WICYS EMPOWERING LEADERSHIP

Empowering leaders pave the way to building a robust cybersecurity workforce.

Leadership is a skillset that one continues to grow and expand. The WiCyS State of Inclusion study, done in collaboration with Aleria, showcases some instances of exclusionary activities that result in attrition for the cybersecurity workforce. This resource is intended to help support leaders to build a more robust workforce where all can thrive in being retained and advanced. *Let's do this together!*

6 EMPOWERING LEADERSHIP ACTIONS
1. Lead with empathy
2. Create safe team environments
3. Recognize ideas and achievements
4. Provide valuable feedback
5. Support professional development goals
6. Improve systems, processes and cultures

1 **Lead with empathy.** Use curiosity to understand everyone's unique experiences, show empathy and respect for their experiences, and support them. Build team empathy through informal gatherings, learning sessions and conversations where they genuinely get to know each other and don't talk about work.

2 **Create safe team environments.** If someone doesn't feel safe or respected by team members, they're less likely to take risks and contribute. Stand up for what's right and intervene when you observe or learn about exclusion. Interrupt interruptions, ensure full inclusion in conversations and build trust between team members.

3 **Recognize ideas and achievements.** Actively listen to everyone's ideas and ensure they receive credit. Publicly acknowledge contributions to projects and career accomplishments. Show you trust women's expertise by seeking their advice, contributions and leadership.

4 **Provide valuable feedback.** Women, especially women of color, tend to receive lower-quality feedback. This limits their ability to develop skills as leaders. Provide career-improving feedback on presentations and projects, as well as one-on-ones and annual reviews.

5 **Support professional development goals.** Be transparent about the specific actions needed for promotions and raises. Check progress together in one-on-ones and reviews. Provide stretch assignments, speaking roles and leadership opportunities. Be their champion and recommend them for new opportunities.

6 **Improve systems, processes and cultures.** Pursue opportunities to improve systems, processes and cultures to be more structured for career growth and advancement. Collaborate with other leaders to assess and make improvements together.

WiCyS is taking the lead on building allies in cybersecurity, and we're excited for you to join us. Thank you for leading the change to transform our WiCyS community and our industry.

TOGETHER, **WE THRIVE!**

The WiCyS Benchmark Report was developed in collaboration with Aleria. The empowering leadership actions were creating in partnership with Melinda Briana Epler, Founder & CEO of Empovia and author of How to Be an Ally.

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