

EMERGING LEADERS PROGRAM

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?



The aim of the Leading Teams Emerging Leaders program is to inspire individuals within organisations to develop their leadership skills in an active learning environment.

At the time of joining the Emerging Leaders program in 2013, Sarah was the Marketing Manager at Bicycle Network with a team of seven. She had been with the organisation for 4½ years and wanted to step up onto the Leadership Team.

In September 2014, six months after completing the program, Sarah was offered a new role as Head of National Strategy and invited to join the Leadership Team.

SARAH'S STORY

Why did you decide to undertake the Emerging Leaders program?

I had reached a point in my career where I really needed to better my leadership skills in order to take the next step in my career, and to be considered for more senior roles.

What were the key learnings from the program?

I learnt more about myself – my strengths and weaknesses as a team member, and as a leader. I also learnt the core mechanics to building a high performing team.

My intention was to better my leadership skills, but I walked away from the program as a better employee, team mate and role model.

How did you find relating with other participants?

At first I didn't see the direct connection with the other participants because we all came from different sectors and workplace cultures. But as we began to have open, honest conversations, it became apparent we had a lot more in common than I initially expected. Since the program, I still meet with the other members of my group and check in, discuss their challenges and share our experiences.

Would you recommend this program to others? Why?

The program is much more than just a "leadership program". It's about challenging your current behaviours and thinking, and looking at ways to adapt and change your thoughts and approach around building and leading a high performing team.

What are the areas of improvement you would suggest for the program?

Learning about drawing the line between sharing too much with your team, but sharing enough to maintain a strong relationship.

What have you found out about yourself since completing the Emerging Leaders program?

I've learnt that being a great team member and leader is more about you being open to being honest with yourself and your team. Being genuine, and investing in the small stuff that fundamentally builds trust with you and your team mates. I've also learnt to trust my instinct and be authentic – not to just manage a team, but to lead by example.

What was unique about the Leading Teams approach?

It's surprisingly confronting at first. Having to speak openly about yourself as a person, not just an employee. You learn much more about yourself as an individual, and how being yourself is fundamental to being a great leader.

How did you integrate your learnings from the program into your day-to-day roles?

I invested more time in the small stuff. Sharing more with the team about myself and encouraging each team member to make time to listen, share and support each other beyond work.