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**Gail Perry, CPA**

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The opportunities are limitless as long as you are confident and willing to stand up for yourself. If you encounter obstacles to your success, you should persevere. The firm or company you are working with might not be the perfect fit for you – but there are plenty of other choices. Be creative, take chances, and know that the profession is changing constantly. There will be opportunities tomorrow that don't even exist yet today.

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

The traditional models of accounting firms are changing. No matter the gender, the modern accounting firm is respectful of requests for schedule flexibility and remote working arrangements for all employees. And it's not all about accommodating non-traditional schedules. Today's workers want more challenging projects, better feedback, and an opportunity to make a difference for their clients. Fortunately as technology solutions take over much of the mundane work, accounting firms will have the opportunity to offer these features to their employees.

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

I chose to work in accounting because it was a skill I developed when I was young and was able to parlay that into a career. I stick with it because I like the work, I like the people I work with, I like being able to use my knowledge and skills to help my clients get to a better place financially.

**What book(s), blog(s), podcast(s) do you recommend?**

Books: *Invested* by Danielle Town; anything by Michael Lewis; *Freakonomics* by Stephen Levitt and Stephen Dubner Blogs: Tax Girl by Kelly Erb Podcasts: Invested with Phil and Danielle Town; AICPA Personal Financial Planning.

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I expect to continue reporting on changes and trends, and I am positioning myself to aid in the transition from traditional tax to financial planning services.

**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.**

Ron Eagle – former president of the Information Technology Alliance, and former head of technology solutions for Indianapolis-based George S. Olive & Co., CPAs (now BKD). Ron gave me the encouragement and the tools to move my career in a new direction, into technology training services and technology writing.

**Please share a personal rule or principle that you follow.**

The most obvious and/or simplest answer is not always the best answer. Taking the time to brainstorm and think creatively can result in new and exciting solutions to problems.

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