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Accounting

Oct. 24, 2016



Geni Whitehouse, CPA.CITP, CSPM

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Q&A:

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

Go for it! There has never been a better time to make an impact on the profession and the lives of businesses everywhere. The tools and technology exist to make this profession anything you want it to be. Learn everything you can, ask questions, and most of all don't be afraid to be who you are. Find a place that embraces you and your personality. Don't try to be who "they" want you to be.

What advice would you give accounting firms on ways in which they can better retain and advance more qualified female staff?

This is not just a women's issue. Accept the fact that people have lives and help them integrate them into their work. Embrace remote work (for real) not just pretending and get these smart energetic people in front of clients ASAP. There are so many amazing tools that support having conversations with clients.

What is the name of one book that has been a great influence to you?

Even a Geek Can Speak, by Joey Asher. His book changed the way I present forever and also inspired my book and the name of my business. He has become a friend and supporter and has still written the best book on speaking I have ever read.

In what ways do you participate in the professional community to change/improve the accounting profession?

I speak, write, tweet, podcast about improving our value, improving our communication and embracing who we are wherever I can. I have an endless supply

of patience and am amazed to see the profession begin to embrace my message after

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years).

Less data, more relationships. And the term “soft skills” shall be forever banished to the same basement housing “paradigm shift” and “ecosystem.” Like technology, communication will no longer be a separate thing – it will just be the way we do business.

How do you see yourself participating in shaping the future of the accounting profession?

I will keep on beating this drum until people start to improve their communication, value their contributions, and work only with fun clients who love and adore them.

Describe one person who has been an important mentor to you and how that person helped shape the direction or focus of your professional life.

Edi Osborne changed my view of what is possible as an accountant. She made accounting fun again and allowed me to find a place for my numbers. She gave us all the tools we need to change lives for small business owners and is the reason I ended up working in Wine Country. She is an incredible human being, a mentor, a goddess, a spiritual leaders, a shaman, a role model for anyone who wants to be a real TRUSTED Advisor (which is also way over-used...)

[See the other recipients of the 2016 Most Powerful Women in Accounting award.](#)

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