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A Girl Blossoms Into a Leader

A USAID-funded training enables a young specialist gain confidence in her leadership ability



PHOTO: BEARINGPOINT

The techniques I learned at the USAID-sponsored seminar have helped me deliver an important presentation with confidence and grace.

—Nazym Iglíkova, a young specialist of the Accounting Department of the National Bank of Kazakhstan.

Recently, a young and talented specialist of the National Bank of Kazakhstan was able to sharpen her presentation and leadership skills at a training sponsored by USAID.

Nazym Iglíkova is an expert of the National Bank's Accounting Department. She oversees accounting automation, arranges inspections of financial organizations, and trains staff of Kazakhstani financial organizations. However, until recently, she never felt comfortable leading courses to other specialists. "I had little knowledge or understanding how to approach presentations," says Iglíkova. "We were preparing many presentations during my university studies, but we were never taught how to do this properly."

So when USAID's Economic Reforms to Enhance Competitiveness (EREC) Project, co-funded by the Government of Kazakhstan, offered a leadership training course for the National Bank employees, Iglíkova was happy to be selected, together with 54 other staff. The USAID leadership skills course was designed for National Bank specialists on the career path to take managerial positions and become involved in the state monetary policy and, ultimately, the development of the country in the near future.

At the beginning of the course, Iglíkova participation was not very noticeable. The young woman sat in the last row, listened to the instructor with interest, and took copious notes. But all changed during a session on presentation skills. "Something shifted inside," - says Iglíkova. "Especially, after the instructor didn't find any significant shortcomings in my presentation."

Now, Iglíkova's eyes are full of courage and even her posture radiates confidence. "She looks like a true leader," says her instructor.

Shortly after the course, Iglíkova had to give a presentation at the commercial bank where she'd started her career. Iglíkova was worried about that meeting and tried to use all the tips from the USAID training to prepare for it.

"My former bosses were in the room listening to what I was able to learn at the National Bank," says Iglíkova. "But everything went well! I used the techniques from the seminar, and they helped me a lot."