



LaunchMe

LaunchMe 2025

# IMPACT REPORT

*"It wasn't just mentorship. It was a transformation."*

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# Foreword by

**Kellan Brown**

COO / CDO

100 Women in Finance



When we built the LaunchMe Mentorship Program, we set out to do something simple and meaningful. We wanted to create space. Space for early career women to ask honest questions. Space for experienced professionals to give back with intention. Space for connection across borders, backgrounds, and career stages.

What we witnessed in LaunchMe 2025 went far beyond what any program framework can capture. Over six months, mentors and mentees showed up for one another with generosity and commitment. They invested time, shared hard earned lessons, and built trust. In doing so, they created momentum that continues well beyond the formal end of the program.

This year's cohort reminds us why mentorship matters. Confidence grows when someone listens. Careers move forward when guidance is paired with belief. Community forms when people feel seen and supported. The impact reflected in these pages, from increased career readiness to real job outcomes, is meaningful. But just as important are the quieter moments. A conversation that shifted perspective. A connection that opened a door. A sense of belonging in an industry where that feeling can be hard to find.

LaunchMe is global in reach, but deeply personal in impact. In 2025, 299 Participants joined from across 6 continents, yet shared common goals of growth, clarity, and contribution. Mentors strengthened their leadership by investing in others. Mentees gained not only skills, but confidence in their place within finance.

I am deeply grateful to our mentors, mentees, volunteer committees, partners, and sponsors who made LaunchMe 2025 possible. Your commitment is shaping the future of our industry in ways that are lasting and real. This report captures outcomes, but the true legacy of LaunchMe lives in the relationships built and the careers it continues to influence.

Thank you,

*Kellan Brown*





# Introduction to LaunchMe

LaunchMe (LM) is 100 Women in Finance's global mentorship program, where we connect early-career professionals and students with experienced industry professionals. Since its inception in 2022, the program has engaged over 800 participants across 18 countries through one-to-one mentoring, group sessions, peer exchange and networking events.

The program has helped mentees gain access to a variety of different career possibilities and build strategic career skills. Mentors enhance leadership skills and build-up the future generation of finance professionals. The LaunchMe program enables the exchange of knowledge and perspectives within a global network.

In 2025, the LaunchMe Mentorship Program (LM25) grew to its biggest yet, bringing together 135 mentors and 164 mentees from 18 different countries, connecting both men and women from New York to Hong Kong, all sharing collective goals of reflection, growth, and opportunity for women in finance.

Over the course of six months, participants dedicated a total of more than 650 hours to the program, resulting in measurable improvements in confidence, career readiness, and cross-border connections.





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"I think the most valuable skill I learned is the power of creating connections, not only with my mentor but with the other mentees.

Finding a group of people who care about the industry was really amazing."

### **Student Mentee 2025**

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I would say that personally, the initial draw to becoming a mentor is the "giving back". However, the program has since shown me the importance of finding my own mentor and learning from others who have more experience than me, or experience in different areas of finance.

It is also a fantastic opportunity to join a network with other mentors across the industry.

### **Mentor 2025**

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# Programming

The LaunchMe 2025 Mentorship Program (LM25) offered a structured, six-month journey focused on four key areas of professional growth

- 1 **Exploring Career Opportunities and Advancement,**
- 2 **Enhancing Your Professional Network,**
- 3 **Building Essential Career Skills, and**
- 4 **Developing Business Acumen.**

To address these themes, LM25 combined global webinars, small-group sessions, one-to-one mentoring, and in-person events designed to guide participants.

## Program Structure

Throughout the program, group webinars and discussions covered a range of professional development topics, from market insights to leadership to personal branding. Each mentee–mentor pair also met regularly for personalized one-to-one sessions, supported by LaunchMe resources and discussion guides, ensuring meaningful engagement and progress on individual goals.

To strengthen community ties, monthly mentee-only calls provided a dedicated space for peers to connect, exchange strategies, and support one another. These sessions helped mentees navigate challenges and build valuable peer networks.

In addition, expert-led webinars deepened learning across key themes such as confidence, communication, networking and leadership.

Meanwhile, in-person gatherings in New York and London offered mentees a closer look at the finance industry in action. Hosted by LaunchMe partners and sponsors, these events allowed participants to experience professional environments first-hand.

## Event Highlights

### Kick-Off Webinar

Mentors, mentees, committee members and program staff came together to set goals, establish expectations, and introduce the program's key themes - exploring what mentoring is and what to expect from each other.



### Imposter Syndrome Two-Part Webinar Series

*Recognizing the Signs and Taking Action* – Mentors and Mentees met with Althea Blake, the “corporate doctor,” addressing confidence barriers and practical strategies for building self-assurance.

*From Invisible to Indispensable* – A follow-up mentee-only workshop with Althea Blake on how to command attention and demonstrate value when others seem ahead, featuring breakout discussions and a Q&A session.

### Leadership Styles Webinar

*How to Capitalize on Your Leadership Style* with Kellan Brown, COO & CDO of 100WF, explored different leadership approaches and how to leverage individual strengths for professional growth.



## Group Mentoring Sessions

A series of small-group webinars where mentors shared their subject-matter expertise, ranging from sector specific businesses (e.g., hedge funds) to professional development (e.g., personal branding), with select mentees. These sessions gave mentees the opportunity to connect with mentors beyond their assigned pairings, ask questions, and gain insights from peers in an, interactive setting.

## In-Person Panel & Networking Events

The lessons of LM25 extended beyond theory and into practice through two dynamic in-person events in New York and London. These sessions allowed participants to experience professional environments firsthand, observe and apply key skills, and build stronger networks within the 100WF community.




*A Real Talk on Networking: From Uncertain to Empowered* – Hosted at Samlyn Capital LLC in New York, this event focused on authentic connection-building and confidence in professional settings. On June 23, 2025, New York–based participants toured Samlyn Capital’s offices for an inside look at the day-to-day operations of a hedge fund. The visit included a panel discussion on transforming networking uncertainty into empowerment and a mentor–mentee networking session, encouraging participants to put their new skills into practice.

*Mentorship in Motion* – Held at Nuveen’s London offices, this interactive workshop was led by executive and communications coach Jennifer Morgan. The session explored strategies for sustaining professional connections and leveraging networks for long-term career success. Mentees and mentors shared experiences, practiced new communication tools, and strengthened peer relationships in an engaging, hands-on setting.

Across both regions, participants had the opportunity to apply and refine networking and leadership skills in real-world contexts, deepening their confidence and connections to the global LaunchMe community.

### **Closing Ceremony**

The program concluded with a celebration of mentor and mentee achievements, highlighting individual growth, shared experiences, and next steps for new alumni, while reinforcing the strong community ties built within 100WF.



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“My mentor took me to her office and introduced me to her colleagues, which gave me even more insight into the industry.

The mentorship program provided me with invaluable network opportunities and showed me just how approachable everyone is.”

**Mentee, 2025**

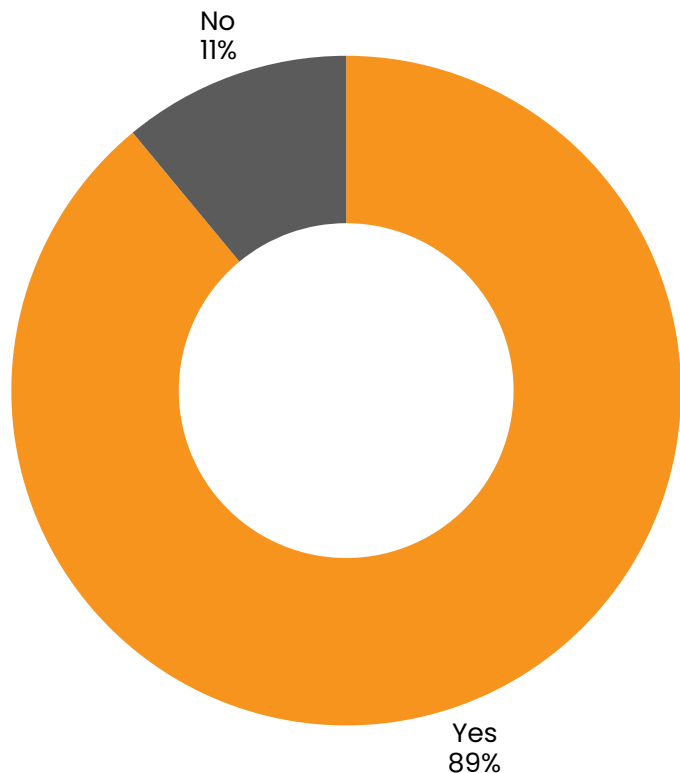
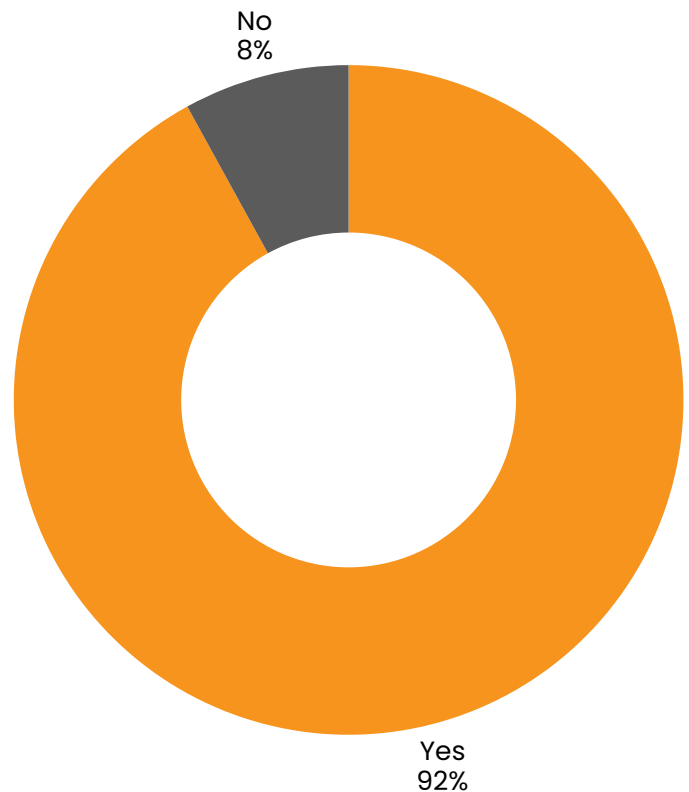
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# Impact and Results

LM25 delivered measurable outcomes for both mentees and mentors, strengthening career readiness, confidence, and leadership development across the global 100WF community.

## Career Readiness and Skill Development

**92%** of mentees felt more prepared for their professional future.

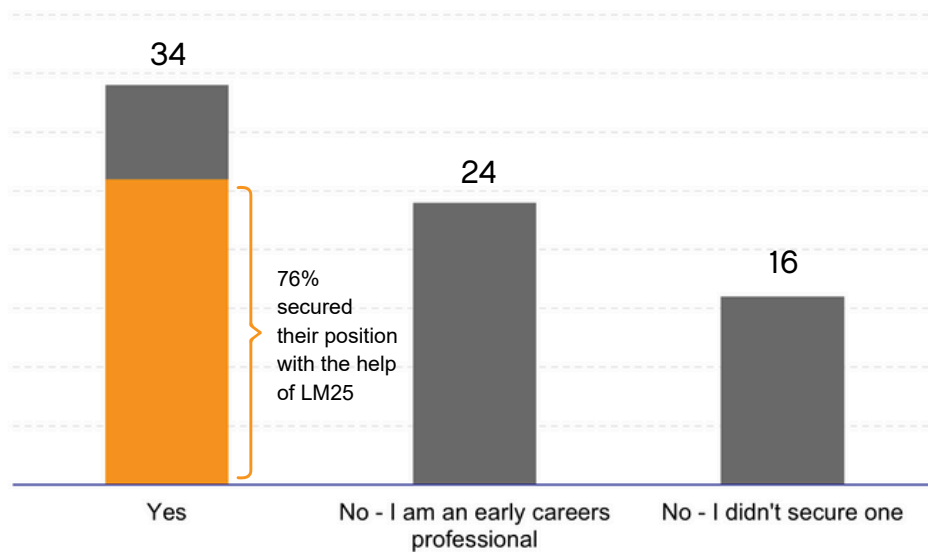


**89%** reported that the program helped them identify the essential skills needed to thrive in finance.

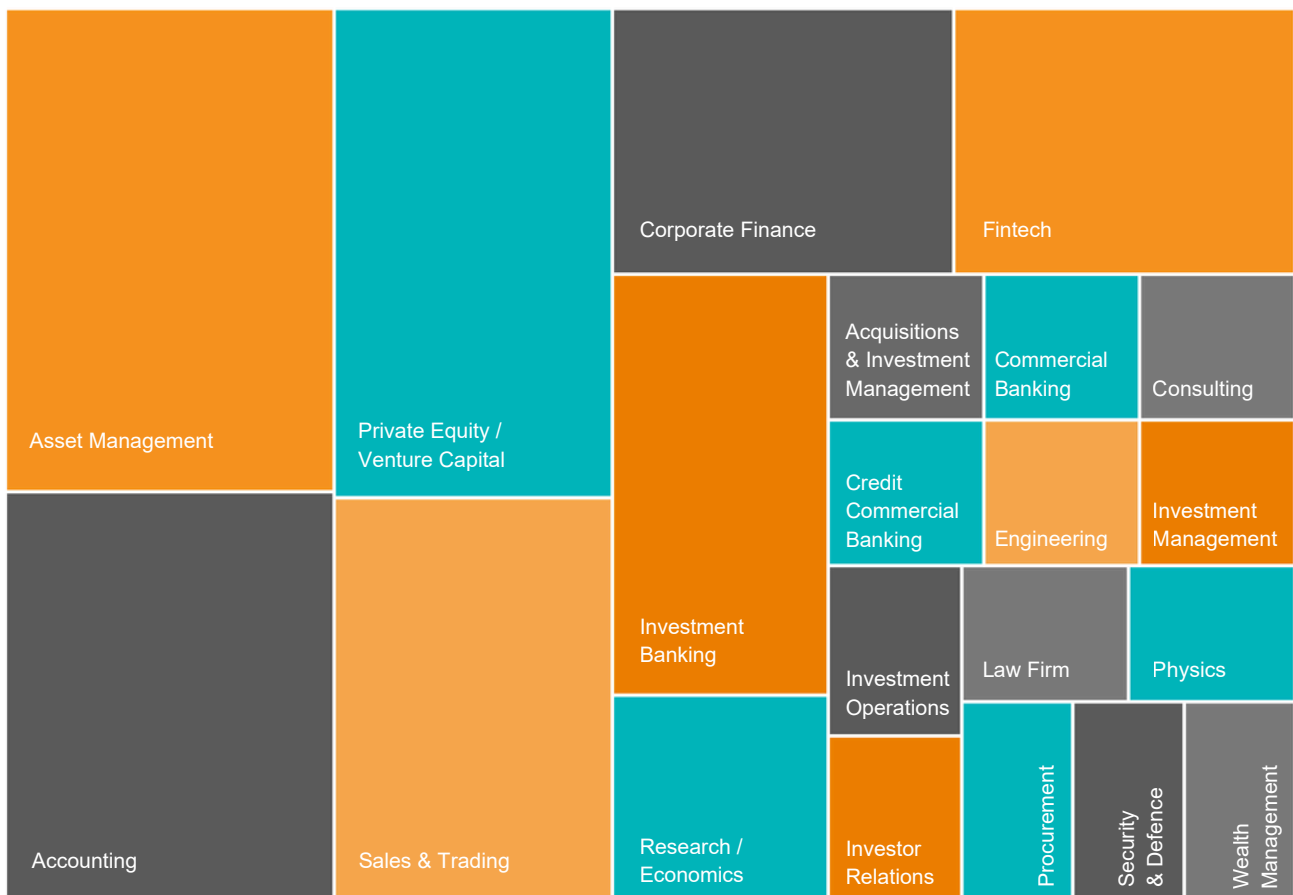


## Tangible Career Outcomes

34 mentees secured internships during the program, with 76% attributing their success directly to LM25.

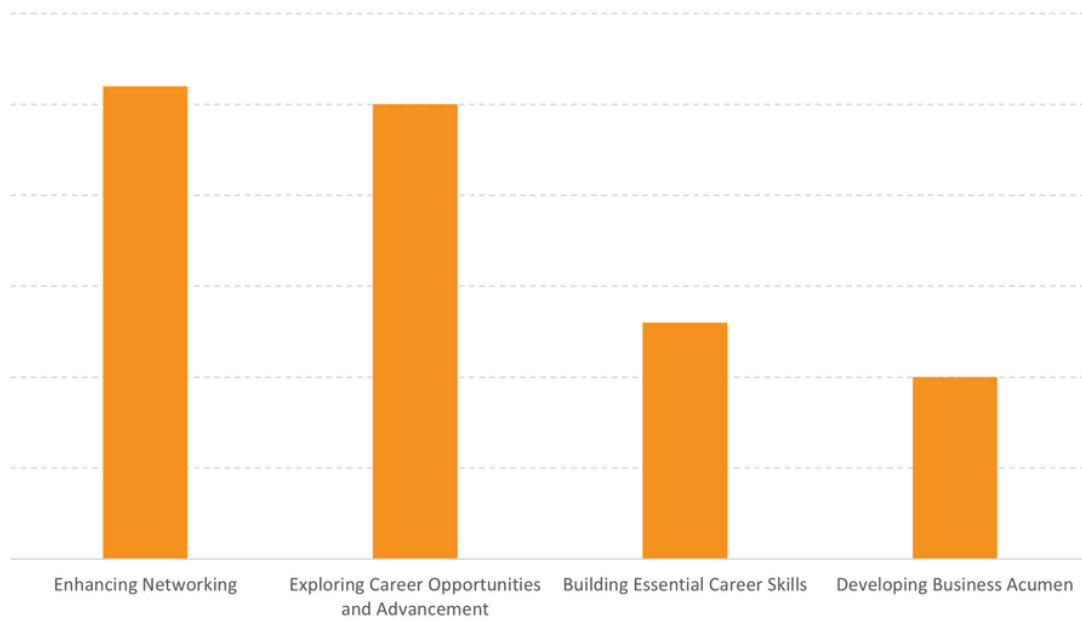


Experiences spanned asset management, accounting, banking, and more.



*Mentees' summer internships*

Key areas of personal growth included networking skills and career advancement exploration.

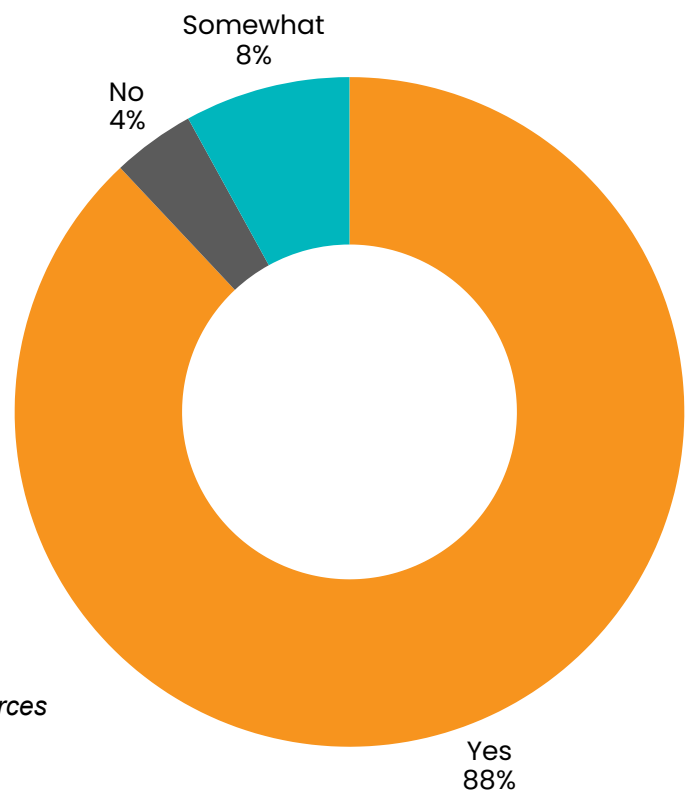


*Which area did you develop most during the LaunchMe program?*

## Mentor Development

60%+ of mentors felt they significantly influenced mentee career development.

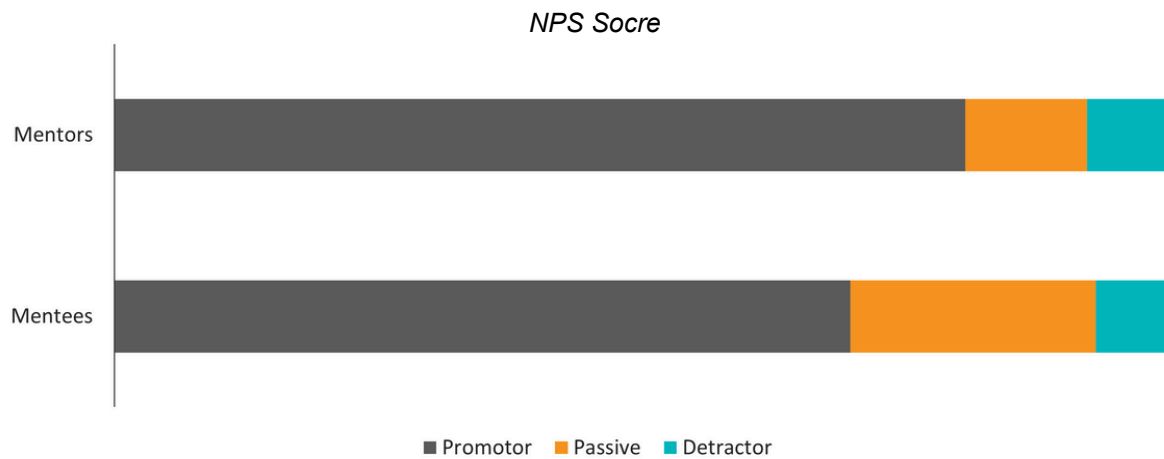
88% reported enhanced growth as leaders and professionals.



*Did the LaunchMe program provide adequate resources and support to help you as a mentor?*

## Program Satisfaction

- Overall recommendation: 8.9/10
- Career guidance: 4.1/5
- Industry challenges and skill-building support: 4.2/5
- Net Promoter Scores (NPS): 63 for mentees, 73 for mentors



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“My mentor showed me how to take initiative during my MBA co-op and hone my financial modelling skills.”

**Mentee, 2025**

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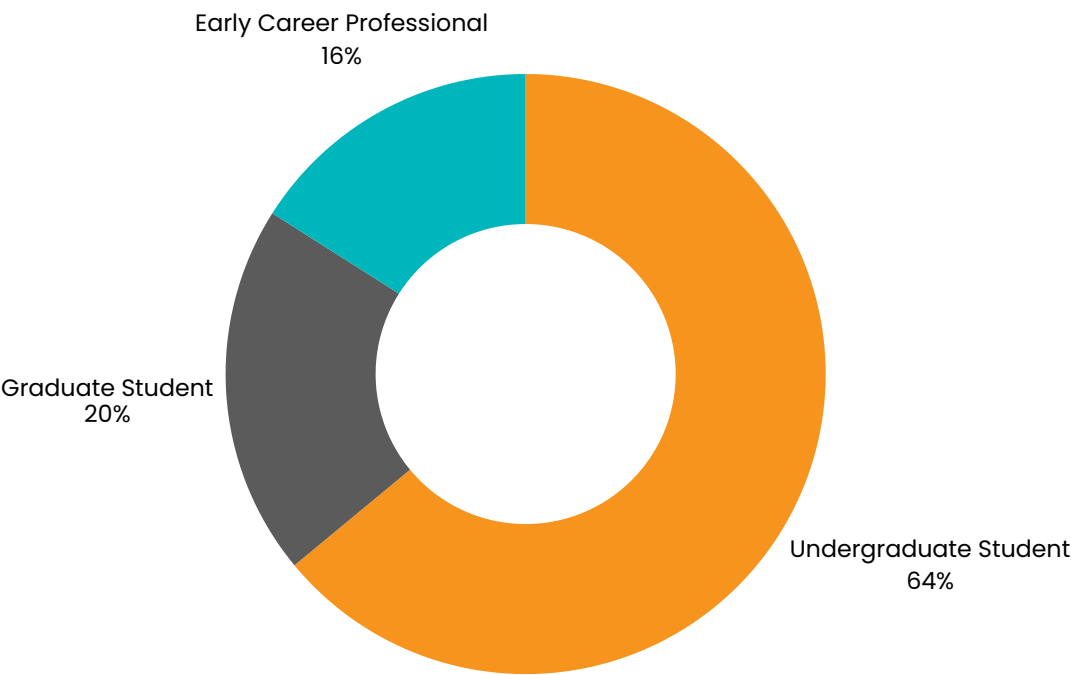






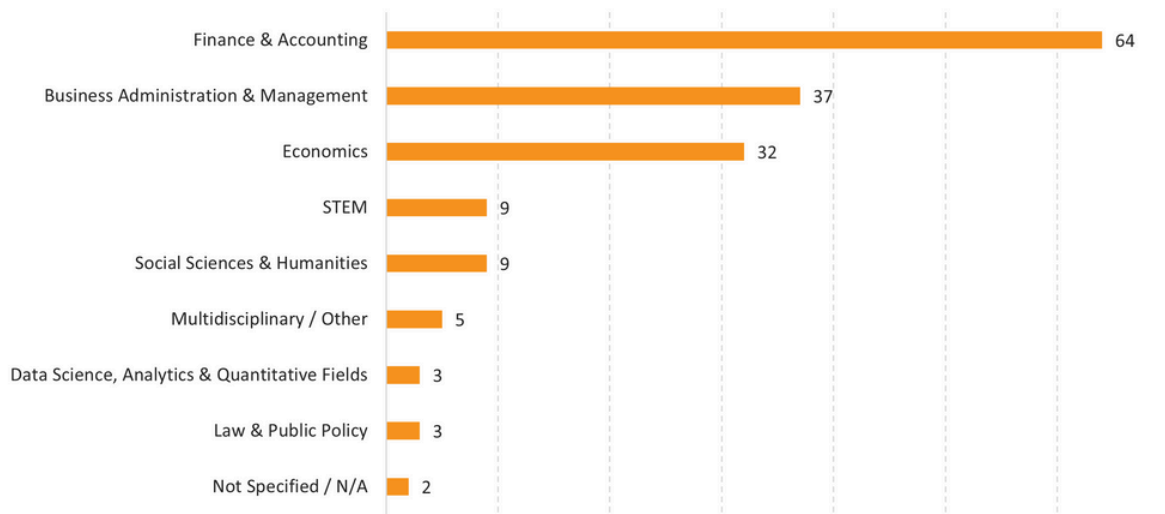
# Meet the Mentees

The 2025 LaunchMe cohort united 164 ambitious women who are undergraduate students, graduate students, and early-career professionals with up to three years of industry experience.



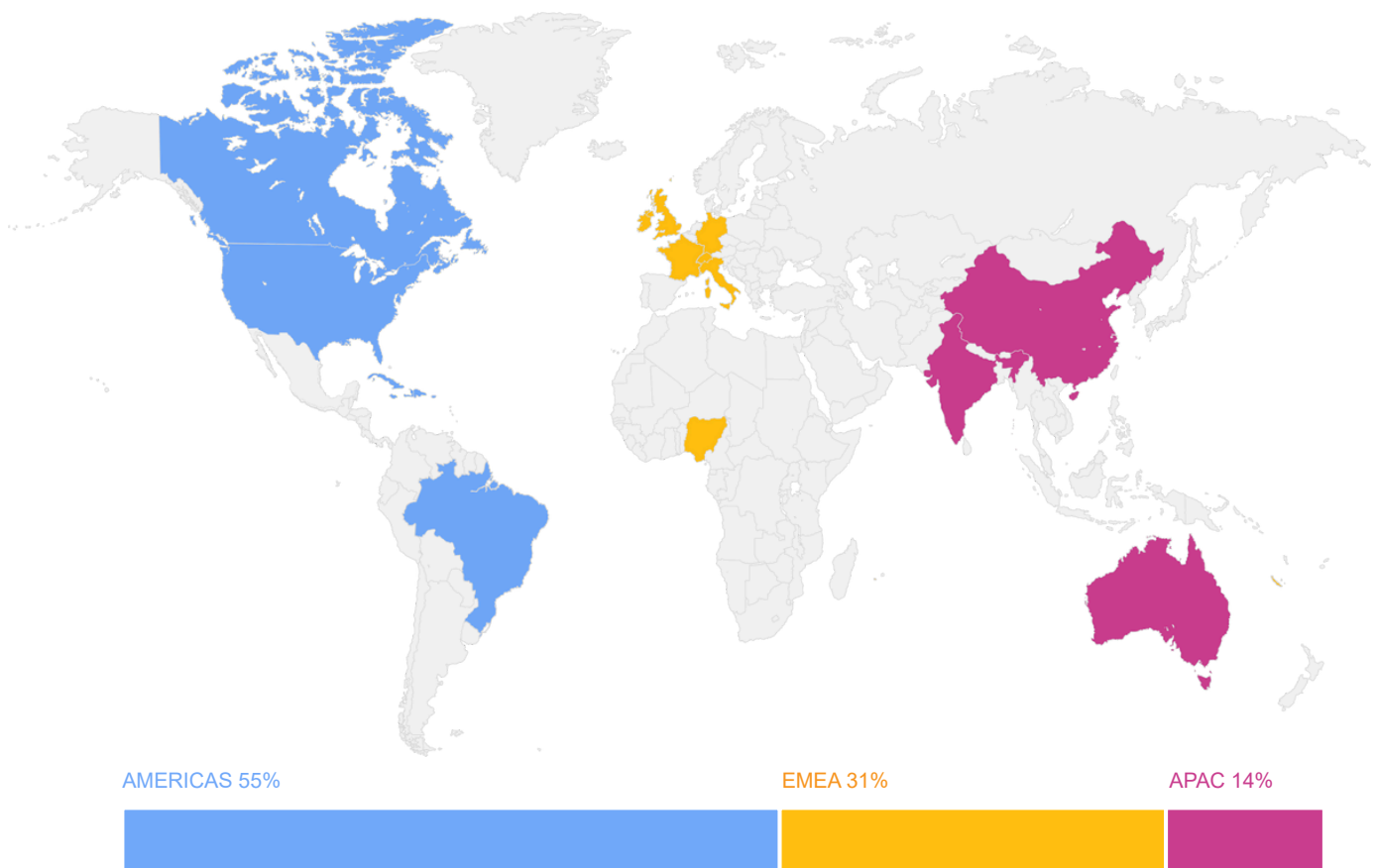
*Mentees by career stage*

Their diversity was their strength. The wide spectrum of backgrounds created a dynamic exchange of perspectives, similar to the diversity within teams and business segments in the finance industry.



*Mentees by university majors*

From New York to India, Hong Kong to Dublin, mentees joined LM25 from every corner of the globe.

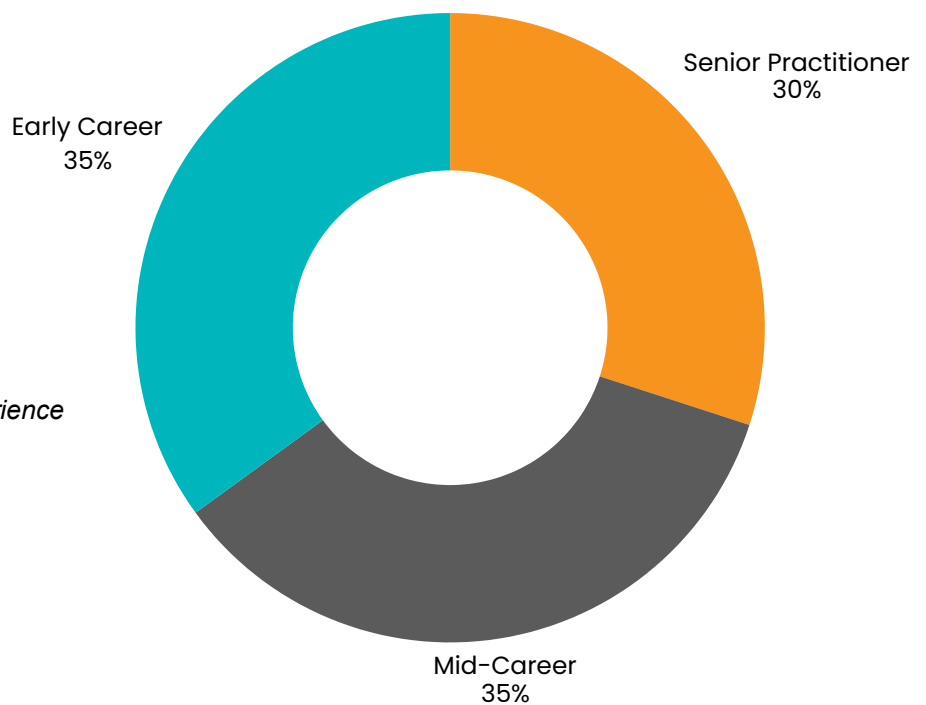


*Mentees by region*

# Meet the Mentors

Our 135 mentors who span 16 countries and fields from sales and trading to fintech, represent a diverse breadth of the finance industry. Experience ranged from three years to over two decades, and **more than half (54%) held advanced certifications** such as CFA, CPA, or CAIA.

*Mentors by years of experience*



Yes  
54%

No  
46%

*Mentors with professional certifications and licenses*





Their impact extended beyond credentials. Mentors acted as guides, advocates, and connectors for their mentees. As one mentee reflected:

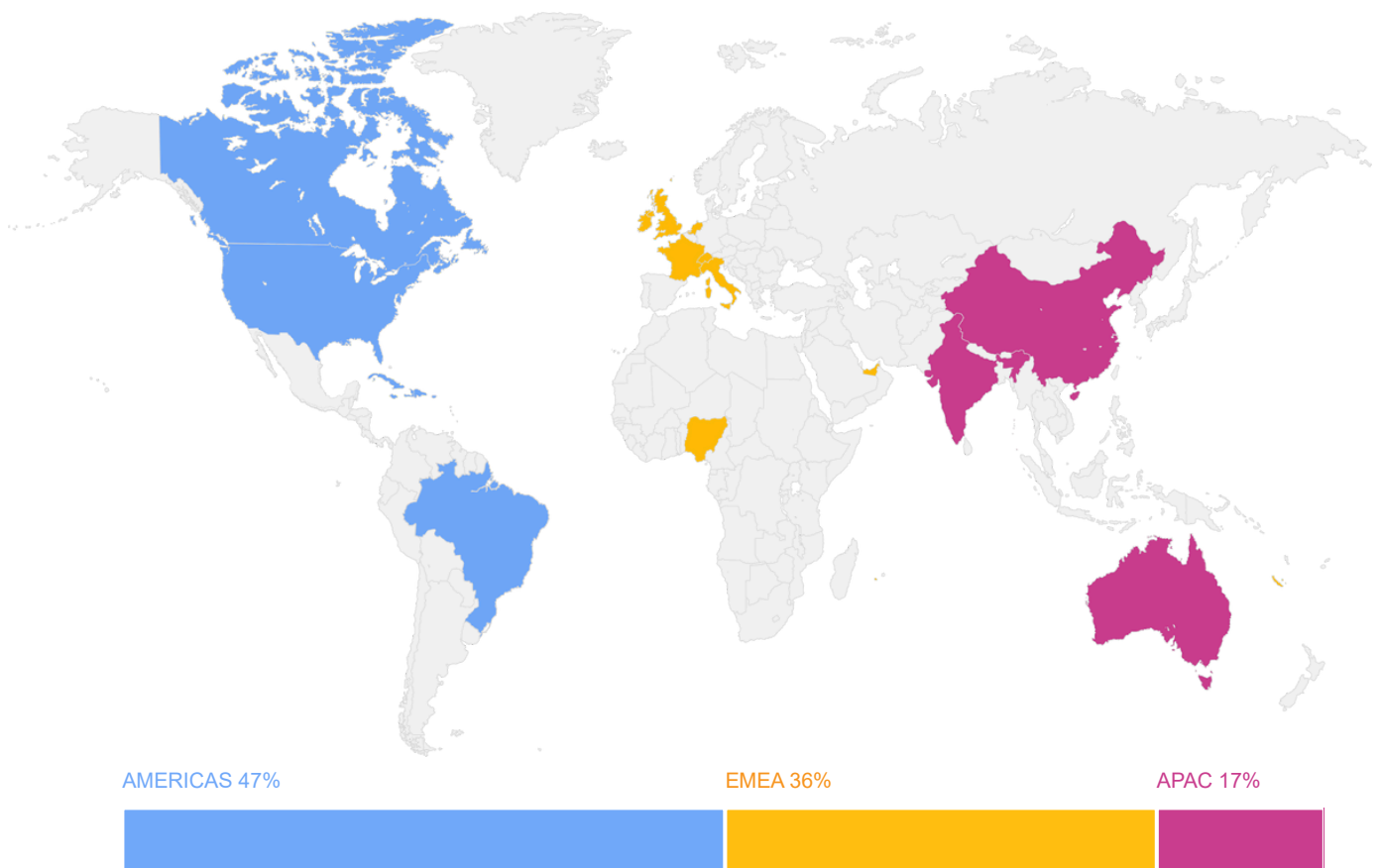
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“My mentor helped me realize my potential and made me feel seen and supported.”

### **Mentee, 2025**

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Many mentors extended their support by welcoming mentees into their workplaces and facilitating in-person introductions with colleagues. According to mentees, these opportunities were invaluable, from learning how to build trust with each other to the importance of preparedness to the actual conversation. For mentors, too, the program also offered valuable growth in developing empathy and emotional intelligence while renewing their sense of purpose in shaping the next generation of women in finance.



*Mentors by region*



# Testimonials:


## The Impact in Their Words

The LM25 Program has been a transformative experience for participants, offering far more than career guidance. It has become a critical support system, confidence builder, and gateway to industry connections. Here's what our mentees and mentors had to say:

Key Theme	Summary Comment	Participant Testimonials
A Lifeline During Uncertainty	The program offers critical support and unwavering encouragement, especially during challenging career transitions like unexpected layoffs.	<i>"Midway through the program, I was unexpectedly laid off from my job. But my mentor and the program coordinators immediately rallied around me... This program became pivotal during a challenging time in my life."</i>
Building Confidence	Mentees reported a significant increase in self-esteem and a renewed belief in their potential to succeed in finance.	<i>"I became more confident in myself as a woman pursuing a career in finance."</i> <i>"This program increased my self-esteem in the workplace and helped me navigate unemployment."</i> <i>"My mentor helped me realize my potential and made me feel seen and supported."</i>

Key Theme	Summary Comment	Participant Testimonials
<b>Mastering Networking &amp; Relationship Building</b>	<p>Participants learned to strategically build and maintain professional networks, recognizing their importance for career advancement, especially without a "target university" background.</p>	<p><i>"I learned how to intentionally build a supportive network and maintain meaningful professional relationships."</i></p> <p><i>"If you're not from a target university, networking and insider connections can mean more than a polished CV."</i></p> <p><i>"Connecting with peers and mentors who cared deeply about the industry was incredibly uplifting."</i></p> <p><i>"The opportunity to meet and connect with influential leaders and professionals in the finance industry has been instrumental in broadening my network."</i></p>
<b>Strategic Career Clarity</b>	<p>The program helped mentees clarify long-term goals, align them with personal values, and gain practical insights into the finance industry and various career paths.</p>	<p><i>"I gained clarity on long-term goals and how to align them with my values."</i></p> <p><i>"The speaker series gave me practical insights into self-advocacy, personal branding, and navigating finance careers."</i></p> <p><i>"I finally understood the real differences between buy-side firms and how to identify where I'd thrive."</i></p> <p><i>"She's opened doors to new connections and conversations that have helped me clarify my goals and recognize where my strengths might fit best."</i></p>

Key Theme	Summary Comment	Participant Testimonials
<b>Mentorship that Moves the Needle</b>	Mentors provided nuanced advice, guiding mentees beyond technical skills to navigate real-world challenges, pivot careers, and develop initiative.	<p><i>"My mentor showed me how to take initiative during my MBA co-op and hone my financial modelling skills."</i></p> <p><i>"She helped me pivot from tech to consulting, and then into asset management, step by step."</i></p> <p><i>"I learned to be okay with not having all the answers and to trust the process."</i></p>
<b>The Power of Connection</b>	LaunchMe fostered a safe, empowering community where participants felt seen, supported, and less susceptible to imposter syndrome, due to the welcoming nature of the 100WF network.	<p><i>"There aren't that many women in finance. Finding a group of people who care deeply about the industry, and about each other, was amazing."</i></p> <p><i>"I reduced my imposter syndrome by experiencing just how warm and welcoming the 100WF community really is."</i></p>



"I have found mentorship to be a two-way street—you listen, you inspire and you both grow. By supporting women starting their finance careers, you help build a stronger, more connected community for yourself and all of us."

**Mentor, 2025**





# Looking Forward to LM26

The LM25 program has set a high bar for future initiatives. As we look ahead, LaunchMe 2026 applications open in mid-October 2025, with the program commencing in early January 2026. Our mission remains to strengthen the pipeline of future finance leaders while continuing to deliver transformative experiences for all participants. The program will evolve in response to participant feedback and industry insights, ensuring that content remains relevant, engaging, and impactful.

## Qooper Platform

For 2026, we are excited to announce the implementation of our technology platform Qooper. LaunchMe will be administered via the Qooper Mentorship Platform. All programming, communications, learnings and scheduling will be coordinated through the platform, giving pairs seamless access to each other and the broader LaunchMe community via web or mobile app. This digital approach allows our team and volunteer committees to focus on strategic vision and program development, with the invaluable support of our 2025 sponsor, Samlyn Capital.

LaunchMe 2026 will continue to deliver mentorship, skill development, and community in ways that are meaningful, inclusive, and designed to have a lasting impact across the finance industry.



# Parting Word

As another remarkable year of LaunchMe comes to a close, the key takeaway is clear: mentorship transforms careers and builds lasting communities across borders.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to our mentors, dedicated volunteer committees, the 100 Women in Finance staff, and our generous sponsor, Samlyn Capital, whose commitment, vision, and support made LM25 possible. Together, they have helped inspire, guide, and empower the next generation of women in finance.



**Women in Finance**



# References

Hult International Business School (2023).

[https://www.hult.edu/blog/wi\\_skills\\_survey/#:~:text=Most%20recent%20graduates%20say,%20their,need%20for%20their%20current%20role.](https://www.hult.edu/blog/wi_skills_survey/#:~:text=Most%20recent%20graduates%20say,%20their,need%20for%20their%20current%20role.)

## Appendix

### Exploring Career Opportunities and Advancement

In the *Exploring Career Opportunities and Advancement* track, pairs delved into questions of purpose and direction, such as what factors inspired the mentee to pursue a career in finance, how company culture and values influenced their choices, and what their long-term aspirations looked like.

Conversations also addressed practical milestones in the job search, including identifying suitable roles, differentiating between functional paths, and preparing for interviews and following up on job applications.

Mentors worked with mentees to reflect on their progress to date, pinpoint challenges they had encountered, whether at the opportunity-seeking stage, the interview stage, or the assessment stage, and develop strategies to overcome them. Notably, the conversations emphasized resilience, focusing on how to recover from setbacks, learn from missteps, and move forward with renewed confidence.

## Enhancing your Professional Network

In the second focus area, *Enhancing Your Professional Network*, mentees gained insight into how to build meaningful relationships and present themselves effectively in professional settings. Guided by their mentors and LaunchMe resources, mentees developed and practiced their own elevator pitches, reflected on executive presence, including body language and professional attire, and examined best practices for effective networking.

Discussions also addressed the key distinctions between different types of professional supporters, including mentors, role models, coaches, advocates, and sponsors, while considering how to build a diverse team of advisors to sustain long-term growth. Pairs also practiced networking strategies such as initiating informational interviews, defining the “ask,” and navigating mentor calls with confidence and clarity. Mentors leveraged their own ‘pools’ or networks to expose their mentees to other perspectives.

Finally, through the creation of the LM25 Cohort Network and access to the LaunchMe alumni group, participants left the program with a supportive community to carry forward beyond the six months.

## Building Essential Career Skills

The third focus area, *Building Essential Career Skills*, has often emerged as an area of high priority for mentees in LM25. Bringing together learning from mentors, peer-to-peer exchanges, and subject-matter experts, this area underscored the program’s holistic approach to professional development.

Through one-to-one sessions, mentees explored a range of skills that extend well beyond technical expertise, including communication, professionalism, and personal brand. They were encouraged to see “career skills” not just as financial modelling or data analysis, but equally as professional etiquette, clear communication, and the ability to present themselves effectively in different contexts.

During the monthly mentee-only calls, participants shared articles, toolkits, and materials they had collected from past workshops and learning sessions, fostering a culture of resource sharing that became a powerful motivator for peer-to-peer support.

Finally, mentor–mentee pairs examined the concept of personal brand, distinguishing between reputation (how others perceive you) and brand (what you want to be known for), and how to align the two as they advance in their careers.



## Building Essential Career Skills

For many mentees, business acumen can feel like the most elusive of our four focus areas. To make it accessible, we began by defining it clearly. Business acumen is the ability to understand how a business operates, makes decisions, and creates value, both within a company and across an industry. It is not only about knowing financial statements or market trends, but also about understanding the dynamics of teams, anticipating needs, demonstrating curiosity, and positioning oneself to contribute meaningfully.

Our mentors were equipped with resources to help mentees reflect on business acumen through three personal lenses: self-awareness, self-advocacy, and proactiveness. We also challenged mentees to consider the often-quoted idea of “bringing your whole self to work.” In the context of finance, this does not mean disregarding professionalism but rather recognising that authenticity and performance are not mutually exclusive. For a young professional, “bringing your whole self to work” means leveraging your unique perspective, values, and strengths in a way that enhances your contribution to the team and the business. Discussing this within the framework of business acumen allowed mentees to understand that being effective in finance involves aligning personal strengths with a team's and organisational goals.

A further theme explored was understanding what to do when things go wrong in business. Whether facing a difficult manager, navigating team dynamics, or simply handling a problematic project, mentees explored tools for taking initiative and managing up, the ability to anticipate the needs of their managers, and support them effectively. This requires emotional intelligence: recognising one's own emotions in the workplace, responding rather than reacting, and handling challenges in a professional manner. Finally, we discussed the principle of adding value. On one of our mentee-only calls, the group reflected on how new joiners can make an immediate impact. The advice was simple: find the task that your manager either dislikes doing or doesn't have time to do and become the best at it.

Identifying and mastering these tasks not only builds trust but also accelerates one's reputation as a reliable team player. This resonated with many mentees. Business acumen is not just about big-picture strategy, but also about the small, everyday actions that build credibility and influence.