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Jennifer Warawa

2018 Most Powerful Women in Accounting

Executive Vice President – Partners, Accountants & Alliances, Sage

What advice would you give to female college students about the opportunities for women in the accounting profession?

I would tell young college students to remember that the sky's the limit. It's hard not to sometimes doubt your ability to succeed because of your experience level, gender

or even nationality. It's important to realize in many cases these are self-imposed

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steps.

This is especially important if the firm leadership is primarily (or entirely) male – women need to know they have a chance at the top.

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

From technology to workflows, the accounting profession is on the leading edge of massive and pervasive change, and as the profession evolves there's enormous business opportunity for early adopters. I love working on the front lines to help move the profession forward and at the end of the day, I love the fact that accountants enable and empower businesses to be successful.

What are you currently reading?

I am currently reading "Selling with Noble Purpose" by Lisa McLeod and I love it. Lisa was a keynote speaker at a recent global Sage partner conference, and I love her book because it explains that if you sell based on a deep mission and purpose, revenue will follow. To me, business is always personal, and this book gets in to the heart of one of the key drivers of great sales performance: making a difference.

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

AI will have a drastic impact on the accounting profession. It's been predicted that by 2030, AI will boost gross domestic product (GDP) worldwide by \$15.7 billion. Our community – accountants – can and must embrace AI to stay relevant in today's changing industrial landscape. By automating parts of the business processes, AI grants accountants more time to serve as a strategic partner to clients and provide data-driven insights to inform business decisions. In the long-term, AI will empower accountants to provide a higher caliber of services to clients.

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

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are learning new skills, finding tools to anticipate trends, and are committed to reorienting their way of doing business. I look forward to continuing to work closely with our Sage partner channel to help guide firms and empower accountants to be successful in light of the changes we are facing in the industry.

Describe one person who has been an important mentor to you and how that person helped shape the direction or focus of your professional life.

I grew up learning the spirit of entrepreneurship from my step-father, Bert. He was a business owner for his entire career, and was not only a teacher through his advice and guidance, but also an example in how he lived his life and ran his business. Through his example I learned 'in the field' sales skills, negotiation tactics and the power of hard work and agility in driving business success. Learning from him and growing up working in a family business in a male-dominated industry (manufacturing) played a major role in who I am today. I am extremely grateful for his mentorship and the opportunity to be part of his business.

Please share a personal rule or principle that you follow.

I firmly (and passionately) believe that the likelihood for an individual or company to be successful is largely dependent on their ability to differentiate themselves from others.

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

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