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Jennifer Lee Wilson

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The opportunities for women in accounting are endless! The profession is increasingly flexible, innovative and advisory and the number of women leaders is growing, albeit slowly. The number of CPAs set to retire in the next decade is staggering and women can fill that void.

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

Find out what your women most want in their careers – what they love most, what they love least, and why, what they want more of and less of and then tailor their careers to them – one-size-fits-one. Give women the ability to speak their minds and you will learn what you need to do to nurture and grow them.

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

The role of accountants is critical to the success of global commerce and I get to help accounting leaders be more inspirational and difference making leaders. It's a dream job.

What are you currently reading?

I'm reading the *2018 Deloitte Millennial Survey*, a bunch of daily periodicals through my newsfeeds (including **Going Concern**, **Fast Company**, **AICPA News**) and I read my latest *Runners' Magazine* while traveling today. I'll read a bunch of fiction on my upcoming beach vacation – mostly murder mysteries but I never read *Goldfinch* and I've downloaded it to read, too.

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

Too many to name! Dramatic changes in the approach to talent will include the

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These individuals are going to emerge and emerge for those who adapt (and adapt fast), and, whoever does the best job with data management and data acquisition wins!

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

I am helping lead the existing, traditional leaders through this change and developing future leaders to rise up and drive the changes needed. We're doing this through the services we deliver, and the thought leadership we produce, including writing for several national publications (including the CPA Insider) and teaching and speaking across the country.

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.

I could name my mother, my first partner in this business, James C. Metzler, or my husband, all who have had such influence on me. But right now, I'd be remiss if I didn't name my business partner and work sister, Tamera Loerzel. She and I have worked together since 1991, first at Sage, then BDO and now at ConvergenceCoaching for 17 of the 18 years we've been in business. She drives me to be a better leader, to think bigger, to look for the opportunity to make a difference and to have fun along the way. I can't imagine doing this work without her.

Please share a personal rule or principle that you follow.

BE UNSTOPPABLE. If you want to raise a family AND have a big job, do it! Exercise, even when you don't want to. If your plane is delayed or cancelled, find another way, including flying to a city that's close and driving in. If you're tired, but you've made a commitment, finish the work, then rest. If the environment isn't supportive, but you have an insight or truth to speak, speak it anyway. It will make a difference for someone. **BE UNSTOPPABLE!**

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