YELLOW SHOES

Athenaship®

Identity-Led Leadership Development

Supporting women who are leaders rediscover who they are, trust it and translate it into sustainable performance & wellbeing.

Evidence-informed.
Experience-led.
Individually transformative.

Jennie Norrish

The Problem

The leadership challenge is rarely capability.

Often, it is identity.

Highly capable women can spend years succeeding while also navigating expectations about what leadership should look like.

The pressure to adapt is often subtle, but over time it can mean expending unnecessary energy second-guessing, editing or overriding qualities that have already served them well – and sometimes feeling as though they are performing somebody else's version of leadership.

That creates hidden costs: hesitation, over-preparation, inconsistency, diminished visibility and - often most signifiantly - the cognitive load of continually editing oneself.

Evidence of the hidden costs:

- Leadership capability that does not consistently translate into impact
- Talented people expending energy on fitting the mould...and burning out
- Underused difference, perspective and leadership potential

Our Solution

Athenaship® starts somewhere most leadership development doesn't: with who you are, not what you need to fix.

Because confidence as a leader isn't the starting point. It's what happens when you understand who you are, trust what you bring and know how you want to lead.

Through a blend of psychology, coaching and practical tools, Athenaship® helps women understand and trust what is already there: the experiences, strengths, instincts and values that shape how they want to lead. It also makes visible the expectations, assumptions and unwritten rules that can create self-doubt or pressure to adapt.

The work isn't about becoming a different type of a leader. It's about trusting your own version.

Four principles that make Athenaship® distinct

It starts with truths, not strengths and weaknesses

Characteristics are rarely simply strengths or weaknesses. The same trait can help in one context and make another harder. Athenaship® explores these characteristic truths – where they come from and how to use them deliberately – rather than judging parts of ourselves as things to fix.

It goes deeper than existing programmes

Its identity-first approach brings together leadership psychology, coaching, narrative tools and practical application. Creating a holistic analysis of self-identity as a foundation. Many leadership programmes ask what a good leader should do differently. Athenaship® begins and ends with the person doing the leading.

It is practical

That insight becomes something usable: a personal Leadership Blueprint that can be applied everyday at work. The aim is a way of leading that is both distinct to the individual, and effective in each unique context.

It lasts

The result is a clearer leadership identity that supports long-term performance and sustainable wellbeing in senior roles. It creates an internal reference point to trust long-term.

> Athenaship® shines a light on the leadership traits women already own by getting clearer on who they are, rather than working harder to fit an inherited idea of how best to lead.

When identity becomes clearer, leadership becomes more coherent.



A clear leadership identity gives people a trusted internal reference point. Instead of relying entirely on external expectations, they can lead with greater consistency, make clearer choices and adapt without losing themselves.

This is not about being comfortable, fixed or endlessly 'authentic'. Effective leaders still stretch, learn and respond to context.

The difference is that development is anchored in who they are, and not based on performing an identity that cannot be sustained.

For leaders at moments that matter.

Who it's for

- Leaders stepping into bigger or more visible roles
- Directors and execs tired of playing a role at work
- Underrepresented groups ready for senior leadership
- Talented people who do not identify with traditional leadership stereotypes

What it looks like

- 1:1 executive development
- Leadership development programmes cohort by cohort

Athenaship®

Identity-Led Leadership Development

A methodology built around the individual.

Leadership identity isn't discovered through one exercise.
It is built from someone's story, experiences, characteristics, assumptions, traits, contradictions and context. Athenaship® uses different tools within coaching conversations to explore those things – then turns what we find into something practical.

01

UNDERSTAND

What has shaped me?

Tool:

Map of Me® analysis

- My story & experiences
- My values & truths
- My assumptions & expectations

02

ARTICULATE

What is genuinely mine?

Tool:

Leadership Blueprint

- Leadership identity
- Leadership narrative
- Leadership principles

03

APPLY

How do I lead my way?

Tool:

Tailored templates

- Decision-making
- Communication & influence
- Relationships
- Pressure & criticism

MY ATHENASHIP® PLAYBOOK

A personal, practical reference point for the leader I am and how I lead at my best.

**The tools aren't the end product.
They are how we get to something much more useful:
a clear leadership identity and a personalised playbook for putting it into practice.**

The methodology is consistent. The emphasis, tools and output are individual.

These tools sit within a six-stage journey: first understanding what has shaped you, then defining what is yours, and finally putting it to work in the reality of leadership.

Six stages. One transformative journey.

01 | DISCOVER – Explore your story, experiences, context and the influences that have shaped you.

02 | DIAGNOSE – Identify traits, patterns, assumptions, tensions and the expectations that influence how you lead.

03 | DEFINE – Get clear on what is distinctly yours and articulate the leadership traits you choose to use.

04 | TRANSLATE – Turn that identity into personal leadership principles, choices, behaviours and communication.

05 | EMBED – Put it to work in the leadership situations that actually matter – decisions, relationships, visibility, pressure and change.

06 | SUSTAIN – Bring the work together in your Athenaship® Playbook: a practical reference point to return to as your leadership continues to evolve.

Insight is only useful if you can use it.

The journey moves from understanding what has shaped you to trusting what is yours – then putting it to work in the moments where leadership is actually experienced.

Grounded in evidence. Built for the reality of leadership.

EVIDENCE-INFORMED

Athenaship® draws on relevant research and theory related to:

Social and leadership psychology
Narrative identity
Self-determination theory
Psychological safety
Stereotype threat and role congruity
Collective self-esteem
Paradox mindset
Organisational culture and behaviour

EXPERIENCE-LED

The methodology is informed by more than 25 years of experience across:

Executive and board-level leadership
Global corporate communications
Organisational culture and transformation
Brand positioning and storytelling
Leadership coaching
Mentorship training
Consultancy and advisory roles

Jennie Norrish combines senior leadership and people and brand development experience with qualifications in communications, leadership, transformational leadership coaching and a recent MSc in Social and Leadership Psychology, awarded with distinction.

Her thesis research explored self-identity conflict among women leaders.

Academic theory is translated into tested, practical tools and leadership choices. The work does not reduce leaders to a personality type.

> My academic research with 150 women leaders from all over the world found that pressure to fit gendered expectations was linked to greater conflict about who they could be as leaders. Athenaship® draws on those findings to help women define a leadership identity they can trust and put into practice, including the qualities they may have been taught to see as contradictory.

The Impact

200+

leaders researched / coached in first three years

100%

of clients approach as effective / very effective long-term

> Jennie cut through major misconceptions I had about myself and rejuvenated me as a leader and a person.

CEO, Major Charity, London, UK

> Coaching strength in identity is Jennie's superpower. She has an ability to unlock what makes you, you.

Group Head of Brand, Agency, Australia

> It helped me find my voice and embrace my uniqueness. I feel more resilient than ever.

Senior Marketing Manager, global drinks company, Spain

> Decisions I didn't, even know I could make became clear.

MD, Design Agency, Kent, UK

> [Athenaship] made me and my business stronger.

Agency Founder, London, UK and Cyprus-

> The work was spot on, very useful and beyond expectations.

CEO, Industry Body, New Zealand

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Jennie Norrish
Founder, Yellow Shoes / Creator of Athenaship®

YELLOW SHOES

yellow-shoes.co.uk