2. Behavior that is Firm but Respectful: Assertive people can clearly express their opinions and desires without using rudeness or aggressiveness. This well-rounded strategy encourages positive connections and avoids pointless disagreements. 3. Balanced Emotional Reactions: Being assertive enables people to respond to both good and bad emotions in a positive way. They communicate their feelings in a way that promotes understanding and resolution rather than becoming unduly hostile or quiet.
- ***Better relationships*** (of all types, personal, professional, etc.): Being assertive improves relationships in both personal and professional environments. Assertive people foster a



climate of trust, understanding, and productive cooperation by talking in an open and courteous manner.

- **Higher self-esteem and confidence:** Being forceful helps one feel better about oneself.

People develop a stronger sense of self-worth and self-confidence when they can express themselves without inhibition or fear, which results in a more favourable self-image.

In conclusion, being forceful has various advantages:

Psychological advantages include less anxiety and sadness, regulated emotional reactions, and efficient stress management.

Better behaviour via courteous yet rigorous conversation improved connections because of sincere communication.

As people speak up confidently and fight for what they need, their self-esteem and confidence are boosted.

### Challenges of not being assertive

- **Sensitivity to criticism:** People who lack assertiveness may find it difficult to take criticism or feedback well. They may interpret criticism personally and become defensive or upset by it due to their fear of confrontation.
- **Passivity:** A lack of assertiveness can result in a person's failure to voice their thoughts, needs, or wishes. Even if they disagree, they could follow others' decisions, which might cause anger and dissatisfaction.
- **Insecurity and low self-esteem** Low self-esteem and insecurity go hand in hand, as does a lack of assertiveness. People may feel unimportant or question their own values when they aren't allowed to speak out for themselves or voice their opinions.
- **Anxiety:** Avoiding aggressive communication may make anxiety symptoms worse. People may be concerned about the repercussions of speaking up or worry that exerting themselves may cause confrontation.

In conclusion, not being aggressive might result in inactivity, insecurity, a low sense of self-worth, and an increase in worry. Relationships, personal development, and mental health can all be adversely affected by these issues.

## How to be assertive

- **Project confidence:** Believe in your ability to speak out for what you need and in your right to do so. Your claims may be more convincing if you speak with confidence.
- **Effective Body Language:** Maintain eye contact and use appropriate posture to communicate effectively with others. Openness and confidence should come through in your body language.
- **Expression of thoughts and beliefs:** Honest and reasonable expression of opinions and beliefs is encouraged. To express your thoughts and feelings without blaming or criticising others, use "I" words.
- **Managing problems as they arise:** Take immediate action to resolve problems rather than waiting for them to get worse. Early problem-solving helps keep issues from escalating into larger causes of conflict.
- **Managing stress:** Develop stress-reduction strategies to maintain composure in forceful interactions. You may maintain your focus by engaging in deep breathing, mindfulness, and encouraging self-talk.
- **Staying calm, no matter how the other person reacts** Develop emotional control to maintain your composure no matter how the other person responds. Keep your cool and focus on the important elements of your argument.

Being assertive entails exuding confidence, employing good body language, clearly communicating views and opinions, resolving issues before they become crises, controlling stress, and being composed in the face of reactions. You may speak assertively while upholding respect for both yourself and other people by using these techniques.

## What are some assertive behaviors?

- **Active listening:** Assertive people actively listen to other people and display a sincere interest in their viewpoints. They show respect for the speaker by participating in the dialogue and offering criticism.
- **Consider other people's perspectives:** Part of being assertive is respecting the thoughts and emotions of others. Individuals who are assertive consider many points of view and are receptive to varied opinions.
- **Emotional self-control and emotional self-regulation:** Effective emotional self-control and self-regulation are traits of assertive people. During interactions, they refrain from being excessively emotional or reacting, which contributes to keeping a cool, collected demeanour.
- **Admit when they make a mistake.** Assertive people accept accountability for their deeds and own their errors. When they are mistaken, they are prepared to own up to it and make amends.

Assertive behaviours encompass active listening, considering other people's viewpoints, emotional restraint, and the capacity to acknowledge and correct errors. These actions support clear communication and the upkeep of wholesome relationships.

### Differences between assertiveness and aggression

**Assertiveness** is a communication style defined by the direct, frank, and courteous expression of one's thoughts, feelings, views, and needs. It entails standing up for oneself while also considering the rights and viewpoints of others. Individuals who are assertive express their needs and limits without violating or demeaning others. Achieving a balance between self-expression and upholding healthy relationships is the aim of assertiveness.

**Aggression** is a communication style in which thoughts, feelings, or desires are expressed in a strong, angry, or confrontational way. Aggressive people frequently put their own interests ahead of others, which obstructs polite conversation. Raised voices, insults, threats, and attempts to dominate or control a discourse are all examples of aggression. The aim of aggressiveness is frequently to establish control or accomplish one's goals without consideration for the thoughts or feelings of others.



Key differences:

**Respectful vs. Disrespectful Communication:** Respectful communication that considers the thoughts and feelings of others is a sign of assertiveness. Aggression is disrespectful and might entail frightening or humiliating behaviour.

**Balance vs. Dominance:** Assertiveness encourages free communication by attempting to strike a balance between expressing oneself and respecting others. The goals of aggression are domination and control, frequently at the price of a productive conversation.

**Win-Win vs. Win-Lose:** Assertive communication strives for outcomes that benefit both parties and make them feel heard and considered. Aggression may lead to win-lose situations when one side achieves its goals while the other is disregarded or treated with contempt.

**Conflict vs. cooperation:** Being assertive fosters cooperation and understanding, which strengthens bonds between people. Conflict, resistance, and strained relationships frequently result from aggression.

**Emotional Self-Control and Calm Expression of Feelings:** Being assertive requires emotional self-control. Anger and heightened emotions are frequent components of aggression.

In conclusion, assertiveness entails direct, polite communication that considers both the demands of the individual and those of others. Aggression, on the other hand, prioritises one's own goals without considering others and uses strong, disrespectful speech.

### Real-life examples: how to apply the above in the ICT sector

**1. Negotiating Project Deadlines:** Assume that you are a project manager at an IT business and that you have been handed a project with a tight deadline that appears implausible considering the difficulty of the assignment. You can voice your concerns to your boss in an assertive manner rather than blindly accepting the deadline. You might outline the difficulties and dangers related to the stated deadline while suggesting a more reasonable one based on your evaluation. In this approach, you can support a realistic timeframe and keep lines of communication open.

**2. Dealing with Scope Creep:** In software development, scope creep—the unauthorised addition of additional features or requirements to a project—can throw schedules and finances into a loop. If you see scope creep as a developer, you may speak up to the project manager. Describe your worries regarding the effect on the project's resources and schedule. Make recommendations on how to handle the supplementary features so that the project's objectives are attained without sacrificing quality.

**3. Handling Communication Breakdowns:** When an IT team is working on a complicated system, miscommunication can lead to misconceptions. You can use assertive communication to ask for clarification if you're unsure about a task's specifications. Ask your team leader or your coworkers for clarification rather than making assumptions or being silent. By making it obvious that you require clear directions, you avoid any mistakes and guarantee that the project runs successfully.

**4. Performance Feedback:** As an ICT manager, it's crucial to give your team members performance feedback. To give detailed, constructive feedback, employ assertive communication rather than being evasive or unduly critical. Share both the accomplishments and room for development in their work. You may encourage a culture of learning and growth within the team by communicating firmly.

**5. Requesting Resources:** As a systems analyst, you may assertively express the resources you need from the appropriate department if you need specialised software tools to undertake in-depth research. Describe the advantages of using such tools and how they will improve the quality of your work. By pushing for the required resources, you make sure that your position is prepared to handle project expectations.

In each of these instances, being assertive entails stating your demands, objections, or thoughts in a polite and straightforward manner while keeping in mind the larger goals and preserving goodwill within the ICT industry.

## Conclusion

In the ICT industry, assertiveness is a crucial talent because it enables experts to properly convey intricate technical concepts and needs, which promotes a more effective information exchange between team members and stakeholders. Additionally, assertiveness is crucial in

discussions with customers, and partners because it enables ICT workers to firmly express their needs and come to agreements that support both technical and commercial goals.

## Module 3: Leadership for the Future of Work

### Introduction

Leadership is crucial for women in all sectors, including ICT. While the importance of leadership applies to both men and women, it is particularly significant for women due to historical gender disparities and underrepresentation in leadership positions. Having diverse leadership teams is essential for fostering innovation, creativity, and problem-solving, since diverse perspectives lead to better decision-making and improved outcomes, especially in the ICT sector, which thrives on innovation and technological advancements.

Women in leadership positions challenge gender stereotypes and biases that have historically limited women's opportunities. Moreover, the ICT sector has been traditionally male-dominated, and women have often faced barriers to accessing leadership positions.

Cultural traditions and societal stereotypes have induced women to not feel a special calling for the digital economy sector from a very early age. However, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, connectivity and digital use have increased worldwide, and this shows no signs of slowing down. That is why equal access to the digital economy is not only a gender issue, but it is also a need that must be considered.

Therefore, leadership is vital for women in the ICT sector as it promotes representation, diversity, innovation, and gender equality. By assuming leadership positions, women can contribute to transforming the sector, creating more inclusive and equitable workplaces, and inspiring future generations of women to pursue careers in technology.

## Module Objectives

The main objective of this module is to explore key principles and strategies that can help women succeed as leaders in the ever-evolving world of information and communication technology. By acknowledging the challenges faced by women in this sector, we aim to equip you with the necessary skills to overcome barriers in your careers.

First, we will explore the foundational aspects of leadership, including the essential competencies and skills that have long been recognized as vital for effective leadership.

Additionally, we will delve into the emerging competencies required for the future of work, considering the evolving nature of the workplace and the challenges it presents.

Next, we will shift our focus to leadership within the specific context of the ICT (Information and Communication Technology) sector. We will highlight inspiring success stories of women who have excelled in this field, offering valuable insights and motivation. We will address the unique obstacles and barriers that women may encounter in the ICT sector and provide practical tips and strategies to overcome them. Furthermore, we will explore the abundant opportunities that the future of ICT holds for women, allowing them to thrive and make significant contributions in this dynamic industry.

## Unit 1 | Developing a leadership mindset

### What is leadership? Why is it important?

**Definition:** To lead is to influence others to take the necessary actions in order to reach the organisational goals, while maintaining integrity and respect, allowing people to unite and operate as a driving force behind every organisational change.

Leadership is currently defined as:

- the set of characteristics that make a good leader
- the position or fact of being the leader
- the person or people in charge of an organisation

“Leadership is influence, nothing more, nothing less. How do you gain influence from people? You invest in them. How do you invest in them? It starts with giving them time.” - John C. Maxwell

In order to become a good leader, you need to be able to communicate and motivate the employees with the goal of achieving better results, creating a work culture with shared values and objectives that allows space and freedom for sharing different ideas. Only by achieving this, can you go from being a simple boss to becoming a leader.

The main characteristic of a good leadership:

- Having a vision of how the organisation should be and generate the necessary strategies for accomplishing it.
- Having a network that is motivated to cooperate and contribute to making the vision come into fruition.
- Being an authentic leader capable of creating strategies and determining the direction in which the company should move forward, making the team want to follow him or her due to their belief in the value of his or her ideas.

## The different leadership styles

There are different styles when it comes to leading the organisation, each of which is suitable for different situations or times. A balance between them will create a strong organisation and a respected leader.

"The best leaders don't just know one style of leadership - they're skilled at several, and have to switch between different styles as the circumstances dictate." - Daniel Goleman, Author, Psychologist, and Science Journalist

The **authoritarian** leadership style is discipline-based. Managers usually give short, concrete and precise instructions. They do not take into account the preferences of their subordinates and results are strictly controlled. If the expected results are not achieved, there will be penalties.



The **democratic** leadership style is based on the idea that the views of the whole group need to be taken into account when making a decision. This usually involves a lot of participatory meetings, where everyone will be asked to participate. One of the key points is the trust placed in the members of the organisation, which is why having a common goal will be essential in order to move in the same direction.

The **affiliative** leadership style is based on the creation of bonds between the members of the group in order to achieve harmony and good collaboration between them. It seeks to create a good work environment in order to avoid possible conflicts. The disadvantage is the lack of discipline or clear instructions.

A **capacitor**, also called visionary, style leadership is based on the motivation of the organisation. It seeks and orients towards different opportunities that can be developed within the organisation with the help of personal goal-setting. Motivation is the cornerstone of this type of leadership.

## Competencies, qualities and skills of leaders

Understanding the key elements of leadership and communication could be the difference between success and failure in an organisation.

To be a good leader, one must have sufficient ability to influence the organisation, which requires a number of competencies and skills.

- **Credibility:** We can hardly influence others without having credibility or without building trust. Credibility is the basis on which people will be willing to work with us.
- **Influence:** Having influence means having the ability to get others to change their behaviour, or simply to do the right thing with the general interest in mind. Our style of influence is determined by the relationship we establish with the individual as well as the difficulty of the task they have to perform.
- **Alignment:** This is the ability to position individual interests in the same direction as those of the organisation, so that by working for our own benefit we contribute to the general interest and vice versa.



- **Decision-Making:** This is the ability to make decisions when it is necessary. Sometimes it is the decision that is made (and its consequences) that is important rather than the act of deciding. The problem is when nothing is done. Therefore, a leader cannot be afraid to make decisions, despite the risk of failing. If we want to innovate, we have to take risks.
- **Optimism:** We are going to refer to "intelligent optimism", which is capable of seeing the good without failing to see the bad, as opposed to "nostalgic optimism", which simply sees the good. Therefore, in the face of the difficulties that may appear along the way, a good dose of optimism is necessary to push us forward with our project.
- **Effective Communication:** To communicate well our thoughts, ideas and demands, one needs to first be an engaged listener, paying attention not only to the speech, but also to non-verbal cues - such as body language and face expressions - from others. Managing stress well and being assertive are also cornerstones for effective communication.

In addition to these general competencies and skills of leaders, it is crucial to name **a few that will be crucial in the future of work.**

1. **Emotional Intelligence:** It's the ability to recognize and manage emotions in oneself and others. It's a critical skill for leaders to build strong relationships, understand team dynamics, and navigate complex situations.
2. **Adaptive and Agile Leadership:** The ability to adapt to change quickly and embrace ambiguity is crucial. Future work leaders should be flexible, open-minded, and comfortable with uncertainty. They should encourage a culture of experimentation, learning, and continuous improvement.
3. **Inclusive Leadership:** Inclusion is increasingly important in diverse work environments: it fosters diversity and, consequently, it fosters creativity and innovation. Inclusive leaders create an environment where diversity is valued, and all individuals feel respected and included. Future work leaders should be able to

recognize and appreciate diverse perspectives, foster a culture of belonging, and ensure equal opportunities for all team members.

4. **Digital Literacy:** As technology continues to transform the workplace, leaders need to be digitally literate. Leaders need to be comfortable with emerging technologies and understand their potential impact on the organization. They should stay updated on digital trends, leverage digital tools to improve efficiency and productivity, and drive digital transformation within their teams.
5. **Collaborative Leadership:** Collaboration is a key aspect of the future of work, where cross-functional teams and remote work are common. Future work requires collaboration across diverse teams, geographies, and cultures. Leaders must be skilled at building partnerships, fostering teamwork, and leveraging collective intelligence. They should also have the ability to influence and inspire others without relying on formal authority, but on collaborative engagement.
6. **Ethical and Responsible Leadership:** Future work leaders should uphold high ethical standards and act responsibly towards their stakeholders, society, and the environment. They should make decisions with integrity, consider the impact of their actions, and lead by example in promoting sustainability and social responsibility.
7. **Coaching and Mentoring:** Leaders play a vital role in developing their team members. Empowering leaders that support individual growth, provide feedback, and foster a learning culture within their teams are crucial.
8. **Change Management:** Change is constant in the history of Humankind, so leaders must be skilled in managing and leading through change in the world of work.
9. **Data-Driven Decision Making:** In the era of big data, leaders need to be proficient in analyzing and interpreting data to make informed decisions.
10. **Resilience and Well-being:** As the future of work brings new challenges, leaders must prioritize their own well-being and that of their teams. To accomplish better results in companies and organisations, they should promote work-life balance, support employee mental health, and provide resources for resilience-building.

## Strategies for developing a sense of leadership



Because technology changes so rapidly, you and your team need to be flexible and dynamic.

To do so, here is a list of tips:

1. **Make a plan to manage your energy level**, know how to manage and organize your time, your schedule, in order to manage your energy. Encourage your team to do the same.
2. **Communicate objectives, wins and strategy** in person. While communication via technology can be fast, it's not always as efficient as face-to-face communication. ICT leaders need to keep this in mind: fast is not synonymous with efficiency. Clarification of project details, communication on necessary improvements, sincere thanks - face-to-face conversation provides immediate feedback.
3. **Drive innovation by combining the younger generation with the old**. Interestingly, growth will no longer come solely from technological breakthroughs or product innovations. It's important to keep in mind a strategy of exchanging ideas between the new and old generations, as this will make the most of everyone's thoughts, resulting in innovation that's perfectly suited to customers.
4. **See leadership as a partnership**. Technology is not the centerpiece of intelligent ICT functions. It's a "WE" solution based on a deep understanding of the other side of the partnership. Working together is the key for success.
5. **Viewing ICT as a way to promote better and deeper human interactions**. Companies that eliminate the depth of human interaction in processes often find it difficult to recapture the closeness and alliances they have formed. Leadership is ultimately about getting things done and creating valuable relationships.

## Unit 2 | Leadership in the ICT sector

### How does leadership integrate into the ICT sector?

There are three core responsibilities of technology leadership:

- Tech expertise
- Team support
- Innovation

What does it mean exactly? Firstly, a leader needs technical excellence to be able to enforce (and then monitor) practices and standards of work adopted and carried out by the whole team.

Secondly, she should know how to lead an IT team, facilitate and motivate, organize the proper workflow and provide support so that it can run smoothly.

And thirdly, she should be a driving spirit for innovation, trying out new things, finding new solutions, experimentation, and be an example for each team member to follow.

### Examples of successful women leaders in the ICT sector

Women have been reaching relevant positions and higher-up positions in companies. Let's see some examples.

#### In Spain:

##### **Andrea Barber**

CEO and co-founder of RatedPower, a company dedicated to plan, design and optimize the engineering process of photovoltaic panels, Andrea Barber has been recognized by the European Institute of Innovation (EIT) as one of the top three European leaders in the field of technological innovation. She has also been included in the list of the 100 Most Influential Women in Spain 2022 by Forbes magazine.

She is co-founder of the podcast Vostok 6, created with the aim of inspiring young women through interviews with prominent women in all sectors, from pilots to architects, from actresses to entrepreneurs.

#### International level:

##### **Ginni Rometty**

Since December 2020, she is co-president of OneTen. She spent much of her career at IBM, where she started in 1981, rising to the position of President and CEO from 2012 to 2020, making her the first woman to hold that position at the company. As a reminder, IBM is

known for its hardware and software products, including computers, servers, storage systems and networking equipment.

## Limits & obstacles

### Lack of representation

According to [Exploding Topics](#), women hold only 26.7% of tech-related jobs, about 25% of leadership positions in tech, and 14% of software engineering positions.

The tech industry suffers from a significant lack of representation of women, making it a challenge for women embarking on their careers to find role models. Due to the absence of female leaders within their company or circle who can serve as an inspiration and offer guidance, it can be difficult for women to visualise themselves in leadership roles or to identify a clear path for career progression. The absence of visible examples of successful women in these roles can cause women to doubt their abilities and feel like they don't fit in.

Moreover, the lack of role models can block their search for mentors or advocates who can provide valuable career guidance and support. Thus, it is crucial to increase female representation in the tech industry and provide women with the necessary role models and guidance to help them thrive and succeed.

#### Solution:

One powerful way to fight this challenge is to highlight top women in tech who have contributed to the technology field throughout history.

[Suggestion: in this part of the webinar we can ask if someone wants to give input on potential solutions, creating more of an interaction]

### Unequal access to opportunities and education gap

Evidence shows that the level of participation of women in Information Society is limited, in terms of both access to Information & Communication Technologies (ICT) and careers in the field. This is a gap at a global scale which, rather than shrinking, has been widening over the last few years. It is also a fact that such gaps within the ICT sector result into well-known

constraints, the so-called “glass ceilings”, hampering the access of women to decision-making and leading roles. These concepts and data are daunting and have long been regarded as inevitable.

The wider literature on education, inequality and matters of social justice seem to suggest that education can be a driver of equality. However, it is necessary to trace historically how far education has been successful in remediating inequality, and if so, by what means. There is for example significant literature on interventions to address women’s professional development and lack of ICT skills, and the extent to which these have been successful.

Solution:

From an early age, educate students about the fact that a job has no gender. Particularly targeting high school students, the range of opportunities and potential careers paths should be as wide as possible.

### Opportunities for the Future of Leadership in ICT

The way ICT is evolving and the concerns emphasised internationally are good pointers for the future of leadership in this field. A good leader has to take into account emerging challenges, always taking into account that these can amount to opportunities for growth, innovation, and social and public life improvement. Our goal here is to inspire creativity and innovation, so we highlight three key areas that seem to suggest future chances for development of leadership in ICT.

1. **Ethics** in ICT is a growing concern, namely regarding intellectual property rights online, data security and privacy rights.
2. **Cybersecurity** - For instance, automation processes to speed reactions to security threats, such as cloud attacks are being explored.
3. **Remote work and collaboration tools** - The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the adoption of remote work, home offices and virtual collaboration tools. There's an ongoing demand for flexible solutions that enable seamless and effective communication and productivity for remote teams, while securing both privacy and transparency.

Though these areas are overarching for the whole ICT sector, women leaders have the ability to play a vital role in the breakthroughs to come.

### Conclusions

As we conclude this webinar on leadership for women in the ICT sector, remember that your potential is limitless. By embracing these principles and strategies, you can thrive as leaders, contribute to the growth of the ICT sector, and inspire future generations of women in technology. I hope you learn from this webinar, and especially, you enjoy it a lot. If you have questions / feedback, I will be happy to answer you.



## Module 4: Public Speaking & Presentation Skills

### Introduction

Welcome to the world of Public Speaking and Presentation Skills tailored specifically for women in the dynamic field of Information and Communication Technology (ICT). In an industry that has historically been male-dominated, your presence and voice are vital for driving innovation and positive change. Whether you're an aspiring tech leader, a seasoned professional, or a rising star in the tech world, mastering the art of public speaking and effective presentations can propel your career to new heights.

This introduction aims to provide you with essential insights and practical tips to help you shine confidently on the stage, in meetings, and during important interactions. We understand that public speaking can be an intimidating prospect, but fear not! We will equip you with the tools and techniques to harness your unique strengths and deliver impactful messages with authenticity and poise.

Throughout this journey, we will explore the power of effective communication, the art of captivating storytelling, the use of visuals to enhance your message, and tips to overcome nerves and boost self-assurance. Moreover, we will emphasize the significance of tailoring your message to resonate with diverse audiences and advocate for greater representation of women in the tech community.

As an ICT woman, you possess a wealth of knowledge and experience that deserves to be heard. Your voice has the potential to inspire, motivate, and lead others in this rapidly evolving digital landscape. Whether you're presenting groundbreaking research, pitching innovative ideas, or advocating for a more inclusive workplace, your communication skills will be your greatest asset.

So, let's embark on this transformative journey together. As we delve into the world of public speaking and presentations, remember that growth comes with practice, and every step you take brings you closer to becoming a powerful, influential, and confident communicator in the exciting realm of ICT. Let's celebrate your unique perspective and the positive impact you can make on the future of technology.

Get ready to unleash the power of your voice and make your mark in the world of ICT through exceptional public speaking and presentation skills. Let's get started!

### Module Objectives

1. Articulate at least three reasons why public speaking skills are important.
4. Differentiate between the major types of speeches
5. Identify the eleven core public speaking competencies.
6. Improve your presentations skills and apply tips in your speeches.

### Unit 1 | What is Public Speaking?

#### Definition

Public speaking, also called oration or oratory, is the process of communicating information to a live audience. The type of information communicated is deliberately structured to inform, persuade, and entertain. Many people fear they suffer from a public speaking weakness and lack the will to master the skill.

The ability to speak before a group of people is a valuable asset as well as an important talent. Like an actor or actress on stage, a public speaker carries his audience along or disappoints both himself and the audience. Public speaking and speech delivery is not an all-comers affair. The skills and strategies needed to deliver a speech are needed to be acquired by everyone irrespective of the person's field of endeavour. It is often said that there is nothing more important to one's education than knowing how to express oneself. Public speaking is easy if the public speaker allows it to be. In any case, there are few pointers that one needs to know which make public and speech presentation less difficult. Above all, the public speaker must know his audience thoroughly in terms of their needs, attitudes, background, interest, etc.

Great public speaking consists of three components:

1. **Style:** Masterfully constructed by using words to create text that is both beautiful to hear and read.
2. **Substance:** A centralized theme to appeal and inspire the audience's values and ideals.
3. **Impact:** Impactful by changing opinions, minds, and hearts. An impactful oration results in a lingering effect on the audience.

## The Importance of Public Speaking

Public speaking is one of the most important skills that an individual can learn. For example, consider the monumental impact of the following two public speeches:

### 1. Franklin D. Roosevelt's "Pearl Harbor Address to the Nation"

On December 8, 1941, Franklin D. Roosevelt delivered an electrifying speech, declaring war on Japan and assuring Americans that the United States would achieve victory. Imagine the uneasiness of every American family knowing that their world was about to change. The reaction of Congress solidified a very real and exceptionally delivered speech. The speech brings every listener to a very critical moment in history.

### 2. Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream Speech"

On August 28, 1963, Martin Luther King Jr. delivered a speech to end racism in the United States and for civil and economic rights. This sterling example of great public speaking was a defining movement of the civil rights movement, which resulted in the passing of the Civil Rights Act, giving African-Americans equal treatment. It is considered one of the greatest pieces of oratory in American history.

The greatest public speeches in the world motivated people during dark times, gave hope in times of despair, provided courage and inspired millions, and changed the course of history. Now that the importance of public speaking and its impact on others are understood, let us understand the importance of good public speaking in a business setting.





## The Importance of Public Speaking in Business

In business, public speaking falls into several major categories:

1. **External Speeches** – these are delivered to investors, suppliers, and other parties that don't directly work for the company.
2. **Internal Speeches** – these are delivered to employees in the form of a Town Hall kind of address or an All-Hands meeting.
3. **Meetings & Presentations** – meetings and presentations are much less formal than the above two types of speeches and occur more frequently. Having good public speaking skills at an internal meeting can be very important for your career.

Public speaking is important in a business context for several reasons:

- Gathering employees, shareholders, customers, or the public together requires time – there should be a good reason to do so. Therefore, this is an important opportunity to inspire, inform, persuade, and re-excite the audience about a certain idea.
- The public speaking skill of an individual gives an impression of the company. For example, if a CEO delivers a bad speech, the audience may conclude that the company has lackluster leadership, the company is a waste of time, or that the company is not putting in the effort to be successful.
- Good public speaking sparks innovation and opportunities. For example, a well-delivered speech in a board meeting room can inspire organizational change and push the company in another direction. Every major business decision starts with a good public speech or group discussion.

## Benefits of public speaking

According to the Association of American Colleges and Universities, there are a core set of skills that are necessary “both for a globally engaged democracy and for a dynamic innovation fueled economy”. In the category of “Intellectual and practical skills”

public speaking is listed as one of these core skills. This is not particularly surprising given that communication skills are critical for intellectual development, career trajectory, and civic engagement. Public speaking is universally applicable to all types of majors and occupations and is seen by U.S. employers as a critical employability skill for job seekers (Rockler-Gladen, 2009; U.S. Department of Labor, 2000). No matter what your ambitions and interests are, developing speaking skills will benefit your personal, professional, and public life.

### **Personal;**

People don't just give presentations on the job and in classes. At times we are called upon to give speeches in our personal lives. It may be for a special event or as a part of volunteer work, one may have to introduce a guest speaker at an event or present or accept an award for service. Developing the skill to give these types of speeches can help us to fulfill essential roles in our family and community. Another great personal benefit of public speaking is that it builds selfconfidence. It's no surprise that speaking in public is scary, but by engaging in the activity you will build self-confidence through the experience.

### **Professional;**

TV announcers, teachers, lawyers, and entertainers must be able to speak well, but most other professions require or at the very least can benefit from the skills found in public speaking. It is believed 70% of jobs today involve some form of public speaking. With the recent economic shift from manufacturing to service careers, the ability to communicate with others has become crucial. Top CEOs advise that great leaders must be able to communicate ideas effectively, they must be able to persuade, build support, negotiate and speak effectively in public. But before you even start a career, you have to get a job. Effective speaking skills make you more attractive to employers, enhancing your chances of securing employment and later advancing within your career.

### **Public;**

Learning about public speaking will allow you to participate in democracy at its most basic level. Public speaking is important in creating and sustaining a society, which includes informed, active participants. Even if you do not plan to run for office, learning about public speaking helps you to listen more carefully to and critically evaluate other's speeches.

## Unit 2 | Which are the types of speech delivery?

### Four types of speech delivery

There are four types of speeches that most speakers utilize in delivering a speech.

1. Extemporaneous speeches are speeches that are carefully prepared and practiced by the speaker before the actual speaking time. A speaker will utilize notes or an outline as a guide while they are delivering the speech. The notes or outline will usually include any quotes and sources the speaker wants to cite in the presentation, as well as the order the information in the speech should be delivered in. The speech is delivered as if the speaker is having a conversation with the audience. Since the speaker is not reading the entire speech, the extemporaneous speaker uses the notes as a guide only – a sort of memory trigger – and the speaker will also be able to respond to the audience since her head isn't trapped by reading every word on a paper. This is the type of public speaking you should strive to use in Fundamentals of Oral Communication for your informative and persuasive speeches as this is most practical type of public speaking – the type you are most likely use in a real life situation when you might be asked to give a formal presentation.
2. Impromptu speeches are speeches that are delivered without notes or a plan, and without any formal preparation – they are very spontaneously delivered. This is one of the most nerve wracking situations for most students to find themselves in because there isn't a plan or agenda to follow – they just have to get up and speak without any "thinking" time. They are afraid of not knowing what to say when they get up in front of the audience so they might make a fool of themselves. If this type



of speaking situation makes you nervous, you are not alone! The reality is that this is the type of public speaking you are the MOST prepared for. Your daily life is filled with impromptu experiences and conversations. Every phone conversation, exchange between you and a loved one, and discussion amongst friends is impromptu by its very nature – even if we “practice” our conversations, they are still impromptu in their delivery. So, while most are nervous about impromptu speeches, they are the type they are the most prepared for from their daily experience.

3. Manuscript speeches are speeches that are delivered with a script of the exact words to be used. If they have to give a speech, most prefer to have every single word in front of them so they can basically “read” the speech to the audience. While this is very reassuring for a speaker and they feel like they won’t “forget” anything if they have every word in front of them, manuscript speaking is one of the worst traps to fall into for a speaker. The speaker who utilizes a complete manuscript will often spend more time looking at the script than at the audience. By doing this, the speaker is unable to react to the audience or respond to the audience members questions. Therefore, the manuscript becomes a trap for the speaker.
4. Memorized speeches are speeches that are committed to memory. The speaker completely memorizes the text of a speech and then delivers the speech from memory without reliance on notes or an outline. This is a very fearful speaking situation for most people because they fear they will forget what they had planned on saying when they get in front of the group – and, they might make a fool of themselves in front of the audience if they forget what to say. This type of speaking is not very common to daily living unless you are in a profession like acting. Most of us memorize very little in our daily lives – we don’t even have to remember telephone numbers since we have cellular phones! I don’t require memorized speeches for Fundamentals of Oral Communication because I think they lead to bad experiences for some and they are not something most people have to do in the course of their daily living.

### Bodily Aspects of Speech Delivery



There are four aspects of a speaker's body which impact an audience's interpretation of the speaker's message.

1. Gestures are movements of the speaker's head, arms, and hands. When you watch a great public speaker, you will notice that their entire body is into the presentation. They use their entire body to deliver the message – their arms gesture, their fingers point or accent important words, and their head even nods when they are talking about something important. Most people think of a podium as wonderful piece of furniture to have on hand when they give a presentation – usually, because it gives the speaker someplace to hide behind! A podium is designed for one thing and one thing only – to hold your notes. It is not meant to support your weight, to be leaned on, or to death grip with your hands. If you hang onto a podium or death grip it out of fear, you will not be able to gesture and you will simply be a talking head. Most of us gesture naturally in our daily conversation. Many of us are accused of talking with our hands. In fact, if you are asked to sit on your hands and have a conversation with someone, you will probably compensate for the lack of arm/hand gestures by nodding your head or shrugging your shoulders more than normal! If you have a podium to speak at, set your notes on the podium and take one step back from it so you can't hang onto it. This will help you to gesture naturally and you won't hang onto the podium. If you hold your notes in your hand, avoid gesturing with the notes because your audience will logically follow the notes if you wave them around.
2. Facial expressions are movements of the eyes, mouth, chin, etc. The best piece of advice about facial expressions is to make them match your subject. If your speaking about a serious subject, use a serious facial expression but if you are speaking about something funny, go ahead and smile or even laugh. You can ruin a serious presentation by laughing during it and you can ruin a light hearted speech by never cracking a smile.
3. Eye contact is sustained, meaningful contact with the eyes of audience members. This is the top reason most people hate public speaking – the thought of people looking at you and all the eyes on you is probably the most difficult part of public speaking. There are a whole lot of ways that people will tell you to get around the eye contact issue.



4. Movement is where the speaker's entire body moves. If you can avoid it, don't let yourself be trapped behind a podium or in one area. When you watch a really great speaker, you'll see that they are almost never trapped behind something. They move around the room as they talk and that may mean they are down the aisle or all across the front of the room.

## Unit 3 | What are presentation skills?

### Definition and Importance

Presentation skills are the abilities and qualities necessary for creating and delivering a compelling presentation that effectively communicates information and ideas. They encompass what you say, how you structure it, and the materials you include to support what you say, such as slides, videos, or images.

### Why are presentation skills important?

Delivering effective presentations is critical in your professional and personal life. You'll need to hone your presentation skills in various areas, such as when giving a speech, convincing your partner to make a substantial purchase, and talking to friends and family about an important situation.

No matter if you're using them in a personal or professional setting, these are the skills that make it easier and more effective to convey your ideas, convince or persuade others, and experience success. A few of the benefits that often accompany improving your presentation skills include:

- Enriched written and verbal communication skills
- Enhanced confidence and self-image
- Boosted critical thinking and problem-solving capabilities
- Better motivational techniques
- Increased leadership skills
- Expanded time management, negotiation, and creativity

The better your presenting techniques, the more engaging your presentations will be. You could also have greater opportunities to make positive impacts in business and other areas of your life.

### Effective presentation skills

Imagine yourself in the audience at a TED Talk or sitting with your coworkers at a big meeting held by your employer. What would you be looking for in how they deliver their message? What would make you feel engaged?

These are a few questions to ask yourself as you review this list of some of the most effective presentation skills.

#### **Verbal communication**

How you use language and deliver messages play essential roles in how your audience will receive your presentation. Speak clearly and confidently, projecting your voice enough to ensure everyone can hear. Think before you speak, pausing when necessary and tailoring the way you talk to resonate with your particular audience.

#### **Body language**

Body language combines various critical elements, including posture, gestures, eye contact, expressions, and position in front of the audience. Body language is one of the elements that can instantly transform a presentation that would otherwise be dull into one that's dynamic and interesting.

#### **Voice projection**

The ability to project your voice improves your presentation by allowing your audience to hear what you're saying. It also increases your confidence to help settle any lingering nerves while also making your message more engaging. To project your voice, stand comfortably with your shoulders back. Take deep breaths to power your speaking voice and ensure you enunciate every syllable you speak.

## **Posture**

How you present yourself plays a role in your body language and ability to project your voice. It also sets the tone for the presentation. Avoid slouching or looking overly tense. Instead, remain open, upright, and adaptable while taking the formality of the occasion into account.

## **Storytelling**

Incorporating storytelling into a presentation is an effective strategy used by many powerful public speakers. It has the power to bring your subject to life and pique the audience's curiosity. Don't be afraid to tell a personal story, slowly building up suspense or adding a dramatic moment. And, of course, be sure to end with a positive takeaway to drive your point home.

## **Active listening**

Active listening is a valuable skill all on its own. When you understand and thoughtfully respond to what you hear—whether it's in a conversation or during a presentation—you'll likely deepen your personal relationships and actively engage audiences during a presentation. As part of your presentation skill set, it helps catch and maintain the audience's attention, helping them remain focused while minimizing passive response, ensuring the message is delivered correctly, and encouraging a call to action.

## **Stage presence**

During a presentation, projecting confidence can help keep your audience engaged. Stage presence can help you connect with your audience and encourage them to want to watch you. To improve your presence, try amping up your normal demeanor by infusing it with a bit of enthusiasm. Project confidence and keep your information interesting.

Watch your audience as you're presenting. If you're holding their attention, it likely means you're connecting well with them.

## **Self-awareness**



Monitoring your own emotions and reactions will allow you to react well in various situations. It helps you remain personable throughout your presentation and handle feedback well. Self-awareness can help soothe nervousness during presentations, allowing you to perform more effectively.

### Writing skills

Writing is a form of presentation. Sharp writing skills can help you master your presentation's outline to ensure you stay on message and remain clear about your objectives from the beginning until the end. It's also helpful to have strong writing abilities for creating compelling slides and other visual aids.

### Understanding an audience

When you understand your audience's needs and interests, you can design your presentation around them. In turn, you'll deliver maximum value to them and enhance your ability to make your message easy to understand.

### Best ways to improve presentation skills

1. Preparation and knowledge (of subject and the presentation itself) are the pre-requisites for a successful presentation, which importantly produce confidence and control, which in turn is important for relaxing the presenter, and the audience.
2. As a presenter, remember and apply Eleanor Roosevelt's maxim that "*no one can intimidate me without my permission*". When you are a presenter you are in charge. The audience generally accepts this, and you are within your rights to control anyone who does not.
3. Remember also that "*depth of conviction counts more than the height of logic, and enthusiasm is worth more than knowledge*". **Passion** is therefore a very powerful component in any successful presentation.
4. Good presenting is about **entertaining** as well as conveying information. As well, people retain more if they are enjoying themselves and feeling relaxed. So whatever your subject and audience, try to find ways to make the content and delivery enjoyable - even the most serious of occasions, and the driest of subjects, can be



lifted to an enjoyable or even an amusing level one way or another with a little research, imagination, and humour.

5. Enjoyment and humour are mostly in the preparation. These effects are not easily produced spontaneously. You don't need to be a natural stand-up comedian to inject enjoyment and humour into a presentation or talk. It's the content that enables it, which is very definitely within your control.
6. Research and studies generally indicate that in presentations you have between 4 - 7 seconds in which to make a positive impact and good opening impression, so make sure you have a good, strong, solid introduction, and rehearse it until it is 'second nature' to you.
7. Try to build your own credibility in your introduction, and create a safe comfortable environment for your audience, **which you will do quite naturally if you appear to be comfortable yourself.**
8. Smiling helps a lot. It will relax you and the audience. In addition to giving you a relaxed calm appearance, smiling actually releases helpful 'happy' chemicals into your nervous system, and makes you feel good.
9. So does taking a few deep slow breaths to make you feel relaxed - low down from the pit of your stomach - before you take to the stage.
10. Avoid starting with a joke unless you are supremely confident - jokes are high-risk things at the best of times, let alone at the start of a presentation.

## Conclusions

“Wherever I go meeting the public... spreading a message of human values, spreading a message of harmony, is the most important thing.” ~ Dalai Lama

In today's fast-paced world, effective communication skills, particularly in public speaking and presentations, are vital for personal and professional success. For women in the field of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), honing these skills is even more crucial due to the industry's male-dominated nature. By mastering public speaking and

presentation skills, ICT women can break barriers, enhance their careers, and inspire positive change within the sector. Here are some key conclusions to consider:

1. **Confidence is Key:** Building self-confidence is paramount for ICT women when it comes to public speaking and presenting. Embrace your expertise, knowledge, and experience in the field, and let that confidence shine through your words and body language.
2. **Practice Makes Perfect:** Like any skill, public speaking and presentation abilities can be refined through practice. Regularly engage in public speaking opportunities, whether it's through workshops, conferences, or internal meetings, to sharpen your communication skills.
3. **Tailor Your Message:** Understand your audience and tailor your message accordingly. For ICT women, this might involve using relatable examples, avoiding jargon when unnecessary, and emphasizing the value of diversity in the tech industry.
4. **Storytelling Matters:** Weave stories into your presentations to captivate your audience emotionally. Sharing personal experiences and anecdotes can make your content more memorable and impactful.
5. **Embrace Visual Aids:** Utilize visual aids such as slides, infographics, and videos to complement your speech and enhance audience understanding. Keep visuals simple, clean, and relevant to avoid overwhelming your listeners.
6. **Overcome Nervousness:** Nervousness is natural, especially when speaking in public. Employ relaxation techniques, controlled breathing, and positive self-talk to manage nerves and deliver your message effectively.
7. **Seek Constructive Feedback:** Request feedback from peers, mentors, or speaking coaches to identify areas for improvement. Embrace constructive criticism as an opportunity for growth.
8. **Champion Diversity and Inclusion:** As an ICT woman, take pride in your unique perspective and actively promote diversity and inclusion within the tech industry. Public speaking can serve as a powerful tool to advocate for equal opportunities and representation.

9. **Continuous Learning:** The world of technology is constantly evolving, so it's essential to stay updated with the latest trends and developments. Incorporate these new insights into your presentations to showcase your expertise.
10. **Support and Empower Others:** Encourage and mentor fellow ICT women in their public speaking and presentation journeys. By lifting each other up, we can create a supportive community that amplifies women's voices in the tech world.

In conclusion, mastering public speaking and presentation skills can be a game-changer for women in the ICT industry. Embrace your uniqueness, be confident in sharing your ideas, and strive to be a powerful voice that drives positive change within the tech sector. Through continuous learning and support for one another, ICT women can break barriers and inspire the next generation of leaders.

## Module 5: Networking and Self-Branding in a Digital Age

### Introduction

This module proposal outlines an empowerment program focused on networking and self-branding in the digital age. The program aims to empower women interested in the ICT sector or already working in the field by equipping them with essential skills and knowledge to excel in networking and personal branding. This document is a condensed version suitable for a 1-hour webinar format.

### Module Objectives

The primary objective of this program is to introduce participants to the importance of networking and self-branding in the digital age. In today's interconnected world, building a strong professional network and establishing a personal brand are essential for career

success. Participants will gain understanding of the significance of networking, recognizing its potential to open doors to new opportunities, collaborations, and mentorship. They will also explore the concept of self-branding, discovering how it plays a crucial role in shaping their professional identity and reputation. Through interactive discussions and engaging activities, participants will learn how networking and self-branding can positively impact their career trajectory.

A key focus of this program is to provide participants with practical strategies for effective networking and relationship building. Participants will acquire valuable techniques and skills to expand their network, align their online presence and foster meaningful connections. They will learn about different networking approaches, such as attending industry events, joining professional associations, and utilising online platforms. Additionally, participants will be guided in developing a strong personal brand that aligns with their professional goals. They will gain insights into crafting a compelling personal brand statement, leveraging their unique strengths and values to stand out in their industry. Furthermore, the program will offer recommendations on utilising digital platforms effectively, enabling participants to harness the power of social media and other online tools for networking and self-branding.

## Unit 1 | Program Content:

This module includes the following topics:

### Personal branding

#### A. Understanding the Importance of Personal Branding:

Introducing the concept of personal branding and its significance in the digital landscape.  
Importance of personal branding for Women and Women in ICT.

#### B. Why is personal branding important?

Your personal brand represents the image or idea that people associate with you when you're not around, and it's what they think of when considering your expertise in a specific field. It's important to make sure this reputation is positive and memorable, and matches your professional goals and skills

### C. Why is personal branding and networking important for Women?

It enables us to overcome barriers that may prevent us from developing a self-brand and celebrating their achievements publicly. By connecting with others using their personal branding identity, women can gain support, better understand how to overcome self-promotion challenges, and effectively showcase their skills and accomplishments. Personal branding empowers women to take control of their professional narratives and build their own success stories.

### D. Why is personal branding and networking important for Women in ICT?

Women often face social and economic sanctions when displaying counter-stereotypical behavior in male-dominated fields, and personal branding can help them navigate and challenge these barriers.

- ❖ Access to Opportunities
- ❖ Increased Visibility
- ❖ Mentorship, Guidance and role modelling
- ❖ Professional Growth, support and Community

### E. Background and skills

- ❖ Your career path with previous experiences
- ❖ your skillset, your expertise, and know-how in specific fields. It's your values and beliefs, your voluntary commitments, hobbies, or free time activities and interests.

❖ But also, and really important for the Nordics - your goals for the future!

What do you want to achieve? Where do you envision yourself?

## Unit 2 | Self-promotion barriers:

Guiding participants in identifying their unique skills, strengths, and values to overcome self-promotion and personal branding barriers.

### A. Modesty norms

Society expects women to celebrate other people's achievements, but not their own. Women also tend to use "we" instead of "I" when talking about achievements - she will credit everyone involved whereas men will often use I, crediting only themselves by default

### B. Cultural norms

Personal branding, or self-promotion, is one of six major areas of cultural difference that cause discomfort for people around the world.

### C. Stereotype threat

When someone is worried about conforming to a negative stereotype about their social group - which, at the end, adds up to the stereotype.

### D. "Impostor" syndrome

"Am I not enough?" Unable to put thinking or desires in action. Individuals doubt their abilities and often attribute their success to luck rather than their own competence, leading to feelings of inadequacy and anxiety.

## Unit 3 | Keys to build your brand

Some keys to brainstorm about your brand to be relevant and targeted:

- You need to be clear about what you are looking for - and focus more in the future than your past (cultural shock!)
- Where do I thrive? What my motivations are? What is a successful job for me? What are my non-negotiables?
- How do my ex-colleagues remember me?
- What problems or challenges do I solve for my employer or client? What value do I personally add?
- Do you have an inspiration or competitor? Which keywords do they use? Which keywords can you find on the job advertisings that are interesting for you?

## Unit 4 | IAmRemarkable exercises

- ❖ Remarkable Wednesdays
- ❖ Practice and perfect 2-3 professional accomplishments with others
- ❖ Track your achievements
- ❖ Set stretch goals

### A. Elevator pitch:

- ❖ Practice a 30 seconds to 1 minute presentation about yourself, what you do and what makes you a great connection or candidate.

### B. Be online - and offline!



This is specifically important for the Nordics, where your presence in Events is the best way to build a strong network that will boost your online presence. As part of your branding strategy, take time to build your online presence first - a strong profile and participation is key to make it memorable.

### C. Online presence and profile

❖ For LinkedIn:

- Detailed description of your past education focused on the aspects that are most relevant for the type of job or task you are interested in. Include investigations and thesis work, projects, specialized courses.
- Results you have achieved for your clients or for the organization you worked for.
- Provide a vivid picture and stories of your experiences - sometimes specific titles are not clear enough and need to be explained
- If you work on a Creative field, you could add presentations, PDF documents, articles, media clips.

### D. Communities and Mentorships

- ❖ Understand your niche, find a Community, mentorships or sponsoring programs, make contacts who can mention you when opportunities appear. Worldwide communities with like-minded professionals are great to seek advice or help.
- ❖ For founders, this can be the key to get funding.

### E. Volunteering

- ❖ Join NGOs, Events where you can participate as a volunteer. You could also volunteer with your work experience or become a mentor.
- ❖ Creating content for others who may benefit from your experience

#### 4. Let's practice!

Introduce yourself in 30 seconds to 1 minute to your group using the Elevator Pitch. Take some time to think about what you need to consider and change for the next opportunity to present yourself. After that, share with your group: Why am I remarkable? Please connect with each other in your group!

#### How did it go?

Please, share a reflection from your group. Do you have any questions or comments?

#### 5. Webinar Delivery

The 1-hour webinar will be delivered in an engaging and interactive manner. The delivery methods will include:

Presentation: Utilising visual aids and slides to convey key concepts and strategies.

Breakout rooms: Incorporating interactive elements to gauge participant understanding and engagement.

Allocating time for final remarks and questions from participants and receiving guidance from the facilitator.

##### A. Webinar Materials:

To support the webinar, the following materials will be provided:

Presentation Slides: A comprehensive set of slides summarising the key points covered during the webinar.

Resource List: A curated list of recommended readings, websites, and tools for further exploration and self-study.

## B. Evaluation and Measurement:

To assess the webinar's effectiveness, the following evaluation methods will be implemented:

**Participant Feedback:** Collecting feedback through post-webinar surveys to assess participant satisfaction and capture insights for improvement.

**Action Plan:** Encouraging participants to develop a personalised action plan outlining how they will apply the webinar learnings in their professional lives.

## 6. Conclusions

Personal branding and networking are essential components of everyone's professional journey, and they hold particular significance for women, especially in male-dominated fields like ICT. These tools empower women to surmount obstacles that may hinder the development of their personal brands and the public celebration of their accomplishments. By leveraging their personal branding identities, women can establish connections with others, gain valuable support, navigate self-promotion challenges, and effectively showcase their skills and achievements. In doing so, personal branding allows women to take control of their professional narratives, construct their unique success stories, and overcome the social and economic sanctions often encountered when challenging gender stereotypes in their field.

For women in ICT, the importance of personal branding and networking cannot be overstated. These strategies offer numerous advantages, including increased access to opportunities, heightened visibility, access to mentorship, guidance, and role models, support for professional growth, and the development of a supportive community. Ultimately, personal branding and networking enable women to break down barriers, shatter stereotypes, and pave the way for their success and empowerment in the ICT sector.

## Module 6: Work-life integration

### Introduction

The module on Work Life Integration can easily be adapted for companies (targeting female employees and/or employers) or for female freelancers and/or students aspiring to work in the ICT sector.

When the module is adapted to the first target group (companies), it is important to dedicate some space to the relational aspects with colleagues and superiors, while in the case of female freelancers, one aspect to be explored in greater depth is the ability to organise time with a view to a fair division between time dedicated to work and time dedicated to private life.

### Module Objectives

The aim of the module on Work Life integration is to provide participants (employees and self employed women, students) with tools for coping with stress. Stress can have various causes: an excessive workload; sub-optimal organisation of work time and/or work and private life planning; a sense of family overload on top of work.

During the webinar, after a brief excursus on the main causes of malaise resulting from work-related stress, suggestions are given on different techniques to improve time organisation and especially personal attitude in the face of the inevitable moments of difficulty.

## Unit 1 | Disequilibrium and its side effects

As highlighted by the comparative research (R1) on the state of the art of women in the ICT sector, despite the differences given by the socio-cultural context of each country, an imbalance between women and men in the ICT sector in terms of presence and career

opportunities clearly emerges. This aspect is strongly interlinked with an unequal distribution of the burden of family care between women and men.

Therefore, in Gender Equality, one of the aspects to be monitored is Work Life Balance.

By reflecting on what is not working and what is inefficient in the time organisation, the aim of the webinar is to help employees and self-employed women to identify precisely what to do and how to do it. The balance, in which personal and professional aspects come into the proper equilibrium, directs oneself resources to effectively and smoothly manage the daily routine.

The consequences of a ***misbalance*** between personal and professional spheres can affect both areas, leading to dissatisfaction and de-motivation that make us scarcely productive. Working under stress can have a very strong impact in each of us creating states of dissatisfaction, conflict, and anxiety.

The symptoms of stress can be detected at different levels:

- Physical effects
- Emotional effects
- Mental effects
- Behavioural effects

## Unit 2 | Multitasking: one of the main causes

We often hear about women's supposed and innate propensity to multitask, but in fact recent and numerous neuroscience studies clearly show all the limitations and negative effects of this bad habit.

Multitasking leads to slowdowns, course changes, intervals, thread loss.

It reduces productivity by 40%. Those who are continually distracted from what they are doing get worse results and in longer time frames.

You work harder, you achieve less.

## The “4 D strategy”

To optimise the resources of time and energy, it is necessary to take some important steps: setting priorities, postponing less urgent tasks, delegating and eliminating responsibilities that do not belong to us from the checklist. These four steps belong to the so-called “4 D strategy”: *DO, DEFER, DELEGATE and DELETE*.

### STEP 1 - Establishing Boundaries

Another decisive step in a stress elimination, reduction or containment strategy concerns the ability to set boundaries. This aspect always concerns factors related to the organisation of time but also to the ability to be in the moment by educating and training the mind to be in the present moment.

Establish hours and time boundaries, and after you have worked your best, give space to your personal life.

### STEP 2: Overview on the different techniques to find Balance

#### Simple tips

Finding balance is a challenge BUT research points to a simple remedy: taking short breaks during work. Breaks help manage stress and improve our ability to focus and engage. Breaks allow our brain to "reset."

**Neuroscience** shows that the way we think affects our bodies as much as our lives. An emerging field of science called "psychoneuroimmunology" demonstrates the tremendous connection between mind and body. Happy thoughts make our brain produce a chemical neurotransmitter called dopamine which makes us feel joyful.

Negative thoughts make our brain produce neuropeptides which make us feel hateful and irritated.

Affirmations are conscious, good-quality thoughts that can help us to integrate any content and funnel into our lives the quality of energy we desire. Affirmations can be defined as positive thoughts formulated on purpose, consciously, for the purpose of infusing the mind

with confidence, certainty, and conviction to achieve. For this reason, it is necessary to formulate them carefully by following some basic rules.

The actions to be taken to get better include acting on several levels:

*Physical level:* the first step implies to work on breath

*Emotional level:* implies building the capacity of visioning

*Mental level:* building awareness on the power of meditation and good quality thinking

*Behavioural:* Influence your well-being

### **STEP 3: Exploring relaxation strategies**

There are hundreds of relaxation techniques coming from different cultures and approaches. Some of these techniques are illustrated to the participants (each linked to a particular psychophysical effect) with the aim of offering an overview from which each one can then draw on one or the other on the basis of their own inclinations.

"*Relaxation and Visioning*" techniques act on the SYMPATHETIC SYSTEM, which is hyper-activated whenever we are stressed. Through these relaxation techniques, normalisation of heartbeats, blood pressure, breathing, muscle tone etc. can be achieved.

As a result of this normalisation process, a feeling of well-being is achieved, states of anxiety are decreased, the ability to concentrate is enhanced, and situations are perceived more positively.

Each *posture* corresponds to a hormonal cocktail, translated into emotion. Even if one is not calm, adopting a calm posture helps the body to take over to calm itself. It happens by cognitive dissonance. It is helpful to take the superhero stance (arms on hips and chin forward). Amy Cuddy's research says that holding the superhero stance for 90 seconds lowers cortisol and increases testosterone, giving us energy and confidence.

After a brief introduction on the aspect of visualisation and posture, 4 strategies are shown

in more detail.

1. Posture technique
2. The STOP technique
3. Anti Stress technique
4. The reconciliation tree

## Conclusions

While addressing a very broad scope with various socio-cultural and physiological most implications are briefly illustrated.

Starting from the negative effects of a lack of work/life balance, the webinar aims to make participants reflect on the causes of the imbalance and then explore very practical tools for

- organise work-life balance in a different and more efficient way
- manage stress in the most intense moments consciously without being overwhelmed by it;
- explore work-life balance measures available in one's own family/social/professional context.

Therefore the intent of the webinar is to provide very practical tools, within everyone's reach, easily experimentable and applicable.

The pursuit of greater well-being necessarily passes through a few stages: greater awareness of the context and of oneself, trust in one's personal resources and in the possibility of a great change made of small attainable goals; this is the most important message the webinar intends to offer to the participants.



## Visions and Values -Self Assessment Toolkit

### Introduction

The self-assessment toolkit was created in the context of the Femin-ICT, keeping in mind the empowerment of women in ICT or those wishing to enter the ICT sector. While the focus is on these women, the tool is versatile and can be applied in various sectors and can be used by any woman wishing to create her own professional plan for her career.

This tool, in its complete form or pieces of it, can also be used by employers wishing to empower their employees. More specifically, it can be used as a trainer's tool in the ICT sector to open the conversation regarding professional growth goals, or the work-life balance integration. These types of conversations can provide employers with feedback needed to design policies that will promote inclusion and wellness in their workplace.

There is a short section with few questions and examples of visions in relation to ICT for women working (or studying) in the information, communication and technology fields. It should be noted that these fields include a wide range of professional roles from digital marketing managers to software engineers, programmers as well as HR managers in technology companies etc. These are examples from women's professional backgrounds who were engaged in Femin-ICT activities in various ways.

### Module Objectives

The Femin-ICT Visions and Values self-assessment tool developed by Stimuli for Social Change, is a tool that was created through the combination of existing methodologies and relevant resources. This tool aims at assisting individuals to :

- a) Map their values and visions

- b) Create a personal “toolkit” that an individual can use to articulate their goals in terms of personal and professional growth
- c) Contribute to the creation of a guide for support in any decision-making process

## Unit 1 | What are Values & Visions

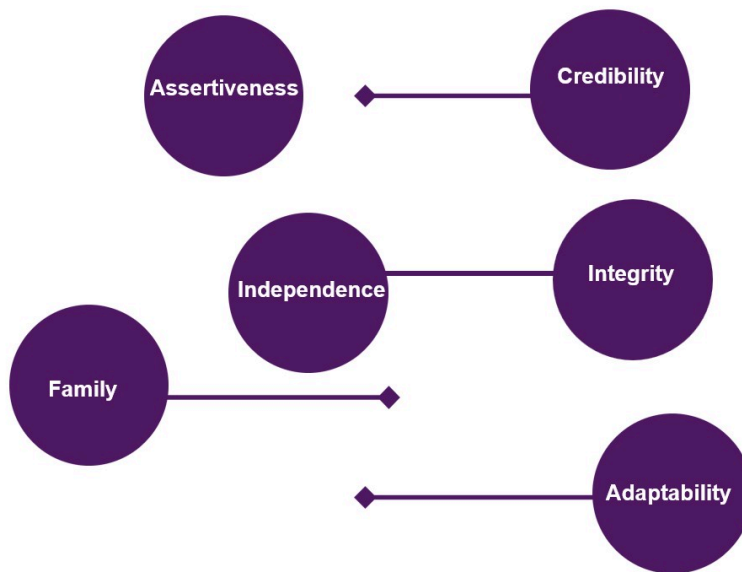
### Definitions

#### Values

Personal values are a set of beliefs that differentiate between “good” and “bad” in your community, culture, or society. They form a mindset that defines what you view as the ideal standards of behavior, like patience and honesty.

You probably already have some guiding principles that inform your decision-making, leadership style, and overall disposition in your personal life or the workplace. It’s up to you to identify what those are and verbalize them.





To determine one's values or start thinking about it there are some questions someone can ask themselves that concern different values. Some questions are found below:

- ✓ **Experience:** What makes an experience important is that the values are being honored: What makes this experience so important for you?
- ✓ **Anger:** What makes a person angry or upset indicates is when their values violated. What values are violated? What upsets or angers you?
- ✓ **Appreciation:** What is easy for you to appreciate? What matters most to you in difficult times.

#### 📌 Note

Although your core values may be fairly stable, it might be surprising to know that a person's values change and evolve. Personal values are constantly changing as you learn and grow.

This is why you should understand your own personal values system and check in with yourself regularly.

## **Vision**

*Personal vision is a summary of how we want our future to be. It's our personal plan.*

Some suggestions for the personal vision are the following and for the way it can be are the following:

ideal - shape it to represent your future the way you want it to

real - it must be ambitious but achievable - otherwise it would not motivate you personally - this means that its shape is up to you.

stable - you can constantly adjust your vision, but as it is supposed to be long term it is best to keep it stable. It may be a good idea to include short term goals that lead to the realization of your vision as short- term goals are more manageable.

## **Unit 2 | Visions & Values-Women in ICT**

Visions and values for women working in the ICT (Information and Communication Technology) sector can be diverse and personalized. The examples presented below, highlight the diversity of visions and values that women in the ICT sector might hold. Personal reflection on questions like these can help individuals identify their own visions and values, guiding their career choices and contributions to the industry.

### **1.Vision:To Vision for Advancing Technology Accessibility**

"To contribute to the development of inclusive and accessible technology solutions that empower individuals of all abilities to fully participate in the digital world."

Questions to identify this vision:

- ☐ **Impact:** What impact do I want to make in the ICT sector, and how does it align with creating positive change in society?
- ☐ **Accessibility:** In what ways can technology be harnessed to break down barriers and enhance accessibility for diverse user groups?
- ☐ **Inclusivity:** How can I actively engage with projects and initiatives that prioritize inclusivity and accessibility in technology development?

## 2. Value for Innovation and Collaboration

"To foster a culture of innovation and collaboration within the ICT sector, promoting continuous learning and cross-disciplinary cooperation for groundbreaking technological advancements."

Questions to identify this value:

- ☐ **Ambition:** How important is staying at the forefront of technological advancements and embracing a mindset of continuous learning to me?
- ☐ **Fulfillment:** Do I find fulfillment in collaborating with individuals from diverse backgrounds and skill sets to solve complex problems?
- ☐ **Innovation:** In what ways can I contribute to creating an environment that encourages innovation and collaboration within the ICT community?

## Vision for Ethical and Responsible Technology

"To champion the development and adoption of ethical and socially responsible technology solutions, ensuring that the impact of ICT on society is positive and sustainable."

Questions to identify this vision:

- ☐ What role do ethics and social responsibility play in my perception of the ICT sector, and how do they guide my decision-making?
- ☐ How can I actively advocate for and contribute to the development of technologies that prioritize ethical considerations and societal well-being?

- ☐ In what ways can I influence and contribute to industry discussions and practices around responsible and sustainable technology use?

### Unit 3 | Self-assessment in practice

This self-assessment toolkit is designed to help you clarify your core values and visions for your personal and professional life. Please answer the following questions with as much honesty and thoughtfulness as possible. The toolkit contains 5 parts including different questions.

#### ☐ Note

Please answer the following questions as honestly and thoughtfully as possible. Rate each statement on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being "Strongly Disagree" and 5 being "Strongly Agree."

Part 1: Defining Your Personal Values and Visions					
I believe that a fulfilling life involves...					
A sense of adventure and exploration	1	2	3	4	5
	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree



<b>Strong connections with loved ones</b>	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Financial security and stability</b>	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Pursuing creative passions and hobbies</b>	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Contributing to my community or society</b>	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Other (Please specify):</b>					

### Part 2: Mapping Values and Visions for Personal Growth

**In the context of personal growth, what areas of self-improvement are most important to you? (e.g., self-confidence, emotional intelligence, physical health)**



**Part 2: Mapping Values and Visions for Personal Growth**

**How do your personal values and visions support your personal growth goals?**

**Part 2: Mapping Values and Visions for Personal Growth**

**What specific actions or habits can you implement to align your daily life with your personal growth objectives?**

**Part 3: Defining Your Professional Values and Visions**

**I believe that a fulfilling career involves...**





Achieving high levels of success and recognition	1  Strongly Disagree	2	3	4	5  Strongly Agree
Making a positive impact on society	1	2	3	4	5
Work-life balance and personal satisfaction	1	2	3	4	5
Continuous learning and skill development	1	2	3	4	5
Financial prosperity and stability	1	2	3	4	5
Other (please specify):					

Part 3 (continued)



**What are the top three values that guide your professional life decisions? (e.g., money, integrity, innovation, teamwork)**

--

**Part 3**

**What experiences or accomplishments would make you feel that you are living in alignment with your professional values and visions?**

--

**Part 4: Mapping Values and Visions for Professional Growth**

**In the context of professional growth, what areas of development are most important to you?**

**leadership skills**

**industry expertise**




<b>work-life integration</b>	
<b>Other</b>	

#### **Part 4: Mapping Values and Visions for Professional Growth**

**How do your professional values and visions support your professional development goals?**

**What specific actions or strategies can you implement to align your career and daily work with your professional development goals?**



## Part 5: Reflect and Plan

Based on your responses, identify at least three concrete actions you can take to better align your life with your values and visions, both personally and professionally.

**What resources or support might you need to achieve these actions? (e.g., mentorship, training, networking)**

**Create a short-term (6-12 months) and long-term (2-5 years) plan outlining your goals and steps for achieving them.**

## Conclusions



This self-assessment is a practical tool and can be used as complementary to any other personal and professional activity a woman might wish to take on (eg. Courses, seminars, mentorship, theory, coaching).

Please remember that your values and visions may evolve over time, so it is important to review this self-assessment regularly to ensure that you remain aligned with what really matters to you. Good luck on your personal and professional development journey!

## General Conclusion

The Femin-ICT Empowerment Program can be used as an educational tool by trainers, employers and everyone wish to support women in ICT to further develop their skills and sense of empowerment. It's a great program to build on by exploring the provided resources and adding other relevant tools and resources. It's adaptive and anyone can use it as it is or in parts to achieve different professional and personal development objectives.

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### **Values & Visions Self-Assessment Toolkit**

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Suggested YouTube videos for Negotiation and Assertiveness Skills:

-How to Negotiate (or, "The Art of Dealmaking") | Tim Ferriss

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-How to Communicate Assertively 4 Tips

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### Module 3

Suggestion of Youtube Videos that could help you develop your leadership skills:

- <https://youtu.be/3rmttW99KDY>
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### Module 6

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## Values & Visions Self Assessment Toolkit

Values Test

<https://www.123test.com/work-values-test/>



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