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Karen Abramson

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There has never been a better time to enter the accounting profession. Accountants have become a critical part of business continuity and success and have truly earned a seat at the table, serving as consultative, strategic partners for both corporations and individuals. Plus, the profession is transforming rapidly as new software tools emerge that streamline and automate workload, creating good work-life balance.

What would you suggest to accounting firms that are interested in retaining and advancing more qualified female staff?

The most successful firms going forward will be the ones that make talent development and succession planning a priority, as well as ensure that deserving people, regardless of their gender, have the opportunities to advance. This can mean advancing to leadership positions within the firm, taking on stretch assignments, having P&L responsibilities, and/or exploring new functional areas to learn more about the business. Flexibility and work-life balance will continue to be a necessity for women, but also for all millennials and those looking to retire. Fortunately, there are tools that exist that can help firms attract and retain staff, including cloud and mobile solutions that enable people to work and serve clients anywhere, anytime. Firms need to ensure that they are adopting new technologies, work processes and policies that support their employees in this way.

Why did you choose to work in – and stay in – the accounting field?

Change is always very exciting to me, especially within a profession that is not used to it. The increasingly complex global economy and regulatory landscape has really changed the game in terms of how accounting professionals rely on expertise, and it

is exciting for us to constantly innovate to provide the best possible tools for our

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What changes do you foresee in the accounting profession of the near future (3-5 years)?

We're seeing several trends that will have a big impact on the profession in the next 3-5 years. For one, firms will rely on more automation of data, allowing them to free up their staff to focus on more value-added service. We'll also see professionals utilizing technology and leveraging software tools for more business insights. Finally, and not surprisingly, tools will need to provide mobility and flexibility for the changing workforce, providing the ability to work any time, from anywhere on any device.

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

Wolters Kluwer has played such an important role in shaping the profession to-date with CCH Axcess, the profession's first cloud-based, modular tax workflow solution suite operating from a single, core database. We continue to enhance this product to help firms grow, manage and protect their business and their clients business. Beyond tax software, we also provide the critical guidance and expertise that firms want and need at their fingertips, both with content like the new Global Master Tax & Business Guide, and with solutions that provide reliable answers in less time. We are changing how tax professionals conduct research by adding real efficiency and reliability into their daily workflows, and it's very exciting to be a part of.

Describe one person who has been an important mentor to you and how that

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Please share a personal rule or principle that you follow.

Never ask your team to do more than you are willing to do yourself. This has been my personal and professional philosophy for many years and I find it's one of the best ways to create hard-working, loyal and dedicated teams who will stop at nothing to ensure success. Along the same vein, I also believe it's critical to reward strong performance. Recognition can go a long way in creating a winning culture, increasing job satisfaction and keeping people engaged and focused.

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

Accounting

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