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**Sandra Wiley, SPHR**  
**Kolbe Certified Master Instructor**

**Shareholder and COO: Boomer Consulting, Inc.**  
**Manhattan, KS**

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**Professional Associations/Memberships:** Society for Human Resource Management; AAA – Association of Accounting Administrators; Strategic Coach – Program for Entrepreneurs; Kolbe Corp

**Hobbies:** Golf, Reading – Everything, Cooking, Hiking, Any Family Activity

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of the 2012 “Most Powerful Women  
in Accounting” awards.

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## 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?**

*Many women are looking for a career that is not just about balance or integration, but also about flexibility and control. There are many firms that are really getting it when it comes to the balance/integration part of the formula, as long as they still get the massive amounts of hours. That is where I believe the breakdown occurs. The massive hours are not attractive to many women for a number of reasons.*

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

*Learn to be bold. I am not talking about being rude, or aggressive. However, when you see*

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*gather a list of the challenges they are having. Then, insure that facilitator brainstorms ideas and strategies for change. You don't want this to be a grip session, but an idea factory. Then, expand the focus group into a task force to implement the best ideas. That new task force should include a cross section of gender, age and level within the firm. Action from the committee is a very strong message that the firm is willing to change.*

**Do you think that there is still a glass ceiling in accounting firm senior management and partner levels, or that the profession has moved to a mostly gender neutral state?**

*I can only speak to the numbers that I see, and when you see the massive amounts of women managers and then you walk into the partner meeting and see 0 to 10% women sitting at the table, it appears that the glass ceiling still exists. I would say that many firms are making great progress, but as a profession, we still have a long way to go. We should not sit back and think that everything is fixed.*

**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?**

*In my case, no. I had the opportunity to build a career and due to my partners, my connections and my particular skill set I do not see that being a woman held me back at all.*

*Now, I will say that I have seen many of my female clients leave the profession because that were working in a firm that held them back because they needed something different in their careers than could be negotiated in their firm. They continued their careers, however most went in the direction of a private company. So, I guess the short answer is "it depends".*

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

*Flexible workplace, calendar, iPad, iPhone and a great support network. There is not just*

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**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?)**

*Extremely! I live mobile. I travel 75% of the year, so mobile is just a way of life for me. The iPad is a game changer for me. Light, instant on and access to everything at my office. Amazing.*

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

*There are actually 3 – My laptop, my iPhone and my iPad.*

**What is your favorite professional mobile app, and why?**

*Evernote. I use it for managing notes that I take at meetings, on projects, with my team at Boomer and for home projects. It keeps me organized and I have learned to get rid of all of my sticky notes and paper. Nice!*

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

*I find that these times are like my mini vacations. I love to read, watch movies and take walks. Walking near my home in the flint hills of Northeast Kansas is the activity I enjoy almost more than anything else I do on a free day. I also enjoy golf and cooking for family and friends.*

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