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Women in Accounting

Jun. 13, 2018

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The accounting profession has wonderful opportunities for women, and we need to create more. As a female leader, you can ascend into positions of influence. While there are approximately equal numbers of men and women in the accounting profession, women represent less than 25% of partners at firms.

I recommend finding effective mentors both inside and outside of your companies, and write down your goals. Look for companies that will help you with your career advancement and respect your time for what you want to do and how you want to work. If you find yourself at a company that needs help with initiatives for women, consider being a voice in your organization to work on improving these initiatives. Find champions that will work with you to implement meaningful programs.

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

The accounting profession has made strides with women in leadership, and more improvements need to be made. The AICPA recently published a CPA Firm Gender Survey that highlights how firms that are succeeding at keeping women in leadership have implemented effective programs for mentoring, sponsorship, gender initiatives, minority initiatives, and combined diversity and inclusion initiatives.

<https://www.aicpa.org/content/dam/aicpa/career/womenintheprofession/download/2017-cpa-firm-gender-survey-brochure.pdf>

Talk about the advancement of women in your company, identify women who can be coached into leadership positions, and develop your succession planning to include women in the future of running your business.

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

My dad's career was in finance, and I grew up looking up to him and wanting to do something similar in my career. When I attended the University of Illinois, I enjoyed

my accountancy classes just as much as my finance classes, so I completed degrees in

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What are you currently reading?

I am reading "The Courage to Take Command: Leadership Lessons from a Military Trailblazer" by Colonel Jill Morgenthaler.

What changes do you foresee in the accounting profession of the near future (3-5 years)?

The skillset of the accounting professional is changing, which we will continue to see reflected on future CPA exams. We will see more people trained deeper in business operations, data analytics, and technology skills. We will compete with more non-traditional accounting professionals, like management consultants, software publishers, and technology service providers. We will need to keep up with the pace of technology and learn how we can best interact with artificial intelligence and automation tools.

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

The accounting profession is capable of achieving monumental goals, including promoting more accounting professionals into top leadership positions, guiding future legislation, and creating opportunities for people to adapt to technology changes in our world.

I feel strongly about giving back to the accounting profession because of how we can help people with financial literacy and critical thinking about their financial and operational strategies. I will be a volunteer and voice of the profession and its initiatives for as long as I am in it. My passions in the profession include promoting diversity and inclusion, perpetuating the value of ethics, and developing strategic skills in others. I teach, write, and serve on committees with these passions in mind.

Describe one person who has been an important mentor to you and how that

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“Let us not grow weary of doing good.” Be the reason other people succeed, and always do the right thing.

[See the full list: 2018 AICPA / CPA Practice Advisor Most Powerful Women in Accounting.](#)

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