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## **Jean Rakich**

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**Education:** University of Toledo, Bachelors of Science in Business; Bowling Green State University, MBA

**Professional Associations:** American Society of Training & Development; Zonta Professional Women's Assn

**Hobbies:** Mentoring other professionals, reading latest business books and novels,

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

I think there are a lot of opportunities for women in the accounting profession, particularly if you are driven and appreciate the analytical and compliance nature of the profession. I do however believe that this profession requires a lot of commitment in terms of time and energy, and is not always flexible due to accounting/tax deadlines. This is just something to consider when choosing any type of major for your future profession, especially for women, who often have to balance the responsibilities of home and career.

### **What advice would you give accounting firms on things they could do to better retain and advance more qualified female staff?**

I would advise firms to provide networking and professional growth opportunities for women. A few years ago, Thomson Reuters rolled out a group called Women @ Thomson Reuters. This group is dedicated to assisting women in expanding their networks, finding opportunities and developing their professional skills. Women across the organization are encouraged to participate in the groups events and utilize the connection women bring to each other. I am a proud member of the Steering Committee for the Michigan Chapter. Last year we rolled out a 4 part workshop series entitled "Get Yourself in The Game: Tips for Pitching a Winning Business Plan". This series has been attended by more than 150 people (men and women) in the Michigan Chapter, with many great ideas cultivating in these workshops. I recently travelled to our Texas facilities to ramp up the local group there so that they can begin to offer the workshops as well. It is crucial for business success for employees to know how to pitch a business case and the fact that Thomson Reuters is so supportive of this shows that they understand that a healthy business thrives on good ideas and an open environment for the employees to feel safe pitching new

ideas. The vice presidents of the business are involved, listening to the pitches and

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same time and that he is about choices. I mentor several young women and men, both at Thomson Reuters and in other companies. I encourage them to think realistically about where they are in life and to prioritize what is most important to them. For example you can't get back the years when your children are growing up and each individual needs to realize this and plan their lives and career paths accordingly. I think we can all be very successful in all aspects of our lives, but it does take planning and prioritizing. A strong network of professional and personal friends is key to success as we all need people to go to and that person we need to talk to can be a different one depending on our particular situation. I also make sure I have several mentors, both male and female to bounce things off of. These mentors have been invaluable to me in my career.

**How mobile are you regarding your work? How have mobile devices and apps impacted your productivity and work-life balance?**

Mobile devices are crucial to my work day. The ability to have an iPhone and an iPad nearby makes flexibility much more attainable. My team travels constantly, educating our clients about our suite of software and the great integration of these products. If they run into an issue traveling or needing assistance, they can always get in touch with me through my mobile devices. I can access schedules, client information and a variety of other tools using these devices. They also make traveling easier as a laptop is not always needed anymore.

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

My iPhone is the one device I could not do without, because it keeps me connected with my team and our clients. The use of texting is unobtrusive when an employee is at a firm and has to reach out for help with something. This allows them to contact me without calling and I can get an answer to them timely and quietly.

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

I use DropBox daily as the team's schedule is in this app and it allows me to access

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fresh air and keeps all of us in shape!!

Technology

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