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Amy Vetter, CPA.CITP, CGMA

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There is an immense opportunity for women in the accounting profession. This generation has been pushing barriers and trying to make things better for future generations in the profession to have better quality of life and more opportunities for leadership. It's important to know what your purpose is beyond the accounting work and ensure where you work align with that purpose. Be prepared to ask questions during your interviews for an accounting job on what the mission is of the organization, what flexibility they provide to employees and the representation of women in the leadership. Speak to those women and understand their career path at that employer and learn about the mentoring and coaching opportunities there are for new accountants to set goals for their career.

What would you suggest to accounting firms that are interested in retaining and advancing more qualified female staff?

It's important to reach out to women and learn about what issues they believe they are facing in the workplace so the right initiatives can be put in place. Too many times I hear men in leadership saying the women aren't applying for available positions or there aren't enough qualified women applicants for leadership positions. Without being proactive, rather than waiting for women to come to you, the issues can't be resolved. Employing cloud technology in order to create a more flexible workplace is a step in the right direction so women don't have to bow out during the time they need more flexibility.

Why did you choose to work in – and stay in – the accounting field?

As a daughter and granddaughter of entrepreneurs, since I was a child I felt the need to find ways for small businesses to thrive better. I watched them go after their passions in life, but not have a clear financial picture that could help them on a day to day business to make the critical business decisions that were necessary for

success. Accounting is the backbone to the small business world. As an accountant,

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years).

The amount of disruption currently occurring in the accounting industry is unprecedented. Millennials, in particular, are introducing the industry to a new way of working, as well as a new set of technology that is changing the way we do business. Over the next few years, the quality of a firm's advisory services will increasingly serve as a competitive differentiator.

Innovative firms will begin to create learning journeys for their accounting professionals today in order to provide the education required to move the advisory needle. I believe those that choose not to provide their staff with the necessary CFO, advisory and business insight training will soon lag behind their competitors and miss out on a unique opportunity to capitalize on technology's many benefits for their clients.

From an advisory perspective, we now have the tools required to better serve our small business clients. From the client's perspective, we're able to move accounting professionals from "the person who does my taxes" to "the trusted business partner I can't do without." While there is a knowledge gap that needs closing, technology is driving new opportunities for accounting professionals and changing the future of our industry.

The changes in technology will also drive increased globalization. In the past, accounting professionals were constrained by geographical borders. With the cloud, an accountant in New York can service a small business in the UK just as effectively as they would someone in their own backyard. In this borderless tech world, accounting professionals are now rethinking how to market and sell services. With the right approach, opportunities for client prospects are borderless and available for firms of all sizes, not just the large firms anymore.

How do you see yourself participating in shaping the future of the accounting

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My family is what shaped the focus of my professional life. I started working in my mom's small business when I was 12 years old and quickly learned that I wanted to help people like her in the future. Not only was a part of the inner workings of her business, but also involved in networking events she went to and met many business people that shaped my desire to go into the accounting profession. I originally went into accounting in order to bring back my accounting skills into her business. By the time I got to college, her businesses were no longer open. I always have been looking for ways since to help more small businesses so they don't end up in similar situations because they were in the dark to their financial decisions.

Please share a personal rule or principle that you follow.

Just do it – take advantage of all opportunities, take risks. Don't be afraid of failure, that is when you learn, innovate and figure out how to accomplish all that you want with your career.

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Accounting

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