

Having heard from former alumni of Empowering Women in a Digital World at a conference, I took it upon myself to campaign my manager to support me joining in.

**It was the best professional move I ever made.** What a fabulous group of humans I encountered. Yes, they were all women but that wasn't the only connection; what formed bonds and sparked friendships was everyone coming to understand how we hold ourselves back, how we talk ourselves down, how we can inhibit our own progress subconsciously.

And we went so much further than that; recognising that this truth applied across our lives, not just our careers. Every session was joyful to share, it was as if we were all holding hands, moving forward together, and it was ok to be vulnerable because the room was full of warmth and empathy. Together we found ways to appreciate ourselves, to admit our good qualities, to give ourselves permission to grow and be the best versions of ourselves.

I saw people have eureka moments and at the time I was a little concerned I didn't experience one. But at the end of each day I felt exhilarated about the learning and the camaraderie, and excited for what was ahead of me. As I reflect on what I gained from this encounter - **from my brand new, exciting and better paid job** that I didn't even realise I wanted, let alone could achieve - I truly appreciate how lucky I was to join in and embrace everything this programme opened my eyes to.

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