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Jean Rakich

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jeanrakich

Educational Background: Bachelor of Science/Major in Accounting from the University of Toledo. MBA from Bowling Green State University

Professional Associations/Memberships: ASTD (American Society of Training & Development), Zonta Professional Woman's Club of Ann Arbor, Steering Committee member of Women@Thomson Reuters, Board member of Bedford Best Baseball.

Hobbies: Mentoring young professionals, volunteering with youth sports, cooking international foods and reading.

[Click here to see the other honorees of the 2012 "Most Powerful Women in Accounting" awards.](#)

Q&A:

Studies show that more women than ever are graduating with accounting degrees, but few are pursuing, or staying in, public practice careers. What do you think may be causing them to think public accounting careers are not as attractive as other careers?

I believe that women are interested in flexible working schedules and the accounting calendar does not support flexibility. Accounting has tough deadlines around closing dates, audit calendars and tax deadlines. These deadlines make flexibility more of a challenge than some other fields.

What advice would you give to these college students about the opportunities for

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If you were asked as a consultant to give advice to firms, would you have any recommendations on things they could do to better retain and advance more qualified female staff?

I would recommend that they have continuous professional growth opportunities for woman including networking and connecting events. Many women have been very interested in Women@ThomsonReuters as they see it as a way to connect with others in our company and industry. Many women appreciate informal growth opportunities that are convenient and worthwhile for them to join.

Do you think being a woman in the accounting profession has made career advancement more challenging than it might have been for a male in the same situation?

No, I do not. My experience has shown that hard work and a good work ethic regardless of gender result in career advancement. We all have to make choices and no one, regardless of gender, can do everything well at the same time. I stress this to those I mentor so they have realistic expectations of what they can expect at different times of their lives.

What solutions have you found successful in managing work-life integration. the balancing of your career with your personal, family and social life?

I believe that a realistic attitude is very important. I don't believe you can have it all at the same time. You can have a very successful career, family and social life, but they all change as priorities depending on your current situation. I have always tried to be available for my children's events, but sometimes a work trip would interfere, but I raised them to understand that life is about balance. The ability to find balance, and get rid of the guilt that you try to put on yourself, is key to success.

How mobile are you regarding your work? How have mobile devices and apps impacted your productivity and work-life balance? (Spending less time in the

office?)

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What single piece of technology could you absolutely not live without, and why?

My iPhone. It allows conference calls, texting and mobile apps all in one device. It's flexibility and reliability are crucial to managing my day.

What is your favorite professional mobile app, and why?

iBooks. I read a lot both professionally and personally and this allows me to have many books available at any time. I have a list of books that the team I lead reads and we refer to these in meetings and it is very convenient for us to have them electronically.

What do you like to do when you actually have free time without any obligations to work or family?

I love movies. I love to relax with a glass of red wine and watch a movie.

Technology

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