

THE TRUSTED ADVISOR PROGRAMME

Small-group leadership development for brilliant researchers who want to grow into leaders people listen to and want to follow.

Impact and influence isn't granted, it's earned. Not through heads-down hard work — but through knowing , making your value visible, and building trust in three places: in yourself, in your team, and with clients and stakeholders.

This programme supports research and insight leaders to go from:

- **Busy to Indispensable**
- **Pleaser to Partner**
- **Responsible to Accountable**

How it Works

3 Months | 6 x 90 minute Online Learn & Test Modules | Real Work Practice | Tracking Progress | Ongoing Accountability

Every module follows the same rhythm:

1. Learn one leadership shift
2. Test it in your real work via one small experiment between sessions
3. Reflect with the group: what did you learn, what to do next

A high support, high challenge environment. Max 6 per cohort.

Module 1: Trust Yourself (From heads down to visible value)

Your value is not how much you carry, it's the clarity you create & the decisions you enable.

- Define leadership in your context - why are you here, really?
- Spot over-delivery patterns
- Build your own Trusted Advisor Proposition - what stays true even when the market/ client noise gets loud

Experiment: Use your proposition in 3 real work moments - to make your value visible or set a trust-building boundary or protect quality.

Module 2: Communicate with Authority (Trust Under Pressure)

Confidence isn't a personality trait, it's a practice you can build.

- Replace over-prep with effective prep (still excellent, less anxious).
- Spot language patterns that quietly reduce your authority.
- Create new scripts that accurately reflect your value and contribution.

Experiment: Practice saying it like a leader - use your new script in 3 real team/client/senior meeting situations.

Module 3: Lead Through Others (Trust Your Team)

Not stepping away, but becoming a delivery leader.

- Delegate with intention vs. reactively (what to hand off and what to hold)
- Delegation that protects quality: (simple delegation brief)
- Coaching through challenge: (support vs. solve)

Experiment: Use a Coaching Intervention / Delegation Brief in real work.

Module 4: High Accountability (Tough on task, Soft on people)

Consistency builds trust.

- Set team / account standards, without being controlling.
- Give feedback that strengthens relationships and performance.
- Create accountability rhythms that reduce rework and 'surprise' problems.

Experiment: Give 3 pieces of feedback with within 48 hours ending with a specific "what next?" agreement.

Module 5: Strategic Cut Through with Senior Audiences

Be the person people listen to when decisions are made.

- Turning insight into direction: “so what / now what” with conviction.
- Shift from pleasing to partnering in senior rooms.
- Handling pushback without over-explaining or conceding too fast.

Experiment: Use your executive narrative in a senior or client meeting.

Module 6: Boundaries that Build Trust

Boundaries aren't distance - they tell people what they can count on.

- Set scope, expectations, and trade-offs that improve delivery outcomes.
- Say “no / not now / not like that” while strengthening trust.
- Design a sustainable operating system (so performance doesn't depend on overwork)

Experiment: Practice using your boundary script in 3 real work situations.

Tracking Progress

Progress is incremental. We'll use benchmarking questions (pre, midpoint & post check in) to track:

- sentiment (e.g. comfort speaking in senior meetings / delegating)
- behaviours (e.g. % of time doing vs. coaching / giving feedback within 48hrs)

Building confidence and motivation through evidence, not hype.

Accountability

Every session starts with “What did you learn from running your real work experiment?” You'll also get an accountability buddy. Every two weeks you'll do a 10-minute check-in with your buddy using two questions:

- What did you let go of this week?
- What grew for you?

Who's It For?

This is for leaders who recognise that they over-service, over-prepare, over-rescue, over-explain, and know this limits their authority, influence and impact.

I get it, because this was me. I became a leader and I thought I needed to carry everything - put out every fire, say yes to every client request, prepare an intelligent-sounding answer to every possible question a client might ask, but this was exhausting, and undermining the influence and authority I was trying to build.

A Note For Sponsors

This isn't about doing less. It's about leading delivery more effectively — with stronger judgement, cleaner ownership, better stakeholder and client management, and boundaries that protect quality.

Over 3 months, you can expect to see:

- Clearer recommendations and faster decision-making (less “here are the findings”, more “here's what we should do next”).
- Reduced rework and firefighting through earlier scope/trade-off conversations and clearer standards.
- Stronger team accountability (leaders who coach and delegate without becoming the bottleneck).
- More sustainable performance (less reliance on overwork to deliver).

Dates, Timings, Investment

£1750 per person. Max 6 per cohort.

Online, Wednesdays, 12.30-2.00pm

Spring Cohort Dates

Module 1: 15th April
Module 2: 29th April
Module 3: 13th May
Module 4: 3rd June
Module 5: 17th June
Module 6: 1st July

Autumn Cohort Dates

Module 1: 30th September
Module 2: 14th October
Module 3: 28th October
Module 4: 11th November
Module 5: 25th November
Module 6: 9th December

Testimonials

The biggest way the course has supported me is knowing I'm not alone, and meeting great people who have all kept in touch. I also have a voice in my head now telling me to 'just give it a go' and 'what's the worse that will happen' if there's something I'm trying to work out the best approach for.

Research Lead, Whitbread

I must admit to being a bit sceptical on how useful the programme would be for me, but it was an absolute revelation. Even now, a year later, I still remind myself of things I learnt - they've almost become a mantra to me.

The most important learning for me was the idea of being in your stretch zone, rather than just in or out of your comfort zone. It's changed the way I approach tricky tasks.

AD, Magenta

The programme really helped me to reframe what success looks like - it made me realise that I was setting myself unrealistic expectations. This meant I was constantly feeling like I was never good enough and I was extremely self critical.

It's really worth taking the time and investing in yourself as you make the transition to a leadership role, and is really wonderful to work through this with a group and build a positive network across the research community.

Head of Brand & Marketing, Centrica

Ready? Curious?

If you're ready to join or curious to learn more, get in touch at zoe@youburnbright.com.

I also run this programme internally for cohorts of leaders (minimum 3)