

163 VOICES

WOMEN IN TECH SPEAK UP



THIS REPORT IS FOR YOU!

We've all seen the stats. Women-led companies get 2% of VC funding. Women leave the tech industry at twice the rate of men (and *not* for family reasons). From unequal pay to delayed promotions, from sexual harassment to abuse, from always being asked to be the note-taker to hearing that achieving diversity in hiring means "lowering the bar" — women in the technology industry don't have it easy. And that's an understatement.

But we're not taking it quietly! Women throughout the industry have been shedding light on the power imbalance: speaking up, speaking out and all around kicking butt (professionally). So TrustRadius is honoring International Women's Day by inviting women in tech to share their accomplishments and their challenges — and make a difference.

At the time we compiled this report, 163 women had taken our survey. (More responses continue to come in.) They collectively spent 38 hours writing 41,319 words about their experiences, advice, inspiration, and challenges. Together, they have 2,110 years of experience in the industry. They helped us donate \$5,000 to Girls in Tech (as a thank-you for taking our survey). Their stories will make your jaw drop. Their stories will inspire you. Their stories will change the way you see the women you work with every day.

Do you want the truth about the challenges women in tech face? ([#yesallwomen](#))

Do you want to know how women are evaluating your company to decide whether they want to work for you?

Do you want advice about how to deal with bias head on?

Do you want to learn about some of the amazing things women in tech are accomplishing?

Then read on. This report is for you.

And if these stories move you, then take a moment to share your own experience. [Take our survey here](#), or share your story with **#WomenInTech**, **#163Voices**, and **#TruthSpeaks**.

WHY DID TRUSTRADIUS WRITE THIS REPORT?

As the most trusted review platform for business technology, why did TrustRadius choose to invest our time in producing this research and writing this report? It's a good question.

At TrustRadius, we live and breathe the technology industry. We are a tech company, our customers are tech vendors, and our review site helps millions of technology buyers each year. Our mission is to bring transparency to the world of business technology. We do this by helping buyers get the full picture of the technology they're evaluating, and helping vendors tell their authentic story through the voice of their customers.

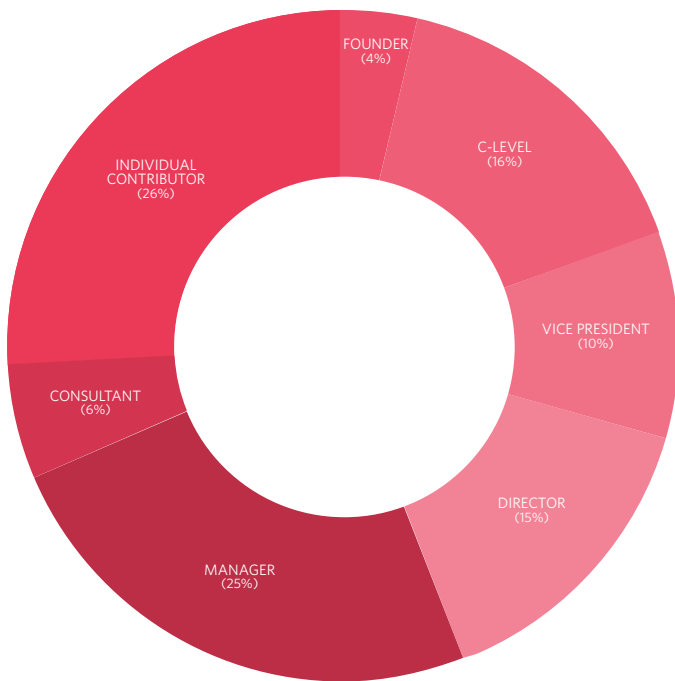
Our focus is on surfacing the truth based on real experiences of real people.

This report is about a different kind of transparency. It's about bringing to light the experiences of women in the industry by giving them a platform to tell their stories. It's about giving women the chance to recognize their own experiences in the stories of others — to know that they aren't alone. It's about giving leaders the opportunity to understand how gender dynamics might be impacting their teams, and how, as leaders, they can — and should — be an agent of change.

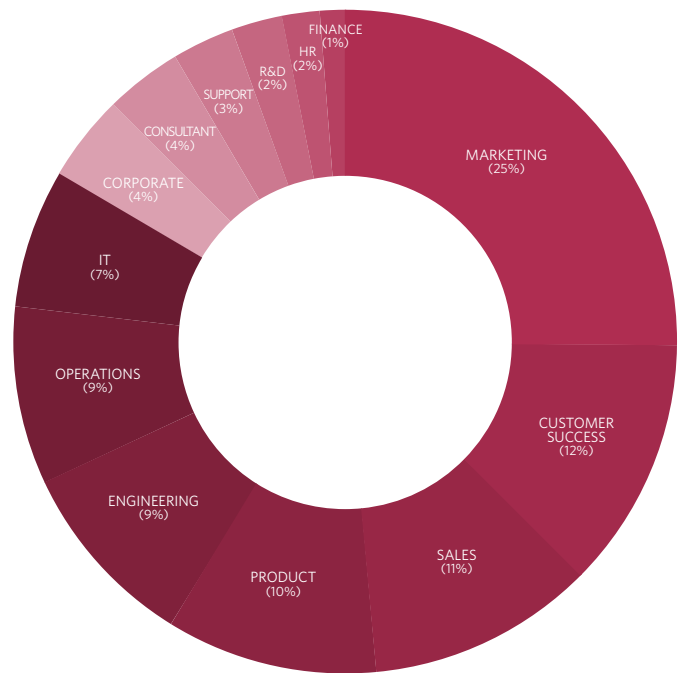
HERE ARE THE 163 VOICES, SPANNING ROLES & GENERATIONS

We had a broad range of participants take our survey. They boasted an average of 13 years of experience in tech, ranging from 1 to 40. They represent all levels, from founder to individual contributor. They represent all organizational functions. 121 of them agreed to be named in the report.

JOB TITLE



DEPARTMENT



We owe a huge thank-you to these women. They took the time to write about their experiences. They showed strength in sharing something very personal, in a professional context. We asked them to answer three out of seven open-text questions — they answered, on average, just over six. They spent an average of 14 minutes on our survey. They invited other women they knew to take the survey.

WHO ARE THESE WOMEN?

Addy Ruth, Redwood Logistics
Aimee Eckhardt, Web.com
Aimee Jurenka, A Place for Mom
and SEO Sustainable
Alicia Chacon Gomez,
HumanizaTech
Alison Harris, Bitdefender
Allison Jones, Cengage
Alyssa Ipatiev, Ivanti
Amanda Rico, Ivanti
Amy Johnson, Clari
Angela Epley, Publicis Sapient
Angela T. Tucci, Apto, Inc.
Anita Tavakley
Anne Hollander, RealPage
Arijita Sethi, Equally
Arpine Babloyan, Verndale
Ashley Humphries, BetterCloud
Audrey Agahan,
Belkin International
Barbary Brunner, Phunware
Becky Russoniello, CoStar Group
Beth Power, The Customer Initiative
Bethany Little, Community Brands
Bianca Kolendo, Indeed
Carly Lucas-Melanson, Indeed
Carolina Armstrong, WeWork
Christina Augustine, BloomReach
Christine Bottagaro, Kapost
Christine Kuecherer,
Papaya Payments
Ciana Abdollahian, Zerto
Claire Morris, ShippingEasy
Claudia Ring
Colleen Butterfield,
Digital Media Solutions
Cynthia Balusek, Revionics, Inc.
Denise van Rossum, Ivanti
Diana Cappello, Clari
Diane Flemming, IBM
Donna Boyer, Stitch Fix
Elissa Fink, Formerly of Tableau;
now Elissa Fink Marketing
Emilia D., Winning by Design
Emily Wilson,
Harvest Moon Creative
Erica Turnlund Schuelke, LinkedIn

Erin Gaschott, Microsoft
Erin Shy, Community Brands
Frances Maier, BabyQuip
Genevieve Wong, Cox Automotive
Ghaz Jahromi, Pod Group
Gillian Farquhar,
Global Head, Customer Marketing
Gillian Ring,
CareStarter Technologies, Inc.
Gwen Schirpik, HireStarter, Inc.
Heather Fralich, Castlight Health
Irene Brinker, Devali Inc
Jennifer Pantin, Sisense
Jennifer Pardi-Cusick,
Gogo Business Aviation
Jessica Davis, Versum Materials
Jessica Groff
Jessica Martinez, Deloitte Digital
Jocelyn Goldfein,
Zetta Venture Partners
Jody Kaminsky, Ultimate Software
Julayne Lee, Lumiata
Julia Floreak, BetterCloud
Julie Hill, WeWork
Julie Riley, Depict Media
Juliette Howland, HomeAway
Karen Kelly, Alchemy Systems
Kariz Matic, Champaign
Katherine Korytkowski, HireStarter
Kim DeCarlis
Kim Diamond
Kim Solow, BetterCloud
Krista Doyle, Content Is Queen, LLC
Krista Glotzbach, Tamr
Kristen May, Ivanti
Kristi Faltorusso, BetterCloud
Lani Rosales, The American Genius
Laura Agarwal, Sumo logic
Lawdan Shojaee, Axosoft
Leah Randazzo, SimpleReach
Lee Pulatie, Ziff Davis
Leela Srinivasan, SurveyMonkey
Linda Oyolu
Lisa Magill, Aleria PBC
Lorna Henri, Mapbox
Lucy Hill, Verys

Madeline Wareing, OutboundEngine
Meg Swanson, Accruent
Melanie Crissey
Melanie Lucas, Gap, Inc
Melissa Crum
Michelle Teed, Compellon
Michelle Williams, Aceable
Misha Burgardt, Aceable
Molly King, RetailMeNot
Monique Morrow,
The VETRI Foundation
Naïke Romain, Localytics
Nicole Drilling, Offers.com
Paige Wirth, OutboundEngine
Patti Soch, Datical
Phoebe Farber, Threat Stack
Preethi, Quest Software
Rachael Ahrens, Blackbaud
Rachel Fitzmaurice, Ratehub.ca
Rana Kahl,
Appirio/Kahl Group International
Rhonda Parouty, Asure Software
Rima, Gresham Tech, CMS
Samantha Starett, SolarWinds
Sandy Carter, Amazon Web Services
Sarah Parker, TrendKite
Sarah Joy Hood, Conde Nast
Sarah Lewis, Ivanti
Sarah Wong, RigUp
Shari Srebnick, Searchmetrics
Sibel Akcekaya,
NobHill Digital Consulting
Sinead McNiel, MongoDB
Sue Farrance, Signable
Sue Lee
Sushma Zoellner
Susie Buehler, Nano
Tami Andrews,
AlienVault an AT&T company
Tanya Kuoni, BetterCloud
Taylor Francis, MongoDB
Wendy M. Pfeiffer, Nutanix
Whitney Magnuson, IBM
Willow Allen, Smartsheet

*... and more, who chose
to remain unnamed*

CHAPTER 1: WOMEN ARE PEOPLE TOO

Shoutout to Betty Friedan! From why they join tech, to what they're proud of, to the career advice they offer: it's always good to remember that women are just regular old humans. Not from Venus, not a different species, and certainly not all the same.

WHY DO WOMEN JOIN TECH?

In short — for the same diverse set of reasons anyone joins tech! Common responses included: high pay, opportunities for growth, the fast pace, solving interesting problems, working with smart people, being good at it, and making an impact. And in some cases, a bit of *serendipity*.

Here's how some of them put it in their own words.

"A fascination for the transformative power of tech, and the desire to work with the (smart) people who wooed me to it."

LEELA SRINIVASAN

CMO, SurveyMonkey

"The excitement, always knowing what cool new thing was happening. The ongoing learning that is required to stay ahead in tech is like nothing else. It keeps you young. :)"

"I was initially attracted to high tech because it was an exciting industry and offered higher pay. I stayed in the industry because I liked the challenge it provided and it paid well."

"Ability to support myself. Fun problems to solve."

"The smarts of the people and technology, the pace of activity and innovation and being on the edge of life changing, enabling technology."

RANA KAHL

Appirio / Kahl Group International

"I know it sounds grandiose, but I saw a job in tech as my 1-way ticket out of a sleepy, uncertain, small life in Nowhere Important, South Carolina."

ASHLEY HUMPHRIES

Senior Functional Analyst, BetterCloud

"money. Money. MONEY!"

"My mother worked in tech and we always had a computer at home long before everyone else did. I loved playing pacman on the computer!"

"I loved that computer programming was all about translating between languages, logic, and building things that could make the world a better place."

"I was attracted to the tech industry because the environment resembles a rocket ship flying towards making a difference. The tech companies that I have worked with enjoy ideas, good or bad, but most of all, making ideas more than just ideas. They are also filled with passionate, positive people that make you want to come to work every day."

EMILY WILSON

Founder, Harvest Moon Creative

"A natural aptitude for tech from a young age."

"Technology is changing so quickly. As soon as you learn something in this industry, it changes, and that is so exciting to be a part of! I can't wait for the day that find my children using a software product and I can say, 'Yeah, mommy helped build that!'"

JULIA FLOREAK

Product Manager, BetterCloud

"High growth. Product Innovation. \$\$\$"

ERICA TURNLUND SCHUELKE

Account Executive, LinkedIn

"The excitement that I get from that moment where the complexity of the technology that I am working with suddenly gets simple."

"It moves a lot faster than the corporate world."

CHRISTINE KUECHERER

VP of Growth & Marketing, Papaya Payments

THE
TECH
INDUSTRY
RESEMBLES
A ROCKET SHIP
FLYING
TOWARDS
MAKING A
DIFFERENCE.

EMILY WILSON, FOUNDER, HARVEST MOON CREATIVE

ONCE THEY'RE IN TECH, HERE'S HOW THEY'RE KICKING @\$\$

We asked women to tell us about a professional accomplishment they're proud of (big or small!). We were inspired by [Girls in Tech's #leaveyourmark campaign](#) — and we encourage you to promote your own accomplishments with [#leaveyourmark](#) and [#IWD2019](#).

For our survey takers, achievements include technical feats, patents, leadership positions, huge revenue gains for their companies, witnessing the growth of those they lead, financial independence, conquering fears, changing lives, helping those in need, building teams, building companies, and public recognition.

Here are some of their proudest moments.

"I am proud of winning Manager of the Year in the first year that I was ever a manager."

"Leading Facebook's 3rd (and finally successful) pivot to mobile."

"I was VP of Engineering and Product at multiple startups and led the development of multiple, global award-winning products."

"Master Inventor. Over 40 patents."

"Took on a position testing ETL and database testing without having done anything like it before. Learned the database schemas, dissected the ETLs and implemented a suite of tests for data integrity and financial accuracy."

JULIETTE HOWLAND

Technical Program Manager, HomeAway

"Launching the Pearson Scholarship for Higher Education, which awards ten \$5,000 scholarship recipients from community colleges and pairs each scholar with a Pearson professional mentor for two years. As a former community college student, I didn't know many professionals. I've since learned how important those connections, and mentorship, can be. I'm proud that my team and I were able to launch this annual scholarship which is still in place today."

ALLISON JONES

VP Customer Advocacy Marketing, Cengage

"Seeing young women I've hired move on to do awesome things — win awards, rotate to a position internationally, flourish in their careers. It's really gratifying!"

"I have built a success support team from the ground up... twice!"

"Ringing the bell on the Nasdaq."

ANGELA T. TUCCI

CEO, Apto, Inc.

"I help[ed] launch a brand new product and get it in the hands of over 1 Million users in under 2 years."

LAWDAN SHOJAEI

CEO, Axosoft

"I launched the Ivanti Women in Technology project. As well as improving internal processes around recruitment and retainment, we have also run lots of inspiring social media campaigns @TheTechieGirls and launched published results from a [women in tech survey where we surveyed over 600 women in the industry](#)"

SARAH LEWIS

Director of Field Marketing, Ivanti

"Having a direct report (who is remote) tell me that I continually make her feel as if she is part of the team and appreciated."

"Being promoted to run my first team; quadrupling my salary in 5 years."

"I grew a company from very small to pretty big — we went public!"

"Being listed as one of the Top 50 Global Women in Technology by Forbes in 2018 is a tremendous recognition as it is the sum of years of consistent impact."

MONIQUE JEANNE MORROW

President, The VETRI Foundation

"Becoming a CIO. And my first CIO gig was at GoPro, one of my favorite consumer brands."

"Becoming Chief Data Officer for a large bank."

"I recently led a major software migration for five major brands onto a single platform. The project pushed me outside of my comfort zone and helped to cultivate my technical skills while building up my self confidence."

"Transitioning from being a middle-school math teacher to working in the tech industry & beginning a new path."

"Working my way up within a company. Buying a house by 23 through my success in tech sales."

"I led the full launch of www.linksys.com/cloudmanager."

AUDREY AGAHAN

Senior Global Marketing Manager, Belkin International

"Linked my electronic health record product to a national file sharing network to coordinate patient care and save lives."

"That I came into this industry at an older age and with zero experience, and quickly made a name for myself."

"One of the companies I worked for was named Microsoft Partner of the Year in our category — I was the one who wrote and submitted the nomination for the award. We got to be recognized on stage and had dinner with Microsoft executives including Steve Ballmer!"

ARPINE BABLOYAN

Director, Acquisition Marketing, Verndale

"Launching Match.com in 1995 and the impact it has had on society."

"Helping a major financial brand get with the times by overhauling their digital presence — winning several awards along the way."

"I successfully sold two multi-million dollar deals into one account."

"Helping thousands of people find meaningful work."

"Last year I became an AWS Certified Solutions Architect — Associate. I have really enjoyed working with cloud technologies, so it is nice to validate my knowledge and skills in that domain."

"In the last few years, I've had the opportunity to speak at conferences and I'm terrified of public speaking. I'm really proud of myself for putting together a talk on my own and presenting to a room full of people, without falling on my face."

NAIKE ROMAIN

Product Marketing Manager, Localytics

"Our team winning the Top Ten Support Sites (industry award)."

"I got to rebuild an entire network from the ground up for a children's home. It enabled them to take better care of the kids."

"Major operational improvements which result in improvements to the bottom line. Delivering 97% renewal rates year after year in one company, reducing churn by 50% in another."

"I automated the writing of unique, informative description blurbs about apartment properties. My program's descriptions are featured on multiple major websites for millions of properties."

"Leading a broad global team to launch an industry-changing BI platform. It took every skill and capability — hard and soft — to get this over the finish line and out into the market, but it reminded me why I love tech and reinforced my greatest strength: the ability to inspire people to action."

CHAPTER 2: DISCRIMINATION IS VERY REAL

Women are attracted to tech for many of the same reasons as anyone else, and they make contributions anyone would be proud of. But we live in a gendered society, and the unequal treatment women face in professional environments is real. This is backed by research. Lots of it.

We invited women to tell a story about a time they faced discrimination or a unique challenge as a woman in tech. Here are 28 different types of discrimination women in tech are up against, and stories from some of the brave women who spoke up about their experiences. Their stories speak for themselves.



UNEQUAL PAY

"There was a time when I found out that I was making \$20k less per year than my male colleagues with equivalent experience and roles. The new CEO remedied that, made sure there was more equality across genders."

"In a former tech job, I found out that I was making 20% and 40% less than 2 of my lesser-qualified male colleagues. I was shocked. When I took the job, I negotiated a package that felt quite good to me and could not believe that I was paid so much less than two men who joined the team after I did and with about half as much experience."

"I have consistently seen pay discrimination in my salary vs. my male counterparts in the same or similar role."

"I was underpaid for 8 years at my last job because I was an immigrant and a girl. When I changed jobs finally I got paid 2 times the salary."

"Not really unique but below average pay compared to male colleagues."

"In between role transitions I was doing the work for both roles with no monetary contribution. I was told by my male authorities not to even think about bringing up the lack of pay and to not create drama in the culture. I felt in that moment that I was being targeted as a woman who complains, when in reality, I would have loved to had an open conversation about my expectations as well as theirs and come to a mutual agreement. I know my male counterparts would have been treated with that respect."

"No bonus or pay raise for 4 years just because I went on maternity leave for 9 months!"

BEING PASSED UP FOR A PROMOTION BASED ON YOUR GENDER

"Early in my career, a new role was being created in my organization and it was my next step. In my 1:1 with

my boss I told him I was interested and he said that he was only allowed to submit one from his team and he chose one of my peers due to experience. I informed him that not only did I have more experience in this field but also have been at this level over a year longer than my male peer. He then said that since I was running most of the highly visible and strategic transformations that there would be no one who could take them over if I were to leave. Last, said that I still needed to work on being softer!

This was typical! I went to a female executive who I had built a strong relationship with to let her know I was interested. Within 24 hours I was a candidate. My boss lied about only being able to refer one candidate and I got the job!!!"

RHONDA PAROUTY

COO, Asure Software

"There was a time in my career that a male counterpart was chosen for a project over me. He had no marketing experience and was fresh out of college. In fact his only qualifications were he was part of a society. I quickly learned that it was a boy's club and that it had nothing to do with me."

MELISSA CRUM

"The CEO of my last co was talking about "work/life" balance, and as a man with a wife who doesn't work, he extolled several examples of very fit, active men at the co who were "shining examples" of people who found their balance, and again, either single or with wives at home men. I felt he did not promote me (after 3 1/2 yrs) to a VP level as I am not perfectly fit and just like his role models. He never promoted anyone who wasn't "like him". This didn't really resonate deeply with me until I left the firm."

"The company I was working for restructured the development team tiers for appearances to prospective buyers. I was one of 3 senior developers — all specializing in different areas — and they choose to promote the 2 males and force me to report to my what was equal with no other explanation than we needed to."

Being Passed Up for a Promotion

“While working for a previous tech company, I understood the C-Level was a ‘boys club’. The leadership staff was all men and no women. This made it tough to have any say while trying to pitch my projects when getting a seat at the table was all reflective of my gender, not my brains, or my ideas. It made it tougher for me to move up the career ladder at that company. When I was up for a promotion, I asked my boss for ways to improve myself and goals to get myself closer to being the person landing this role. Each time I checked in on my progress he said that I was doing great and had nothing to add. In the end, I was passed up because of my ‘masculine energy’ while replaced by an alpha-male, who was my boss’ close friend. It became clear that I was never getting this role no matter how much I improved myself or made myself the ‘ideal candidate’ because I was a woman.”

EMILY WILSON

Founder, Harvest Moon Creative

“I’ve been pulled off projects that I start and lead (too junior, not enough experience, doesn’t understand how we do things all given as reasons — even after 15 years of experience) and denied promotions because ‘other women’ would be jealous and will want what I’m getting OR because I don’t ‘put myself out there enough’ and the organization ‘lacks confidence’ in already proven skillset.”

... OR BEING OFFERED A PROMOTION

BASED ON YOUR GENDER

“When I moved to Austin from DC and finally decided to jump into the software world, I was fortunate to land a Director-level job leading a team who delivered digital services using the company’s software platform. After 2-3 months, a male VP told me he wanted to provide ‘affirmative action’ status to me because there were not enough female directors in the company, or in software companies in Texas for that matter, and he wanted to sponsor me into a VP role more quickly. I said, no thanks, I want to earn my spot, I was pretty offended and it wasn’t brought up again. I have many other stories...”

BETHANY LITTLE

EVP & General Manager, Community Brands

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

“I had a customer who crossed the line and made me feel that I should give in to his advances. I alerted my management and asked to be removed from the client.”

“A former supervisor asked me what exactly I would do for a raise during a performance review held after work hours in a hotel lobby while on the road on a job location.”

“On one occasion I was asked by a customer if my hourly rate extended into the evening hours as well. I was very fortunate to be with a group of people who supported me and did not tolerate that behavior/comment. However, I was very worried about the impact that situation would have on my career even though I hadn’t done anything.”

A top executive asked me into his office after hours to tell me that he thought he was in love with me and wanted to have an affair with me. He said he saw what the CEO had with a coworker and felt he deserved the same. This was in no way mutual nor was it OK. I had to go to HR to get him to stop talking to me.

... AND OTHER SIGNS OF FEMALE OBJECTIFICATION

“Suggestion that I should hire a gal because of her great legs.”

“Throughout my years in the tech industry, I routinely felt like my voice was not heard as a woman. I found it challenging to work in an environment where male jokes, references, and analogies were constantly the norm. For example, I recently sat in a meeting where a male VP compared closing a big deal to “bedding a woman” which I found inappropriate and ridiculous. As the only woman in the room, it was very uncomfortable as all of the men laughed, and then immediately looked at me to see what my response would be.”

“Also, at conferences when men becoming overly comfortable telling you how great we look is nothing short of disgusting — this is a professional environment!”

...And Other Signs of Female Objectification

"I am lucky to not have personally endured many moments of discrimination, but one story that stands out to me the most was while supporting a Sales team as an Operations professional, I was in a conversation about team recruiting strategy. During this conversation the sales leaders that were participating spoke casually about how hiring beautiful women for the sales team was a great strategy because even if they weren't talented, they'd be eye-candy to keep the sales guys entertained and motivated. Needless to say I was disgusted, made that known, and then was brushed off as too sensitive. It bothers me to this day that these men truly held this belief and stuck to their guns when confronted by me. Here's hoping they've evolved since then."

CLAIRE MORRIS

VP of CS, ShippingEasy

"Call out things you see happening that are flat out wrong — when the token 'Can you take notes' is always a woman, never a man. When male colleagues make inappropriate comments about another woman you work with, or when your boss tells you not to wear anything that exposes your shoulders or knees, because it is distracting to men in the office, don't nod or ignore it. And yes, all of those things happened to me."

"My CEO and a client suggested that we have our work lunch at a bar/restaurant that was famous for having young, attractive women wearing novelty sexy outfits while serving cold beer; it was impossible to focus knowing that my client thought this was an appropriate place for doing business and even worse that my CEO didn't suggest an alternative location"

"I... found out that [someone], along with several other men in the group, had formed a chat channel dedicated to discussing my appearance and dateability."

A DRESS CODE JUST FOR YOU

"Dress codes. While in New York I was told that I needed to wear stockings under my slacks or I would be denied access to my office. I was traveling on business from San Francisco (the land of jeans and hoodies) to New York (apparently the land of the clothing monitors) and the team leader wanted to look at my ankles to see if I was wearing stockings. Stockings have nothing to do with my ability to perform my job, nor were we informed of this unique dress code prior to the three day trip. I was actually requested to go to the department store and purchase stockings before I was allowed to do my job."

Side Note: Here is this person's strategy for assessing company culture: "I look at the desks, do they have pictures of family, do they have personal items at their

work space, are the people themselves a representation of the population, are there men and women talking in the hallways, are women free to wear their hair naturally... are they wearing stockings?? :D"

A COMMUNICATION STANDARD JUST FOR YOU

"I often feel that men give blunt, short replies in email discussions. When I've done it, I've often been chastised. Just b/c women tend to be more gentle and/or wordy in their responses doesn't mean short, direct answers from a woman are disrespectful."

"Unique challenge is how women communicate in a bro-culture that exists in tech."

"My style of collaboration and consensus building isn't appreciated in the same way that strong voices and loud opinions are."

"While working at a previous startup, one of the founders was particularly sensitive to how I communicated to him over email. One day he called me into the conference room and lectured me on disrespecting him. I was so confused. When I asked for specific examples, he referenced an email I had sent him earlier that week. He had asked a question and I had written a very quick, short email back with the answer. This email, according to him, should have started with a friendly greeting, could have asked him how he was doing that day, and needed to be written with a better tone. As the only woman in the office, I was 100% certain that nobody else was getting lectures about how they deliver accurate and timely responses to questions. In case you're wondering, I did not change how I communicate as a result of this conversation."

LISA MAGILL

Co-Founder, Aleria PBC

"I was in a product review meeting where the product team and CTO were advocating a tier 1 launch for something I deemed a feature release. As the CMO, it was ultimately my call. During the meeting the CTO took me to task in a public and mean way saying 'if you think this is just a feature release, then you clearly don't get it'. Rather than get into a public debate with 20+ people in the room, I said 'You're right, I may not get it. Let's have an offline discussion where you can open my eyes and perhaps I'll change my opinion'. This completely diffused the situation and we were able to move on and complete the meeting. Afterwards, several people dropped by my office to say that they thought the CTO was completely out of line and that I had handled him, and the situation, with great professionalism. I can't help think that the situation would never have come up if I were a man. I also believe that if I had chosen to have a public debate with the CTO, it would have been labeled with negative terms like 'bitchy and aggressive' whereas a man would've been 'standing his ground'."

... & OTHER DOUBLE-STANDARD PERSONALITY EXPECTATIONS

"I can remember a time where I disagreed with the direction of a project and asked the leader of my team if he had considered approaching it another way. He didn't appreciate being questioned and angrily left the room. He also used that interaction to label me as "angry" and push back a promotion my direct manager had offered. When I asked my male peers about their relationship with this VP, they all said they were able to push back in meetings and never had him react that way. I was worried, disappointed, and frankly, hurt. Like a lot of black women, building up competencies and achievements feels like a bit of a shield, so I was caught off guard when my interaction with a leader at the company went so poorly. His feedback after the fact was that I was 'sassy' for questioning him and that I should watch my tone and delivery, regardless of my intent. Having my promotion derailed felt like a major set back, but I stayed focused and did my best to prove that I was a valuable member of the team."

NAIKE ROMAIN

Product Marketing Manager, Localytics

"I work for a company that — like many tech companies — is very male dominated with very few women in high profile leadership positions. Receiving constructive feedback about my 'leadership style' vs. men being celebrated for the same qualities is a regular occurrence."

"In meetings I have been told I am emotional (when for the same behavior men are called passionate)."

"I have never had a performance review without personality related feedback (e.g., being told I am too intimidating, interrupt people too much, too abrasive in style). Everyone agrees I am not selfish or political and that my intentions are to get best outcomes — the feedback is that people's feelings are hurt by me. In

essence, I'm competent just not likable. I've always embraced this feedback, really cared that I was hurting others, and done my best to overinvest in relationships and demonstrating respect to teammates who didn't always get what they wanted when my teams made forward progress. But, I have always wondered, and I will never know, if they would have been offended by my behavior if I were male."

"I've been labeled 'dramatic' or 'crazy' more times than I can count because of my ambition. At my last company, I was a consistent #1 performer but was told that I have nothing to share with the rest of the organization because 'I was too OCD or way too far outside the norm.'"

ERICA TURNLUND SCHUELKE

Account Executive, LinkedIn

"I was once told during a performance review that they would typically give a 4/5 for a specific category but they rounded up as "they didn't want me to cry like women tend to do". I was the highest performing member of the team at that time."

COLLEEN BUTTERFIELD

Director of Sales, Digital Media Solutions

ALWAYS THE CONFIDENCE FEEDBACK

"People have always assumed I am the secretary. I feel I had to work twice as hard for my accomplishments. I was told once I didn't get promoted because I am not confident enough and I say like too much."

I'VE BEEN
LABELED
'DRAMATIC'
'CRAZY'
MORE TIMES
THAN I CAN
COUNT
BECAUSE OF
MY AMBITION

ERICA TURNLUND SCHUELKE, ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE, LINKEDIN

Always the Confidence Feedback

"I've had multiple CEOs tell me to 'be more confident'. This is unhelpful advice. Confidence comes from success and experience, so more mentoring and exposure would have helped with that. My most recent CEO didn't tell me to be more confident, instead he's given me confidence by offering responsibility and the autonomy I needed to achieve bigger goals."

PRONOUN PROBLEMS

"Often times when speaking with hiring managers/potential clients they refer to characteristics of their ideal hire or candidate, almost always using the pronouns 'he/him'. It's very common for hiring managers to assume that their next hires will be males."

"Everyday pronoun use ('Mr Customer' examples), 'girls' as reference to professional women. Fortunately becoming more rare, but I'm not shy about correcting."

CHRISTINE BOTTAGARO

CMO, Kapost

... AND OTHER FORMS OF DISRESPECTFUL LANGUAGE

"In board meetings, a board member and CEO of several large reputable companies repeatedly called me 'kid' as a term of endearment. I don't think he was trying to be disrespectful at all, it was very fatherly. However, the younger men in the room were called by their first names."

"The number of times I've been called 'sweetie', 'honey', 'angel', and others in a professional setting — if I had a dime for every time that's happened, from the most conservative to most progressive companies, I'd have my own venture fund."

"When faced with a challenging task that I had reservations about, I was once asked if I would be 'naughty or nice', which is typically only said to women. I thought it was very inappropriate."

BEING THE ONLY WOMAN

"Constantly being the only woman on the board, or at the leadership table wears on you — as you not only

have to do your functional role but ensure that you are being a loud persuasive voice to ensure that diversity of thought and hiring continues within a company."

"Never seeing a woman in engineering in a position of power anywhere I've worked. Being the only woman in the office and being seated by the entrance to the office to look like I was the secretary."

LEE PULATIE

Engineering Manager, Ziff Davis

"I am regularly in meetings with external executives and am the only woman present. A significant portion of the small talk centers around sports, how much their wives hate their travel schedule, or other traditional male dominated topics. Often something slightly off-color will be said and the man saying the comment in the room will turn to me and say 'sorry, I hope that isn't offensive' which is an additional way of singling me out as 'different'."

"Dudes talking about dude stuff and then turning to me like 'you wouldn't know'."

ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT HOME AND FAMILY

"Raising capital as a 100% female founded deep tech startup is not easy — I seem to get a lot of questions that I'm sure are not being asked of my male counterparts. My favorite was, 'So what does your husband do for a living that allows you to pursue your passions?' Do you think Steve Jobs was asked about how his wife would support him while he 'pursued his passions'? The technology my company is developing reads the cardiovascular, nervous and respiratory systems from garment based devices. We're on a mission to save lives — not opening an Etsy shop to sell doilies!"

IRENE BRINKER

CEO/Co-Founder, Devali Inc

"I've been yelled at more times than are acceptable. I've had the big and small sighs at needing to care for my children during the workday. These add up to feelings of insecurity, not good enough, not focused enough, not dedicated enough."

Assumptions About Home and Family

"When I was pregnant with my first and told my boss, I was careful to put together a highly detailed plan for my absence so that none of my work would collapse in my absence. In every one of our 1:1's he would ask about my 'plans for leave' and I'd point to the document and explain how I'd identified people to take over the items that were urgent, deprioritized some, etc and that everyone involved was onboard. Then I'd ask him what he was concerned about and he couldn't quite tell me. Then, finally, after months of this conversation he said something like 'well, you never know what you'll decide after you have the baby' and I realized he was worried I wouldn't come back to work. I assured him I'd be back and that I was the primary breadwinner in our household and that seemed to alleviate his concerns. Later when I thought about it, though, I realized he would never have had this conversation with a man. He'd have assumed the man was committed to working after having a child."

"Was asked if I was ready to work longer hours and harder (to be a VP) and it was OK if I didn't want to and be the 'primary caretaker'."

"I was in the lobby of a customer with my new boss the VP of Sales. He asked me how old I was and I said, '34'. He said, 'don't you think it's time you started a family?' (He wanted to hire his friend into my role.) That incident was just the top of the iceberg."

"I've also been told that if I wanted to have another baby, 'just don't do it this year'. It's astounding. But, I wouldn't ever let that hold me back. Not a chance."

... OR GETTING JUDGED FROM THE OTHER SIDE

"Surprisingly, most of my challenges as a working woman came not from work but from the 'other side' — getting judgmental comments from other moms about not spending enough time with my kid or just working in general, as if it meant that I neglected my child."

ARPINE BABLOYAN

Director, Acquisition Marketing, Verndale

HE-PEATING

"I sat in a meeting where I was the only woman with about 10 men. Every time I presented an idea or thought, they verbally or through facial expressions and body language discounted it. Then literally a minute later, one of the men would restate what I had just said and the entire room thought the idea was brilliant. This happened 3 times in this one meeting. I thought I was going insane."

"Consistently, I have experienced men telling me that I talk too much but the reality is I honestly am only keeping up with them. I've also shared ideas and not get a reaction; then 10 minutes later, a guy says the same thing and it's brilliant."

"A couple of years ago I was the only woman in a 8 or 9 person team. It was *almost* comical how often I would suggest a process improvement or initiative and was shut down only to have one of my male colleagues suggest the exact same concept within minutes and get praise."

BIANCA KOLENDO

Search Quality Team Lead, Indeed

"I've been in situations where either I or another female colleague has presented an idea to a client, been ignored or given pushback, and then within the same meeting a male colleague/superior sharing the same exact idea to the client's satisfaction."

... AND OTHERWISE NOT BEING HEARD

"I had a major role working with the dev team on understanding customer needs, when voiced these needs I was not taken seriously and only upon roll out was my opinion verified but never verbally told 'you know you were right'. This has happened endless times in my career."

TEN
MINUTES
LATER...

A GUY
SAYS

**THE SAME
THING**

AND
IT'S BRILLIANT

...And Otherwise Not Being Heard

"...the recurring theme I still see, even now as a Director, is constantly being talked over, or ignored when I do speak. I am constantly in meetings with men, where I am typically the only woman in the room. Even if it's my meeting, when I am talking and looking around the room, attempting to make eye contact, most of the men in the room will be looking at their phones, computers, or actively typing and doing something else. I thought I was being paranoid for a long time, until I started calling on people and asking 'Do you agree?' or 'What's your opinion?' When I realized they always responded with a variety of 'I'm sorry, I was distracted for a second, can you repeat that?' I knew I wasn't, in fact, paranoid, but actually being ignored, consistently. When my male peers speak, the others look up, nod their heads and verbalize what is usually agreement. It is absolutely infuriating and on a daily basis it takes a lot of restraint not to start yelling or doing something that might be considered 'emotional' like crying, after yet another meeting where I spent hours researching, analyzing and creating a presentation goes almost wholly unnoticed."

BEING OUTRIGHT IGNORED

"I once had my Director (male) sit in on a sales pitch. I lead the entire pitch and pricing conversation, and the male prospect asked questions only directed at my male Director. He didn't feel comfortable with a female selling to him."

"I had a great working relationship with our VP of Engineering. A director was hired under him, and I reported to him. As soon as the VP left the company, the director started ignoring me in meetings, dismissing my comments and even kicking my chair in meetings with the other two managers. I was ready to quit, but three coworkers, all male, insisted I go to HR and report him. I did — turns out he was doing the same to 3 other women, include the HR person and a Sr. VP."

JULIETTE HOWLAND

Technical Program Manager, HomeAway

BEING INTERRUPTED

"I had trouble with interruptions. I knew I was interrupted more than my male co-workers were, but I never thought it would be a *silencing* interruption. I'd never experienced interruptions coming from the intention to silence me, but the first time it happened to me — I didn't handle it well."

I was the sole female at a very large table full of men talking about a technical issue. I had a counterpoint, something that we needed to consider, before making a decision. Five to seven (I don't even remember now) assumed that a) I was off topic or b) they knew what I was going to say and that didn't matter. All those people took turns interrupting me literally between each word in my sentence to tell me either a) or b) and they were wrong. They didn't know what I was going to say because they refused to let me finish. I felt embarrassed to be berated in front of all of these colleagues, frustrated to be actively silenced from multiple people, and hurt because this was supposed to be a place that didn't happen.

I never got to finish my sentence because by the time that a male ally realized what was happening and opened up the floor to me, I was already to the point of tears and peak frustration. I just shut down. I excused myself from the room and went to cry in the bathroom.

The positive bookend to this story is that I was able to communicate this as a point of improvement for our business. People and Culture heard my story and paid to have a wonderful communication coach come in to teach women (by opt in) how to deal with interrupters — excited, accidental, and malicious. Everyone, including myself, really got to benefit from this training because of the negative experience I had."

NOT BEING TRUSTED

"It happens constantly when partners or customers go back to my boss to get a second confirmation regarding the information they are seeking."

"In a previous role, my direct management treated me differently than my male counterpart on a regular basis. A minor example, requiring me to be in the office and visible whereas my male counterpart was allowed the freedom to work remotely at any time; despite living much farther than my male counterpart."

SAMANTHA STARETT

Salesforce Administrator, SolarWinds

BEING MINIMIZED

"I've been in client meetings (when I worked in an agency setting) where the client said 'oh look at that, you've got a girl!', like I was just some kind of token."

Being Minimized

"I have been told that some of my accomplishments were because I was a 'cute young girl'."

JESSICA GROFF

"I was the only girl in a college engineering class. After our exams were graded, the professor would hold up my exam and show the entire class (of young men). 'Let's see how many of you beat the girl.' As he handed out their exams, he would announce either 'Ha! The girl beat you.' or 'Very nice! You beat the girl!'"

BEING EXCLUDED

"... most people on the leadership team are older men. The culture that creates is one in which men feel comfortable socially engaging with leaders and finding mentors whereas younger women are isolated and left out of social interactions that often have professional implications."

"In this #metoo era, I actually find that male colleagues are less inclined to engage me in conversation and can sometimes be a bit standoffish. I fear that because I am a woman that they are 'afraid' that any engagement that I could possibly perceive as offensive would result in some negative backlash for them. I can understand their concerns but I feel more excluded than I had previously as a woman."

"Several years ago my management team was discussing a major issue which included a heated debate. We took a break and, when everyone came back, a decision had been made. Unfortunately, the men had continued the discussion in the Men's Room. As the lone female on the team, my voice wasn't heard. I did point this out but the heat was over and a decision had been made without me."

PATTI SOCH
CFO, Datical

... OR HAVING TO GO TO GREAT LENGTHS NOT TO BE EXCLUDED

"I have been in tech for 25+ years and have been to more strip clubs than I can count in order to 'fit in

with the team' and have multiple times been hit on in order to receive a promotion."

ASSUMPTIONS THAT YOU'RE NOT A LEADER

"As a female CEO, every meeting outside of my office starts with discrimination. 'Oh, you are the CEO?' most will blurt out."

LAWDAN SHOJAE
CEO, Axosoft

"While working at a small company, I was the only programmer and worked closely with a (male) product manager. Others in the company persistently assumed that this coworker was my boss, and that he was writing code. It was a fairly political work environment, so I ended up devoting a lot of energy to reclaiming credit for my work while trying not to come off as petty or competitive."

"I was invited to an after work event to celebrate a project team I was on. Spouses were invited. I was the only woman on the team (not unusual), and had several situations where the spouses of my peers asked my husband what he did for the company. 'Nothing at all,' was his reply. The first time was amusing. The second time was funny. The third time made me wonder what decade I was living in."

CYNTHIA BALUSEK
Senior Director, Global Customer Support, Revionics, Inc.

ASSUMPTIONS THAT YOU'RE NOT CAPABLE

"Back when working for an agency, I had a client ask to work with a man because he didn't think I could do the job."

"While working in tech phone support, users not trusting my answers, pushing back and worse asking for tech support, once I answer and being really surprised that I was the actual tech support."

THE
CLIENT
SAID
"OH
LOOK
AT THAT,
YOU'VE
GOT A GIRL!"

Assumptions You're Not Capable

"Early on in my career, I had men ask if I 'even knew what we did here' or understood our 'complicated software products'."

ASSUMPTIONS THAT YOU'RE NOT TECHNICAL

"As a woman in tech, we have to continuously prove ourselves of our capabilities... more so than men to overcome unconscious bias. As an example, at an industry dinner, rather than being asked what I do, I'm asked if I'm in marketing or HR. Once I share I run engineering, I have to elaborate to demonstrate that I'm a technically competent leader."

"Once I was in a room with my executive team while serving as Head of Product. Another executive asked a technical question related to our customers. I began to answer. After I finished a well articulated and technically correct answer, he responded 'well, I'll defer to the technical folks' and pointed to the (male) head of R&D. I replied to him that 'I'm right here' and fortunately the head of R&D backed me up 100%."

"I am often asked to staff my company's booths at major industry trade shows. Several times I have been asked by men if I am hired help or if I actually know what my company does. I am happy I work for a company that doesn't hire promo models to work at shows and staffs the booth with women who are knowledgeable and product but still disheartening to see that men in the industry make the assumption if you are a woman, you can't understand technology"

CIANA ABDOLLAHIAN

Senior Manager, Customer Programs, Zerto

"I don't have a typical 'engineering' or 'tech' background on my resume. I wasn't invited to 'technology' meetings, despite that I ran IT for the company."

"When I got my first job, I was the only technician who was a woman. My boss gave me the documentation chores, instead of the really cool stuff like troubleshooting or project developments. Since I've always been very curious, I always asked my coworkers to join them on these jobs. Time passed, and my boss treated me as an equal and apologized to me for not believing in me at first."

ALICIA CHACON GOMEZ

Consultant, HumanizaTech

"As a woman with an interest but just burgeoning ability to code, I was first laughed at when I expressed interest in moving into tech, by my closest friends and family. Later, when I showed aptitude and wanted to grow, the male leadership at my company refused to let me grow, refused to give me opportunities I was more than qualified for, took credit for my work and ideas, and gave opportunities I was working towards to men with less interest and experience."

"A few years ago, while visiting a hackerspace in San Francisco I was browsing the bookshelf and someone on the nearby couch said "oh, those are mostly technical books". I said "OK" and continued browsing. Then, he repeated himself, a little louder this time. I thanked him for his repeat note and told him I was looking for a book on Electrical Engineering basics for a personal project I was working on. Before he could interrupt me with how complex that might be I went on to tell him that my technical skills were really more on computer programming and actually pretty old. His demeanor changed and it appeared that I was suddenly more interesting to him! We chatted another 5 minutes during which time he mentioned that he could learn a lot of technical skills from me and had he not been using THAT line to work his way up to asking me on a date, I would have probably been able to forgive the first few minutes more easily. Next!"

"[at networking events] I've had men spend several minutes explaining to me what they do for a job when I've managed that function or role before."

CYNTHIA BALUSEK

Sr. Director, Global Customer Support, Revionics, Inc.

A DISPROPORTIONATE SHARE OF THE UNDERVALUED WORK

"Being in a meeting early in my career as the only woman in the room and asked to take the notes for the meeting. As I was one of the subject matter experts, I pushed back with a request that the person who calls the meeting should be responsible for the note-taking with a further agreement to round-robin this action with the team."

MONIQUE MORROW

President, The VETRI Foundation

A Disproportionate Share of the Undervalued Work

“At two companies I’ve been asked to join the ‘diversity committee’ without any additional compensation. It always feels like an obligation and I just don’t have the emotional energy for it.”

“I’ve been asked if I made the coffee in a boardroom at the Driskill hotel in Austin (which, clearly I don’t work there) by a board member who knew me! That was a small thing but ridiculous.”

“A great example is expecting a woman to clean up after a meeting. If I really want to clean it up, rather than just cleaning it up myself (which I did for most of my career), I will say, hey guys, it’s not fair to leave a room a mess for the next team. Let’s ALL clean this up together. If you simply express the expectation, the guys will jump in and help.”

ULTIMATELY, BEING FIRED OR NOT HIRED

“In early days of being a tech recruiter at [Company], my (male) boss came into my office one day and said, ‘You aren’t going to like what I have to say, but I need you to just deal with it. [Name] walked into one of the training programs and saw a lot of women and freaked out, so we need to stop hiring women for a little while.’”

“Ageism. My president told me when he fired me that he wanted some fresh blood.”

EMILIA D.

Partner, Winning by Design

“When I returned to full time development after being a stay at home mom for 15 years I was not a traditional applicant. Some companies excluded me automatically due to my lack of recent experience. It was tough finding a company willing to look past my career break and understand my potential.”

KRISTEN MAY

Software Developer, Ivanti

“As a transgender woman, I was laid off within eight months after coming out. I had to relocate my life to another state to feel more safe.”

CHAPTER 3: WOMEN HAVE SOME TRICKS UP THEIR SLEEVES

(THAT WE CAN ALL LEARN FROM)

Clearly women in tech face tricky situations, from annoying to horrifying to debilitating. How do they deal with bias in the moment? And how do they assess companies before they join, to avoid those situations as best they can?

If you're a woman in tech, read on for tips and strategies to try out. If you are a company leader, this is a great section to help you:

- > Understand how your female employees are navigating company dynamics
- > Learn how female candidates are evaluating you
- > ... and why they might not be joining your team!



STRATEGIES FOR CALLING OUT BIAS AT WORK

Women have vastly different approaches for this. There is no one “right” tack to take. It varies based on who you are, what you’re comfortable with, and what context you’re in.

Here are some of their insights.

BE DIRECT

“Call it like it is- straight and to the point and as soon as it happens, no bullshit. This is the only way things can change — but also always offer a solution, it’s not healthy or beneficial to just whine and complain.”

“Continuing to self advocate. ‘I literally just said that. That’s what I did.’ Also the advice I give to my employee is to highlight the work you do that is considered ‘female work’ as something you try to do and work hard at (e.g. communication and cross department collaboration). Sometimes men supervisors only look for characteristics they’re good at and won’t recognize different work.”

LEE PULATIE

Engineering Manager, Ziff Davis

SKIP THE EMOTION

“Speak up but in a calm way without an emotive slant.”

SUE FARRANCE

Head of Customer Success, Signable

IN PUBLIC

“My strategy is direct and often public. One time when I was promoted, the CEO announced it at a company meeting. Instead of highlighting my actual accomplishments, he pointed out my clothing and how my glasses match my dress.

When I got the mic I thanked him and then reminded everyone that I also have 20 years of experience, an MBA, and have improved retention x% in the last 3 years. I also spoke with the CEO later and told him his comments undermined my credibility in the workplace.”

BETH POWER

Owner, The Customer Initiative

... OR IN PRIVATE

“Addressing it one on one with each person, in private, after I see something that bothers me. Not just pointing it out but coming with a suggestion to correct it.”

“In my experience, one on one situations are best for calling out bias. This eliminates a lot of defensive behavior and the need to save face. It also lets me ‘workshop’ the situation with the offender, asking questions such as ‘what would you have said if the situation involved X instead of Y’ to truly make someone think.”

TRY TO PREVENT A DEFENSIVE REACTION

“Quiet conversations that attempt to teach new behaviors while also leaving everyone with their dignity.”

“I learned from a black manager years ago to use the phrase, ‘I’m not sure how I feel about...’ as it calls out bias, unconscious or not, and aims to open up constructive dialogue. Also, starting with ‘My experience with...’ reduces the need for others to become defensive and shut down the conversation.”

JULAYNE LEE

Director of Business Operations & Compliance, Lumiata

“I really like to get to know the people around me. When you understand a person, then bias becomes more clear and easier to have conversations about.”

JULIA FLOREAK

Product Manager, BetterCloud

Try to Prevent a Defensive Reaction

"I prefer to tackle things privately, directly, and trying to understand their perspective rather than correcting someone. BULLYING SOMEONE doesn't fix a bias, it just shuts them up around you. Finding the middle ground is an actual fix."

LANI ROSALES

COO, The American Genius

"I like to start from a concept known as unconditional positive regard, which assumes everyone around you is worthy of your respect. I think calling out bias starts with assuming people are inherently good, sharing your surprise with their behavior and compassionately asking them to address their behavior. It doesn't always work, sometimes I'm just mad, but I think that's a good framework."

BE VULNERABLE

"I call it out directly, in the moment, as I see it and also let people know that I'm also personally learning how to overcome bias myself; we can learn and get better together and hold each other accountable — nobody's perfect!"

ENCOURAGE CONTINUOUS LEARNING

"I'd call it 'lending perspective' rather than calling it out — which is frustrating but effective. The adage 'if you see something, say something' applies well here, but the delivery of the message is important. Get straight to the heart of what's driving the bias with a couple introspective questions, consider the answer, then lend a new perspective. I often prefer to do this 1 on 1, but sometimes the group setting can be more effective to talk it through. And it's rarely just one conversation — it's tough to expect change in one swoop, so it's a continual check-in. Is it uncomfortable? Yes, every time. But 95% of the time, the outcome is better than allowing the bias to fester."

"Talking to my team about it proactively — making sure we keep learning about unconscious bias or unintentional exclusion. Keeping an open dialog where we can discuss it in a safe and judgement free environment."

"Always speak the truth clearly, but remain open to a path forward. Ultimately, the only path forward in any conflict begins with one party being willing to show grace to the other."

TURN IT ON ITS HEAD

"I literally just say 'That's language that's usually used for 'x' group and not 'y'. What's the real concern here?'"

"It depends. If it's a small microaggression like someone saying some flippant, sexist thing such as 'I've got to go home early for date night, you know the old ball and chain' says so!', I'll pretend I don't understand and ask them to explain. It's pretty amazing to see how that can elicit an embarrassed response and make someone see how ridiculous they sound. If it's big — I call it out intentionally. I've been known to thank someone for mansplaining something to me. I've also been known to stop a room during a meeting and ask a woman her opinion of she's been quiet in a sea of male voices. I have no problem calling things right out."

"I usually phrase 'call outs' as a questions because I've found that leads to a better conversations than accusatory statements. However, it depends on the scenario.

If I am interrupted in a meeting I will immediately say 'excuse me' and finish my sentence. If I recognize overt bias I might say 'out of curiosity, do you think you'd feel that way/say that/do that if she wasn't a woman?'"

USE HUMOR

"I play dumb/not so dumb. For instance if I hear a sexist joke I'll loudly say 'Oh are we telling jokes? I love jokes. Tell it again!'"

"I try to use humour so it feels less serious but still calls out the issue."

ALWAYS
SPEAK
THE TRUTH
CLEARLY,
BUT
REMAIN
OPEN TO A
PATH
FORWARD

Use Humor

"If it's a small thing — joke that comes out wrong, or a 'could you explain it to your mom?' kind of blithe sexism, as much as possible, react in real time to correct immediately and preferably lightly — using humor, and never calling out a person, just an idea or phrasing — go out of your way to assume good intent on the part of the speaker and just act like I'm correcting a 'typo'. (After the fact it is impossible to do without making a big fuss.) For example, in the mom example, you could say something like 'Huh, I wonder why we never say', 'could you explain it so my dad could understand it', or 'speak for yourself, my mom has two math degrees!'"

BE AWESOME

"Do the job 110% better than ever expected and prove them wrong with results."

"The best way to defy stereotypes isn't to argue about them — it's to prove them wrong by exceeding everyone's expectations of you."

"No strategy. Prove them wrong. Stay with your own belief. Focus on facts not rumors or assumptions."

"I model good behavior."

"I still don't have great strategies for handling it other than to ignore it, and continue to show that my work is of the highest quality, that I'm a team player, and that I will advocate for myself."

FOCUS ON NUMBERS & FACTS

"Unfortunately with my 10+ year long career I am just now getting to the point of standing up for myself at work. Instead of feeling intimidated and accepting the BS I am now asking for leveling charts, requirements for roles, etc and demanding a solid plan for review processes to know what is expected of my role and not just me specifically. This way I can fairly say 'Why is this person paid x amount when they only meet x amount of qualifications when I am getting paid x amount and meeting all the qualifications?'"

"Stick to the facts. It makes it easier for those receiving it to decipher on their own as people aren't persuaded by emotion, no matter how emphatic you are."

"Short sentences strong verbs. I make the discussion about business and have people explain to me why my perspective isn't business-focused. I often talk in terms of delivery and expectations. Results are hard to argue with."

JESSICA DAVIS

Operations Supervisor, Versum Materials

"Stick to the facts. It makes it easier for those receiving it to decipher on their own as people aren't persuaded by emotion, no matter how emphatic you are."

"Direct. Provide specific examples and data."

JULIE HILL

Community Lead - Operations, WeWork

GET SOME HELP

"Thankfully, I have an incredible manager always willing to speak out where I am too afraid. I constantly go to her when something biased is going on, and she comes up with the best way to handle the situation."

MICHELLE WILLIAMS

Paid Media Specialist, Aceable

"I don't necessarily have one. The only time, so far, that I had to deal with something that really bothered me was when I took it to my supervisor. Luckily, he's super supportive and doesn't tolerate the BS. (He's probably a secret feminist). ;)"

"Talking to the leader responsible for that group."

SOMETIMES... DON'T

"Unfortunately, I don't. As a black, queer/genderqueer person, I avoid a lot of confrontation to ensure my own success. I'm open about my feelings, however, in exit interviews."

"I snark about it afterwards."

HE'S
PROBABLY
A
SECRET
FEMINIST.

Sometimes.. Don't

"If it is more severe/chronic bias (e.g. a misogynist in a position of power or a policy that systemically discriminates) — round up a bunch of allies from the powerful group (e.g. male, white, technical) who are already in leadership roles to take point on the issue so I'm one of many voices, not the only one.

The data on this is really clear; when members of the group in-power speak up about discrimination against the minoritized group, they are perceived as altruistic (get respected and liked for it); when members of minoritized groups speak up for themselves, they are seen as self-interested and take long term reputation damage."

"In the moment — using it as a teaching experience. Sometimes, though, when it is culturally-driven, I find it better to spend my energy elsewhere."

RANA KAHL

Appirio Kahl Group International

ULTIMATELY, HAVE THE RIGHT INFRASTRUCTURE

"Step one is craft a team with a equal number of men and women and then you find that you don't have to call out bias often at work.

But when it does happen (and it will) I assess if the feedback will be better received privately or if it is egregious enough that it needs to be called out publicly at the time it has happened. I've done it both ways. I also assess what other women are in the room. If there are women that look up to me or need to feel the support that it isn't acceptable, then I will call out bias as it happens."

"I'm lucky to work somewhere that has a group for women inside of the company where we can talk to each other and work out strategy in the best way. We have internal support across the entire org structure."

SARAH PARKER

Content Manager, TrendKite

STRATEGIES FOR PICKING A REASONABLE COMPANY TO WORK FOR

These women have some astute ways of figuring out what company to work for or partner with. And they're a good group to take advice from: 57% of our survey takers said their current company does enough to invest in building women's careers — this is much higher than other, broader studies, which means this is a group that has done a better job than most of picking the right places to work. (And of course — some of them are founders.)

We asked survey takers what their strategies are for assessing culture and figuring out if a company will be inclusive.

An extremely common response — obviously! — was reviews. Glassdoor or reviews (even product reviews like those on TrustRadius) were mentioned in 28 answers to this question. Reviews from other employees can tell you about what it's like to work with management, company policies, work life balance, and the vibe on different teams. Reviews of the company's tech products will give you a sense of the how well the company serves its customers, and if you're customer-facing, what to expect when working with clients. They can also give you a sense of how quickly features get developed, and how well aligned sales, support, and other teams are — because these things affect customers' experiences, and tend to show up in their product reviews.

But beyond reviews, here were some other tips.

LOOK AT LEADERSHIP

"I always look at the executive team. How many are minorities and how many are women. One of the reasons I wanted to work at IBM was because the CEO is a woman!"

"Are there women in leadership? If not, is it a goal of theirs to change that? If it is, do they have a plan? It's often as simple as that."

CLAIRE MORRIS

VP of CS, ShippingEasy

"I look at the female leaders. How many of them are there? How high up are they? What types of people are they? I also do a gut-check on the other women in the organization: are they allowed to be themselves and express femininity while still being taken seriously?"

"I look at number of women on the board and number of women in the executive suite, as well as racial diversity. however, we all know that the tech has an inclusivity and bias problem, so finding a tech company where this doesn't exist is challenging. It really helps to have a great HR leader on board who is well respected by the CEO."

BARBARY BRUNNER

CMO, Phunware

"[I look at] pictures of the team. If it's all [race] [gender] people, they have not yet discovered the benefits (financially and culturally) of diversity. So, I would either take that as a challenge (get in on the ground floor and help their evolution) or hard pass."

LANI ROSALES

COO, The American Genius

"First, I look at leadership. Are there women in middle and upper management? Are there tons of women in middle management and curiously none in upper management?"

Second, if I have the opportunity I talk to female employees. Do they feel like they're taken seriously and given equal opportunity?"

BUT ALSO LOOK BEYOND LEADERSHIP

“My org drinks too much of the ‘Great Place to Work’ koolaid, so they think they are ‘above’ bias because most of our visible leadership is female. Unfortunately it is a bro show and they think it isn’t a problem. Not safe to talk about it because you are seen as negative.”

“There are some obvious tells of misogyny in powerful men; I don’t believe anyone can go from seeing women as subordinate and decorative in their personal life to seeing them as equals at work, so I consider someone’s choice of domestic and romantic partners a pretty clear tell on what I’m dealing with and whether that person will ever see me as a human being, let alone a peer, let alone a boss.”

“I always look at executive team’s profiles. But seeing senior-level women sometimes is not enough — I enjoy looking at their careers, and if I see someone who started small and then got promoted within the company, it means that the company recognizes employee’s efforts and promotes growth. Evaluating employees’ family status (where it is possible, i.e. executives’ bios often include some personal information that makes them feel more approachable) and cultural backgrounds also means a lot. I have worked for a company that had more female employees, but none of them had children or came from another country except for me. I felt like an outsider. In my next company (also in tech), I was one of four women in the office working alongside 50+ men. These men were of different backgrounds, and I felt a lot more included there.”

ARPINE BABLOYAN

Director, Acquisition Marketing, Verndale

STRAIGHT UP ASK ABOUT IT

“I ask for gender and diversity stats and also about pay gaps. It’s a red flag if they cannot tell you stats in these areas quickly. Today, these goals and stats should be published internally.”

RHONDA PAROUTY

COO, Asure Software

“When the company expresses desire to ‘hire more women’ — do they also give you a reason they are doing that? Do they understand and value a diverse workforce, or are they filling a quota?”

“Direct open ended questions to get their philosophy on inclusion.”

“I ask straight up what are they doing to make the world a better place. Typically their Diversity and Inclusion efforts will come up.”

“If I get to talk to a woman in an interview (and it often doesn’t happen), I ask them about the company’s stance on promoting and supporting women. A woman I was interviewing asked me this once, and I really struggled to answer the question (which, unfortunately, was telling) and so I’ve borrowed it ever since.”

CYNTHIA BALUSEK

Sr. Director, Global Customer Support, Revionics, Inc.

...OR ASK AROUND IT

“I think asking if failure is encouraged or discouraged is a great way to see if it’s an inclusive work space. If your supervisor encourages failure, this likely means they encourage vulnerability and that they will be open if you have to share feedback with them that is hard.”

“I ask about the communication strategy — how do they share goals/updates, team wins. I also ask about how a day in the life goes — that helps to clarify the working conditions. I also look at what awards they’ve won and how they promote themselves.”

LOOK FOR CLUES IN THE JOB POSTINGS

“Job postings are so wildly revealing about a company’s culture (often using unconscious biases against age groups or genders).”

LANI ROSALES

COO, The American Genius

MY
ORG
DRINKS
TOO MUCH
OF THE
**'GREAT
PLACE
TO WORK'**
KOOLAID

Look for Clues in the Job Posting

"I look for discrimination in how companies advertise their job openings (ex. a billboard for Entrata advertising that their 'software brings all the boys to the yard' guarantees I won't be applying there)."

KRISTEN MAY

Software Developer, Ivanti

GET THE INSIDE SCOOP

"I like to hear from people who work for leaders of the company and hear how they are treated, how they feel their peers are treated and what their relationship with their boss is like. I don't want to hear from the senior execs on culture very much, because honestly, it's always the sunniest possible picture, they are in sales mode and they will never tell you they scream at their EA or the Office Manager if we run out of post its or a fight gets cancelled at the last minute. It's not typical that people will give you the whole truth on the first call, but you can definitely get a sense for how happy they are."

"I call other women who work for the company and those who have left."

"I always like to talk to someone who hasn't been at the company long themselves during the interview process. They're more apt to be honest about what surprised them when they first started."

WHITNEY MAGNUSON

Global Head of Social Media & Influencer Programs, IBM

"Talk to people who work there. Find them on LinkedIn and interview them."

EMILIA D.

Partner, Winning by Design

DO LOTS OF ONLINE RESEARCH

"Company websites, job descriptions, and social media feeds can all provide direct insight into a company's culture. Existing and former employees can also provide useful input. One thing I look for inclusive language — using gendered pronouns unnecessarily, off-color jokes,

etc can all be signs that the culture won't be inclusive. The benefits highlighted on career pages can also be a clue - are they actually trying to add value to the employee experience, or do they seem to be checking boxes? I look at images used to represent the company and its products - do they show people of different genders, colors, ages, and sizes? Is the executive team diverse or do they all fit the same description?? Looking on LinkedIn, do the employees appear to come from diverse backgrounds? What types of events has the company sponsored?

Secondary insights can come from Glassdoor reviews of the company by employees, or from Googling reviews of the company's product or customer service. If a company has terrible product reviews and the company doesn't seem to be doing anything to address complaints publicly, I would consider working elsewhere. If the customers feel mistreated, imagine how their workers must feel!"

ANITA TAVAKLEY

OBSERVE

"Another important area that I pay attention to is how the flow of conversation progresses. How do the people who traditionally hold power in society make space for others to speak, if at all? What is the breakdown of how much men speak in the room versus women, and similarly, how much do people of color, LGBTQIA, people with disabilities, etc. speak and receive acknowledgement for their contributions?"

GILLIAN RING

Project Manager, CareStarter

"I like to observe how the people in the company treat each other. Is it about hierarchy, is it about the quality of the idea, or is it about the loudest person in the room? The companies that value multiple opinions, look for multiple voices, and value ideas and results equally show me how meritocracy based they are."

"My biggest go-to is if their product itself is inclusive. Does their product feature people of all races, classes, abilities, genders. Then, does their office reflect that — in their staff and even in the images they have on the walls. I once interviewed at a company that had 20+ images of people on the walls, and 100% of them were white."

Observe

“At the in person interview, definitely take a tour of the offices. A lot of things are good giveaways of the culture, including just seeing if there is diversity among the employees. Go to the bathroom, maybe you’ll run into a female employee there, casually strike up a conversation and ask them what it’s like to work there!”

“Also it’s a major plus if the bathroom has free menstrual products.”

ASSESS WHETHER VALUES ARE LIP SERVICE OR AUTHENTIC

“Think about the people you interact with during the interview process. How diverse (or not) are they? Do they really listen to your responses? How do the company’s values support inclusion? When asked, do your interviewers give authentic examples of those company values in action?”

LEELA SRINIVASAN

CMO, SurveyMonkey

“Finally, if a company has certain values that it professes to uphold, I will ask leadership what practical application of these values exists. If the value is simply posted on a wall hoping that it will instill the company with those values by osmosis, that’s a major red flag. If I can, I will also ask employees what certain values mean to them, and how they feel like their perspective has changed since being with the company. At any given point in our lives, there is more to learn and ways to improve. If a company is not positively driving this, then their values are valueless.”

GILLIAN RING

Project Manager, CareStarter

NOTE IT CAN BE EXTRA HARD FOR EXTERNAL-FACING ROLES

“I have an interesting job in terms of inclusive work spaces since I am in a customer facing role.

The company I work for makes a large effort to be inclusive, to the point where senior leadership will call out the difference between diversity and inclusion and the importance of both to support their employees. However, I’m often working for customers that don’t have the same values.”

WHEN IN DOUBT... BUILD YOUR OWN COMPANY

“I have actually given up on this. I’ve decided to start my own company and to implement my own values. Sick and tired of doing so much due diligence only to find out the “truth” once you enter the organization.”

CHAPTER 4: SOME INSPIRATION!

We asked our survey takers to give a shout-out to another woman: Who inspires you, and why? So here's an inspirational list of women — from famous to loved ones — and what they're doing right — from mentoring, to trailblazing, to making you a better *you*.



FAMOUS PEOPLE

"Does it have to be an engineer? If not, Lady Gaga. She's all about being who are you and never letting someone else's idea of what you can amount to be a reality of yours."

"This is tough! Honestly, it would be Ada Lovelace. Even if she wasn't the first woman programmer, she had contributions to computer science."

LUCY HILL

Senior Software Developer, Vervys

"Michelle Obama. Smart, humble, and leads with class."

JESSICA GROFF

"Ruth Bader Ginsberg. It's like she's some sort of super woman. She just keeps plugging along in the face of all sorts of personal and professional obstacles."

"Stevie Nicks because she seemed to defy gender roles at time and in an otherwise male dominated industry."

"It's a bit of a pie in the sky shoutout, but Serena Williams is an incredible inspiration to me. As a female athlete myself who grew up as a tomboy and was frequently teased about being 'boyish' — I'm amazed at her perseverance in the face of a constant barrage of criticism throughout her entire career. Baseless accusations of using steroids, frequent commentary about her being manly, blatantly racist hatred from the general public AND high-ups in the tennis world. But through it all, she continues to share a message of positivity and encouragement to women everywhere."

"Sheryl Sandberg has done a lot for women in tech. Thanks, Sheryl!"

CAPABLE PEOPLE

"Sue Lee. She holds her ground and very respected in an industry that is primarily male."

"I'm a big fan of Karen Peacock at Intercom. She's, razor-sharp, down-to-earth and generally badass."

LEELA SRINIVASAN

CMO, SurveyMonkey

"Alyssa Fitzpatrick at Microsoft inspires me! She's consistently revolutionizing how the various teams she works for GTM and support their end customers...no matter who stands in their way!"

ERICA TURNLUND SCHUELKE

Account Executive, LinkedIn

"Beth Weeks — Beth has always been a strong leader in tech and someone I've admired. She is not only highly respected but also highly approachable and has had an impressive background leading technical teams for over 3 decades in a male-dominated industry."

"Laura Broderick is a force to be reckoned with! She's done incredible things in tech — from an impressive tenure at Dell to fantastic work in the startup world. She's whip smart and just one of the most fun people ever."

"Meagen Eisenberg — I have seen her speak at many B2B marketing software conferences and she has such a depth of marketing experience that balances metrics with creativity."

GOOD PEOPLE

"Chana Ewing who founded GeenieBox and brings the tools to the forefront for black women in these industries to succeed."

"My manager is inspiring as an example of how to stand up for yourself and for others. If someone on her team is being treated unfairly by a customer or other employee, she'll fight tooth and nail to get them out of the situation and treated properly."

**RUTH
BADER
GINSBERG.**

IT'S LIKE
SHE'S
SOME
SORT OF
SUPER WOMAN.

Good People

"Christine Heckhart, former CMO of NetApp and Brocade, now CEO of Scalyr is an inspiration to me. She always has time for people in her network, gives great advice and has a true North Star, acting with integrity in all she does."

"I've only known her a short time, but Kristi Faltorusso is a true inspiration! When she joined the organization that I work for, she instantly earned the respect of everyone around her. She is intense in a way that is inspiring. Not only does she come in every day looking to be the best encouraging everyone around her, but she also somehow manages to keep her family as her number one priority. It's always inspiring to see a woman looking to manage it all."

JULIA FLOREAK

Product Manager, BetterCloud

"Danielle Levitas, EVP at App Annie — incredibly knowledgeable in the mobile app industry and a phenomenal public speaker globally. And always supportive of her colleagues male and female!"

"I'm gonna be 'that person' and give a shout-out to my wife, Kelly, who also works in tech.

Every day I get to watch her go above-and-beyond for her team, who she cares about so much. She is constantly learning and trying to be a better boss and teammate... and wife! :)"

KRISTA DOYLE

Owner, Content is Queen LLC

"Ali Hills. She works so hard every day and supports everyone on our team and all of the women. It is rare to find a teammate who builds everyone up in the team and cares about mine and the team as a wholes success more than their own."

TRAILBLAZERS

"Carol Bartz. One of the first female CEOs in tech. Famous for cursing in public. Love her."

"Lynette Barksdale, D&I @ Google Cloud. She is an inspiration and is a trailblazer in the D&I field."

RHONDA PAROUTY

COO, Asure Software

"Ginni Rometty. She started with IBM as an engineer and went on to hold titles in marketing and sales among other departments before becoming the CEO. She is a skilled strategist but has also faced challenge and criticism while maintaining her vision for the company."

"Shout-out to the only data scientist at my company who always stands up for herself, but also always gets the work done."

"All of the trans women before me... every... single... one."

LEADERS

"Meg Murphy, CMO at IBM. She is a true servant leader, and will stop initiatives and meetings to ensure that they are focused on either the customers or employees getting a phenomenal experience."

"Katrina Lake, CEO at Stitch Fix. She is incredibly smart, kind, and badass."

"There are so many women who inspire me that it is hard to pick one. Diana Holford, SVP JLL. She is fun to be around. To say that she's driven is an understatement. You certainly want her on your side of the negotiating table. She is also kind and thoughtful, seeing the best in almost everyone. Her extensive network is loyal to her for all of these reasons."

PATTI SOCH

CFO, Datical

"Anna Zornosa, Ruby Ribbon CEO, successive successes and perseverance"

Leaders

"Mary T. McDowell. She's the former CEO of Polycom and I had the honor of working on her team when she led the server division at Compaq. She's a dynamic & sharp woman who has lead her teams to success despite the industry & challenges."

TAMI ANDREWS

Senior Customer Advocacy Programs Manager, AlienVault, an AT&T company

"Lexi Reese (COO of Gusto) leads with her heart and cares so much about serving underserved markets."

"Sophia Prater! Dynamic leader and teacher."

"Connie Santilli, VP of IT at Gap Inc. She drives delivery while being charismatic and thoughtful. She is detail oriented and asks great questions."

"Brene Brown has an interesting and raw POV on how to open up and have the courage to lead in a more candid approach. She's a true example of how women can change the lives of how many leaders in tech should be leading their teams."

PEOPLE YOU WANT TO BE LIKE

"There are so many women who inspire me, but it would have to be Sallie Krawcheck. As a women in the NYC Finance world she shattered glass ceilings to serve as the CEO of Merrill Lynch, Smith Barney, US Trust and was the CFO of Citigroup. She then went on to launch her own startup Ellevest, an investment platform for women. She has managed to balance family and a career and is witty, sharp and brilliant. She is truly authentic and is empowering women every day to be independent through her many funds and organizations. She motivates and inspires me to be a better me."

"My CEO Katie May is an absolute inspiration. She has built a set of skills that are immeasurably valuable (although I suppose you could measure the incredible growth her company has seen over

the last 6 years and attribute a good bit of that!). She is great at recognizing the talents in other people and encouraging them, as well as coaching people up (myself included) in the areas they struggle in. She's impact-focused, outcome driven, and a winner in all ways — I strive to emulate her more and more each day."

CLAIRE MORRIS

VP of CS, ShippingEasy

"Barbary Brunner, CMO at Phunware, formerly CEO at the Austin Technology Council, prior to that Yahoo! and Microsoft. Her resume speaks for itself. Barbary is who I want to be when I grow up. Seriously. She is one of the most brilliant minds I've ever come across. If you're in tech and need to understand something about all of the moving pieces, the politics, the technologies, the history, the culture, the innovations, etc. SHE is who understands it all. She's a goddamned treasure."

LANI ROSALES

COO, The American Genius

COURAGEOUS WOMEN

"Chrissy Teigen! She is so funny on Twitter, and is not afraid to speak the truth. When you are loud or aggressive as a woman that makes you a 'b*tch' but when a man behaves the same way its "manly" and she doesn't let that type of gender discrimination stop her."

"Ashley Feinberg. I've been following her writing since she worked for Gawker and am impressed on how she effortlessly handles and mocks trolls while still getting her point across. Same for Lindy West who gave up on Twitter but decided to not take the abuse. I keep private on all social media platforms because I don't have the skin to take on the endless trolls (especially prevalent in tech) but like to see how they do it plus get their POV across."

LEE PULATIE

Engineering Manager, Ziff Davis

WOMEN HELPING OTHER WOMEN

"I would like to shout out to Britney Siddle, founder and admin of the Facebook group Lady Geeks of Austin. She has done an amazing job of cultivating a space where female-identifying ladies can just be our geeky selves without worry of gatekeeping, sexism, or any other nonsense prevalent on the rest of the internet. Personally, Lady Geeks of Austin helped me as I was making my career transition, and for that I will be forever thankful."

ANITA TAVAKLEY

"Coco Brown, CEO and founder of The Athena Alliance. I've known Coco to be a successful C-level executive who can build and run companies. What inspires me about Coco, is that she has combined her business acumen with passion to help other women, and started Athena Alliance to get more women on board seats. She is always positive, helping others and making a huge impact in our tech community."

"Sandy Carter, AWS has been consistent in working for impact and an advocate for girls and women in the tech industry."

MONIQUE MORROW

President, The VETRI Foundation

"Sarah Lewis, Ivanti. I love the community she has created with [@TheTechieGirls](#)."

"I'm shouting out two — Sara Ines Calderon and Jessica Tremblay. Both are members of Women Who Code and both are amazing women who go the extra mile to encourage, welcome, and mentor women in tech - whether they are brand new or have been in tech for a while. They definitely helped me feel a part of the tech community in Austin when I first started out."

KAREN KELLY

Full-Stack Software Developer, Alchemy Systems

"Magdelina Yesil. She wrote a great book about her experiences in the tech world. She also wrote

it because she was concerned about young women not going into tech because of all the bad press and that is a concern of mine. She gives examples in her book of women who have great careers in tech in multiple industries and not just the ones like Google, Facebook, etc."

WOMEN WHO STAND UP FOR OTHERS

"My Chief HR Officer Viv Maza is an inspiration to everyone — she vocally stands up for equality and belonging in the workplace for women, men, LGBTQ, and any group that has faced workplace discrimination in the past."

PEOPLE WHO ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE

"Brenda Wilkerson, CEO of AnitaB.org, with the mission to have the population at large reflected in the technical communities of our companies."

ANGELA T. TUCCI

CEO, Apto, Inc.

"I recently met Kathy Terry who founded in Lieu, a new app that helps people recognize others and support their favorite nonprofits, in lieu of hostess gifts, birthdays, anniversaries, etc. It's only about a year old but I am incredibly impressed with the passion she has for changing people's mindsets about saying thank you and congratulations through supporting nonprofits."

"Wow, so many women inspire me but I have to say that Dr. Sue Black springs to my mind. She is so inspirational and works so hard to raise awareness of the importance of diversity as well as creating opportunities for women to get into tech and of course, her work in saving Bletchley Park."

SARAH LEWIS

Director of Field Marketing, Ivanti

People Who Are Making a Difference

"I'm also inspired by Cassie Betts, Founder of MISLA. MISLA supports the economic development of underserved communities by providing technology education to kids and pairing their training with businesses in need of those services. I met Cassie at a conference a few years ago, have watched her career transformation and been witness to her service to her community."

KARIZ MATIC

Founder, Champaign

PEOPLE WHO MAKE YOU A BETTER YOU

"Lani Rosales. She's the creator of Austin Digital Jobs, the largest digital jobs group in Austin with 43,000 members. I consider her a friend, a mentor, and an all around bad-ass. She's the one who usually nudges me into networking and is largely responsible for helping me put myself out there in the Austin tech scene."

ADDY RUTH

Senior UI/UX Designer, Redwood Logistics

"My manager, Dani Whitley, is absolutely an inspiration! An incredible woman in tech making waves every day. Dani is a paid media pro and I admire how she is never afraid to take on new projects, push for growth, and challenge leaders above her when she truly believes in something. Also, she advocates for my growth every day and consistently pushes me to be my better self."

MICHELLE WILLIAMS

Paid Media Specialist, Aceable

MOMS (YOURS OR OTHERS')

"My mom, she was a wife to a 3 star general, supported my dad through Vietnam, 20+ moves, Just Cause invasion, entertained other wives, took care of families, diplomats, did charity work. Enough said."

BETHANY LITTLE

EVP & General Manager, Community Brands

"My mom Alka Sethi who is a social entrepreneur in India. She made it normal for me to be ambitious and feel good about it. Women like Katrina Lake who took Stitch Fix Public, Reshma Saujani of Girls who code who normalised the fact that we shouldn't be going for perfection."

ARJITA SETHI

Co-Founder, Equally

"My mother inspires me. She showed me how to be a hard worker by going to college and raising me as a single mother. She taught me that women must work twice as hard to prove themselves in the industry. She taught me to never give up."

MELISSA CRUM

"Working mothers — seriously, I don't know how they do it everyday. I'm childless by choice, but when I see the ruthless time and project management by professionals who have to balance all their priorities — which can change swiftly — I'm awestruck and so grateful to work with them."

"My mom. She worked in technology before it was cool and was one of a handful of women to graduate from Poly Tech in the 60's when they first allowed women in."

BOSSSES

"I'd like to give a shout-out to one of my first managers, Ann Sorenson, who taught me how to be a compassionate, kind and purposeful leader without compromising outcomes or fun!"

ALLISON JONES

VP Customer Advocacy Marketing, Cengage

"My one-time boss, Holly Rollo (RSA CMO), strong, passionate and moves mountains"

CHRISTINE BOTTAGARO

CMO, Kapost

SHE
MADE IT
NORMAL
FOR ME
TO BE
AMBITIOUS
AND
FEEL GOOD
ABOUT IT

ARJITA SETHI, CO-FOUNDER, EQUALLY

Bosses

"So many! My current VP runs two divisions of the company and runs global teams while maintaining having a new daughter and staying close with her family. She is well-respected in our company and puts the values of family support and career growth first so we all work toward a solid balance."

"My former boss Maria Scurry. Strong and uncompromising in staying true to her talents and vision, in a company full of equally strong men."

MENTORS

"Patti, CFO Datical. She is a very strong woman and has given me a lot of good advice."

"Betty Hung. She is a partner at Vista Equity Partners. I told her I'm never afraid to step into areas I'm not familiar with. She challenged me, a business major, if I'm willing to take on a technology job. She got me thinking. A few years later, I took a job to be head of IT for a software company, something I would never do had Betty not asked me that question."

FRIENDS

"Margot Langstaff — my HBS classmate who started several successful companies. She took risks, assembled great teams, and has built a great company in health care."

"So many, but my very dear friend Julie Larson-Green has done really remarkable things both as a technologist and as a woman leader paving the way for, and supporting other women."

BARBARY BRUNNER

CMO, Phunware

"My friend Meryl Ayres is such an inspiration to me. She's an incredibly talented and creative woman that started her own video production business in the last year. I am so impressed by her ability to turn her passions into a successful business. It's clear that her love of the work and skill has connected her to clients that are excited to work with her."

NAIKE ROMAIN

Product Marketing Manager, Localytics

"My dear friend, Espree Devora, inspires me with her authenticity, her big dreams, her unflappable desire to help other people, her adventurous spirit, and her ability to overcome challenge after challenge with a huge smile on her face."

LISA MAGILL

Co-Founder, Aleria PBC

ALL THREE

"Lauren Costella. She started out as my boss and has become a close friend and mentor. It's hard not to be inspired by her. She's super passionate, leads by example, always willing to help, and her enthusiasm is genuine and contagious."

ALL THE WOMEN

"The women leading #GirlsClub because they are capturing a big opportunity for professional growth for women in our culture"

"I am inspired by the women I work with that are good at their jobs and have fun doing it!"

"I love the women I work with! They are all a vision of persistence, intelligence, grace and curiosity. And humor. I'm inspired by my friend Lee who is an astute observer of user behavior and a thoughtful, thorough engineer who mentors and coaches people around her. I am inspired by one of our previous VPs Kate, who shared her strengths and vulnerabilities with us, was unafraid to take on coaching herself and coached us to want more, do better, expect better."

"It's not one woman but an entire community. We have a female founders TX group with over 400 members. Sometimes it takes a village!"

IRENE BRINKER

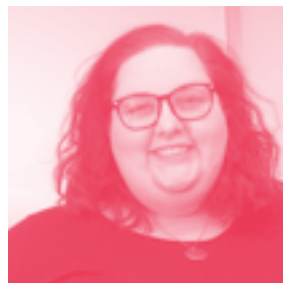
CEO/Co-Founder, Devali Inc

"Every woman who shows up to her programming job each day as if it's normal, because it is."

(EM)POWERED BY THE WOMEN OF TRUSTRADIUS

They had an idea
They researched the topic
They crafted the questions
They campaigned to get responses
They built the report
They launched it
They made it count
They hauled @\$\$ to get it all done in time
All while keeping up with their day jobs

The women of TrustRadius think big
They are an inspiration.



*One of our survey respondents created an awesome campaign that inspired this byline!