

INDUSTRY	COHORT	DURATION	SCOPE	CLIENT
Professional development & career transition	Public cohort, unrelated employers	6 months · 2026	8 enrolled · 6 pre-post	Anonymised

Measured adaptability increased across a six-month cohort while participants' environmental conditions declined.

SITUATION

The Adaptability Accelerator is a six-month development programme for accomplished women in the mid-to-late stages of their careers who have identified a need for significant career transition. Participants in this cohort enrolled individually, drawn from unrelated employers across government, defence, healthcare, financial services and the nonprofit sector. Most brought fifteen or more years of specialist expertise. Each was performing well against conventional external measures, and each reported an inability to progress.

IMPLICATION

A stalled transition does not remain static; it compounds. Each month of uncertainty deepened the erosion of hope and hardened the imposter narrative, so that decisive action became progressively harder rather than easier. The expertise these participants held was itself at risk of being discounted, by them, because they could not articulate how it transferred to an unfamiliar context.

The costs were simultaneously economic and personal, and they did not fall on the individual alone. Prolonged transition produces lost earnings and under-employment relative to capability. It also removes experienced practitioners from the organisational system at precisely the seniority at which their judgement is least replaceable.

COST OF INACTION — FOR THE INDIVIDUAL	COST OF INACTION — FOR THE WIDER SYSTEM
- Continued stasis and a diminishing sense of agency - Diminished wellbeing and a reduced sense of professional accomplishment and impact - Acceptance of a role beneath demonstrated expertise - Abandonment of the transition altogether - Lost earnings and under-employment relative to capability	- Senior, experienced practitioners lost or under-deployed - Institutional knowledge left under-utilised - Avoidable attrition of hard-won capability for departing employers

APPROACH

The Wolf Kamins Group delivered six live virtual sessions across six months. Each participant completed the AQme™ assessment at baseline and again at programme close, with an individual debrief of her baseline results. Rather than functioning as a single diagnostic administered at the outset, AQ® was integrated throughout: the five Abilities and the A.C.E. model provided a consistent analytic vocabulary that participants applied across sessions addressing imposter syndrome, transferable skills, values, the personal board of directors, unlearning and integration. Each session followed a consistent arc of grounding, teaching, self-assessment, paired breakout, debrief and written commitment. Workbooks were completed as pre-work so that live time was reserved for discussion rather than content delivery. Monthly coaching, scheduled office hours and a private participant community operated between sessions.

WHAT AQ® REVEALS

AQ® measures adaptability — the capacity to navigate change, complexity, and uncertainty — across three dimensions: Ability, Character, and Environment. Unlike engagement surveys or personality tests, AQ® measures what people can do when the ground shifts, not how they feel or who they are. It is the only validated framework that lets leaders predict, develop, and scale adaptive capacity.

RESULTS

The principal finding is that measured adaptability increased while the conditions surrounding participants did not improve.

- **Hope and resilience increased.** Hope rose in five of the six participants who completed both assessments, and resilience rose in the same proportion. Overall AQ increased in four of six, with the largest individual gain recorded at 94 points.
- **Participants' self-description shifted.** Individuals who had initially characterised themselves as stuck, lost or fraudulent were, by programme close, articulating specific next steps and a future they could describe concretely. Self-doubt was not eliminated; it was reinterpreted as a normal feature of transition rather than a judgement on capability.
- **The internal shift produced documentable external action, and the market responded.** Participants reported constructing the practical apparatus of a transition: defined target markets, ideal client profiles, pricing models, marketing materials and prepared pitches. That work converted into hard-won interviews for ideal roles and paid consulting assignments. Participants were not simply better prepared; the external market was confirming that they were delivering value in a new direction.

Mean change across the six participants who completed the AQme™ assessment at both baseline and programme close:

MEASURE	MEAN CHANGE	PARTICIPANTS IMPROVING
DEVELOPMENTAL GAINS		
Hope	+14.3	5 of 6
Resilience	+5.8	5 of 6

Sample comprises six participants completing both assessments. Findings are reported as within-individual change over time and are not statistically significant at this sample size. No team-level effect is claimed, as no baseline team report exists for comparison. The design does not permit causal attribution.

"I'm not running away from anything. I'm running toward what's next, with optimism and clarity I didn't have six months ago."

Cohort participant, The Adaptability Accelerator

"I uncovered blind spots I didn't know I had, recognized patterns of negative thinking that had been shaping my decisions, and revisited my core values, only to find they had evolved in ways that completely reframed my next chapter."

Cohort participant, The Adaptability Accelerator

PRACTITIONER SPOTLIGHT · The Wolf Kamins Group

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The Wolf Kamins Group supports organisations and leaders in developing the capacity to operate effectively through change, combining the psychology of human behaviour with operational leadership experience. The firm advises CHROs, chief executives and senior leadership teams on the human dimensions of organisational disruption, with professional roots in defence and special operations, financial services, and government. The Adaptability Accelerator is currently enrolling its third cohort.

Specialism: Adaptability measurement & development · Leadership transition · AI and cultural disruption

Sectors: Defence · Financial services · Government

ABOUT AQai

AQai is the world's leading platform for measuring and developing adaptability. Backed by science and built for modern organizations, our assessments help leaders and teams understand, predict, and grow their capacity to adapt — so they can thrive in any environment. aqai.io · hello@aqai.io