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**Sandra Wiley, SPHR – 2017 Most Powerful Women
in Accounting Honoree**

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Education (Degree/school): BS Human Resource Management

1. What opportunities do you feel women in accounting have in that they didn't have when you started in the profession?
- The biggest difference I see is the ability to carve out your own career in a way that will "fit" into your life. You can work the hours you want, in the niche you want and with the team/clients you want due to the technology and a change in attitude by firm leaders. And... if you don't get what you want, you can start your own firm.
 - How important is work/life balance and what suggestions do you have for those who are struggling to attain this?
 - It is imperative to overall happiness – but I would suggest that balance should be replaced with harmony. Life and Work harmony requires that you take a hard look at priorities and make sure that you are creating a sustainable life where you integrate and feel comfortable with the time you spend in the areas of family, friends, self and work.
 - What is the most difficult part about being a women in the accounting profession?
 - The glass ceiling that still exists in some firms. It is really hard to break today since I believe in the majority of cases it is an unintentional glass ceiling. Leaders in those firms believe they are training, developing and mentoring everyone equally as they look at succession, but the reality is that they feel more comfortable with someone who looks, acts and things like they do, and if that is a man, then men get promoted.

- What is the best part about being a women in the accounting profession?

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forward to helping the profession transition from compliance to advisory.
Training, building communities and speaking will be core to the strategy.

- Looking back at your career, what would you do differently giving the knowledge you have today and how can women who are entering the benefit from that knowledge?
- I would give myself a break when I made mistakes. I had a tendency in the past to “wear” my failures and it affected my confidence. I have overcome that with time, but I lost precious brain cells worrying about the very things that actually made me smarter and stronger. Own your life – the bad, the good and the amazing!

[Learn more about the 2017 Most Powerful Women in Accounting.](#)

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