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## Accounting

Jun. 12, 2019

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**Danielle Supkis Cheek, CPA, CFE, CVA**

**2019 Most Powerful Women in Accounting**

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

We are at the stage where there is a shortage of talented accounting staff in many markets. In my personal opinion, the question should be: "What attracts and retains people in the accounting profession?" regardless of gender. However, the cliff is far more pronounced for women, and we still have an advancement for women issue as a profession. But the solution at firms is mostly a wholistic one.

I have seen many times when men and women push their own ideas or ideals onto a particular person regarding what (s)he should do for his/her professional or personal life. Each person's needs, desires, goals, etc. are different from the next. There should not be a alone-size-fits-all approach to retaining and attracting people. Initiatives supporting the whole CPA and his/her individual needs and goals. are imperative. That means flexibility in options, asking rather than assuming a particular career choice and not stigmatizing staff for the choices (s)he makes in his/her career.

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

Because I love it! People mock me all the time for how much I actually enjoy reading and keeping up with accounting current events and finding new solutions for my clients. But here is the secret to life: I derive true joy from lots of little things. Accounting means I get money for things that ultimately make me happy. (And yes, there are a lot of really annoying things I do that I don't want to do, but I try to see those as the price to pay to get to do the things I like to do).

Also, for those that mock .... it's ok... I know you are just jealous of how giddy I get on super technical things ;0)

**What book(s), blog(s), podcast(s) do you recommend?**

So, I have been working on trying to come up with an answer to this question for

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It would be almost irresponsible for me to guess at what is coming in next several years. Change is happening so fast; the only thing that I can responsibly predict is that there will be change. Where change can be uncomfortable, I see it as an opportunity for our firm and our clients.

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

I plan to be present and speak up. I have earned a seat at many tables and plan to speak up when appropriate—especially on matters that put less artificial barriers in the way for others to earn their seat.

**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.**

My mother was, and still is, a key influence in my life and had a very successful career as an attorney. I have had far fewer barriers in my career than my mother did, but as a kid I did not see the barriers she had to break through to have the career success that she did (I was twelve months old when she made partner at her law firm). I thought her career path was normal. I was lucky, because when I went into the professional world, I did not have as many stereotypes and perceptions of barriers. Since some barriers are often perceived due to upbringing, social norms, etc. and I never saw those, I didn't have as many perceived barriers. I just kept going. Of course, I had obstacles along my way and will have more throughout my career—everyone does. For the challenges we do face, my mother taught me to analyze a situation, assess the risks or benefits, plan and—most importantly—have the courage to take the right action.

**Please share a personal rule or principle that you follow.**

“Get ‘er done”

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elaborate 11×17 to-do list that I always have with me.

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[Learn more about the 2019 Most Powerful Women in Accounting.](#)

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