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Karen Abramson

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There has never been a better time to enter the accounting profession. Accountants have become a critical part of business continuity and success and have truly earned a seat at the table, serving as consultative, strategic partners for both corporations and individuals. Plus, the profession is transforming rapidly as new software tools emerge that streamline and automate workload, creating more opportunity to integrate and balance job and life.

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

One of the ways to change is to have firms focus on succession planning and talent management to make sure there is balanced representation. At Wolters Kluwer one of the things we focus on in our planning is to have equal gender representation at all levels. To ensure that that leadership will be well balanced moving forward we very much believe in giving stretch assignments and roles with operating responsibility.

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

Change is always very exciting to me, especially within a profession that is not used to it. The increasingly complex global economy and regulatory landscape has really changed the game in how accounting professionals rely on expertise, and it is exciting for us to constantly innovate to provide the best possible tools for our customers so that they can deliver value to their clients.

What are you currently reading?

Right now, anything I can get my hands on about Customer Success.

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

We're seeing several trends that will have a big impact on the profession in the next

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

Wolters Kluwer has played such an important role in shaping the profession to-date with CCH Axcess, the profession's first cloud-based, modular tax workflow solution suite operating from a single, core database.

Today accountants are in the midst of a transformation that is reshaping their practice and changing how they work. Technology can be instrumental in helping navigate this challenging landscape and Wolters Kluwer leverages technology to drive innovation. We constantly look at how artificial intelligence, machine learning, robotic process automation and many other technologies can help accounting professionals be more efficient, productive and ready for growth.

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.

Nancy McKinstry, Chairman Wolters Kluwer – One of the best pieces of advice from Nancy was telling me: don't approach your job as work will always come first, or your children will always come first, or your husband will always come first... because you will have a day when one comes first and other days when the other comes first. It's all about balance – find the balance, understand the balance

Please share a personal rule or principle that you follow.

Never ask your team to do more than you are willing to do yourself. This has been my personal and professional philosophy for many years and I find it's one of the best ways to create hard-working, loyal and dedicated teams who will stop at nothing to ensure success. Along the same vein, I also believe it's critical to reward strong performance. Recognition can go a long way in creating a winning culture, increasing job satisfaction and keeping people engaged and focused.

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