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Amy Vetter, CPA – 2018 Most Powerful Women in Accounting

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Author and Consultant

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

It's never been a better time to be a woman in the profession. Seek out mentors who can help guide you on your path and prepare you for the skills you will need to

accomplish in your professional roles. Look for senior leaders who are women and get to know them, learn their stories and how they were able to get to where they are today. Seek out ways you can help others and you will get it back tenfold. The profession has been awakened to the needs of diversity, so don't hold yourself back — try things you didn't think you could do, learn from your experiences and improve, and say yes to opportunities that present themselves.

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

Don't wait for women to apply or for your firm to create open roles — proactively target talented women to grow within your firm. Many times, women do not apply for roles because they don't see other people like them in those roles. In order to change the paradigm, you can't wait for them to speak up. Rather coach and mentor women to develop the skills they need so they will feel confident in their next best role. Find creative ways to provide out-of-the-norm benefits that support them to take on more responsibility. This could include a flexible and remote work schedule and help with home responsibilities so they don't feel overwhelmed, such as meal services and qualified babysitting services.

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

My personal purpose has always been to help businesses thrive. My mother had her own business when I was growing up that I participated in from a young age – from helping her around the office to accompanying her at trade show and networking events. I watched her business grow and succeed and then ultimately fail due to my mother's lack of financial knowledge. I saw directly how her accountant could have changed the outcome by being more timely with strategic advice. Instead, because of not having the advice or knowledge she needed, our family ultimately lost everything, including our house and most of what we had in it, in order for her to pay all the outstanding bills and penalties she had from the business. Since this time in my life, I knew that I wanted to be an accountant so that I could help small businesses like my mother's understand the numbers so that they could make smart business decisions. In this way, we as accounting professionals are in a unique, extremely valuable position to provide the story behind the financials that business owners need to know so that they can survive, grow and thrive. Without someone to decode the story for them, many businesses can find themselves in trouble. Our expertise has a powerful ripple effect — it helps these business owners achieve their

dreams and support their loved ones, as well as allows their employees to keep their jobs and support their families.

What are you currently reading?

My reading – is like my life – Yin and Yang!

The Truth Machine – the Blockchain and the Future of Everything by Michael J Casey

The Practical Neuroscience of Buddha's Brain – Happiness, Love & Wisdom by Rick Hanson

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

Firms will be innovating like never before. In all my years in the profession, I have never seen more openness among firms to learn the latest trends and try new things. There is no choice to “wait and see” anymore, all traditional services will be re-engineered with technology development. Job descriptions will be re-written, professionals will gain new skills and become more savvy with technology and how to create more efficient business processes internally and with their clients. There will be increased diversity among firm leadership, and new openness to the diversity of thought and how it impacts the firm's success will create new types of leaders in the profession that will drive change into the future for the better.

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

I have pivoted my career many times in this profession to find ways to help with the change management process. My mission is to not only help provide a picture of the future way we will work and what technological trends are on the horizon, but how to make these changes mindfully and in a way that creates greater human connection. I see myself as a mindful technologist. I want to continue to serve as a Speaker and Educator for firms and accounting professionals to better understand ways to use technology to its best advantage, while creating space to collaborate in new ways, both internally with your teams and externally to help clients thrive in their businesses so everyone can create a more fulfilling life, whether it be at work, personally or at home.

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.

Alison Ball – Early on in my career I met her after speaking at a conference. She gave me the confidence that I had the potential to be a speaker in larger venues. At that point in my career, I had primarily taught training courses to small businesses and executives and was also a professor at colleges, but wasn't speaking to large conference audiences. She opened doors for me and was a constant supporter of the work that I did. She never was pushing for something in return, she was always looking for what was best for the community at large and motivated me to keep doing more in something I was passionate about. I will always be thankful to her.

Please share a personal rule or principle that you follow.

Have the courage to live a life true to yourself, not what others expect of you.

[See the full list: 2018 AICPA / CPA Practice Advisor Most Powerful Women in Accounting.](#)

Promotion

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