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## Rita Keller

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accounting as a major and as a career. I believe there is way too many negative thoughts and comments being written and talked about for women in the accounting profession. I like to convey that an accounting career can be flexible, educational, interesting and financially rewarding.

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

I urge CPA firm leaders to make it easy for females to speak-up and communicate their wants and needs. I believe females often keep silent and that men (leaders of the firm) interpret their silence meaning they are happy and content. Often I have heard male leaders say, "I wish she would have told me!"... or she should have said something. So, I advise leaders to furnish the forum for women to be heard – mentoring or counseling sessions, roundtables, women's initiatives (that include males in some of the discussions).

**3. 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?**

Sorry to report that I believe there is still somewhat of a glass ceiling. It is difficult to change a lifetime of assumptions ingrained in male CPA leaders. I would like to see more CPE sessions on the topic of "helping women advance in CPA firms" directed toward males. When I give presentations on this topic, rarely are there male leaders in attendance. While I focus on helping women in business understand male attitudes (they don't mean harm, they just don't know what they're doing is misguided), I think men should also be open to learning more of why women do what they do and how to co-exist better (for the benefit of the firm and the clients).

**4. How have you managed to balance your professional and personal life obligations, whether that includes family, etc?**

You must have help on the home front. I agree with Sheryl Sandberg when she says

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I love being mobile! I am able to work from anywhere. Most of my “in the office” work consists of writing, researching and telephone coaching. My clients never need to know I am sitting on a balcony in Hilton Head or in my home office in Ohio. As far as mobile devices and apps – I use many and love them. I always say I couldn't run my business without Google and Apple. I have an iPhone, iPad Air, Macbook Air and iPod nano (I use it mostly to track my daily steps via the pedometer). I am very active on social media: I blog every business day – just completing 9 years... so I have a lot of content “out there.” I tweet daily, I post on my business Facebook page, my personal Facebook page, I use Google+, LinkedIn, Instagram and Pinterest. Working solo, as a consultant to CPA firm leaders, I am able to control my own calendar, thus providing as much work/life balance as I need.

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

I couldn't survive without my iPhone. It is my main business phone and resource device. Recently, I visited Australia and did not pay the extra cost to have international access. It wasn't the phone part I missed the most, it was tweeting, GPS, maps Google, etc. I could only use it via wifi and wifi isn't that prevalent in Australia!

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

My favorite mobile app is Twitter – I get my news and professional updates via following A FEW people/sites on Twitter. I also update my followers often via Twitter. I try to get my clients (CPAs) to use Twitter but have little success – – it can actually be a time saver not a time waster.

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