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EMPOWERING WOMEN
IN THE WORKPLACE

An Employer's Guide to Supporting the
Development of Rising Women in Tech.

Talent Activated.

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Introduction.

Despite broader movement toward gender parity in the workplace, women still face significant barriers to entry and success.

Without immediate and direct intervention, these gaps will persist and possibly grow wider. Leaders must act now to create more equal opportunities for women to join their workforce, thrive, and ultimately move up the ladder.

This guide leverages advice from industry experts and senior leaders to provide actionable insights regarding the recruitment, retention and advancement of women professionals in the technology industry. Talent acquisition, human resources, and executive leaders are encouraged to use these experts' knowledge to improve their own understanding of diversity, equity and inclusion in the workplace, and reinforce critical strategies and initiatives.

WHERE GAPS REMAIN:

Gender Disparities in the Workplace

Though there's been a tremendous amount of progress made over the past several years, gender disparities in the workplace are still very much alive. We applaud the leaders, organizations, and individuals advocating for and acting in favor of greater transparency and equity within the workplace; true equity will be the result of tangible change, not just good ideas.

However, in order to transform good ideas into action, it's vital that we first understand where we're starting from. This section provides a high level overview of how women fare in the workplace today, specifically in the tech industry.

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Women in the Workplace Statistics

The following statistics help illustrate the impact of today's workplace on women professionals.

WOMEN ARE SUBJECT TO THE BROKEN RUNG.

The "broken rung" refers to the first major career step to manager that ultimately bars women from achieving more senior executive roles. We see that play out often in the tech industry.

Just 19 percent of entry and mid-level roles in tech are held by women, and even fewer women (16 percent) have senior titles. At the executive level, just 10 percent of positions are held by women.

10%

IN THE TECH INDUSTRY, JUST 10 PERCENT OF EXECUTIVE POSITIONS ARE HELD BY WOMEN.

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*At the company level, I believe we need to shift from mentorship to true sponsorship. We must **implement sponsorship programs with a high degree of accountability** at the most senior level, which includes having senior leaders actively sponsor one or two women and **champion them for senior technical and leadership roles** via talent review, special assignments, promotions, and the like."*

OLGA BRAYLOVSKIY
VP OF HR FOR TECHNOLOGY AND
CUSTOMER SUCCESS AT INTUIT

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GENDER BIAS IS REAL.

A 2014 study on the influence of gender in the application process revealed that a woman's success rate in the application process hovered around 18 percent.

However, a 2020 meta-analysis of a past application process showed that when applications are partially anonymous (i.e. when the applicant's name is removed) women's acceptance rate increases to 23 percent. When applications are fully anonymized, that rate increases to 30 percent.

DISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF SEX IS PREVALENT.

Discrimination of any kind is widespread in the tech industry. In fact, according to a 2021 Built In report, 73 percent of tech employees report having been treated unfairly in the workplace because of their race, gender, sexual orientation, religion or some other aspect of their identity.

In 2020, more than 21,000 sex-based charges were filed with the EEOC. Of those, 61.7 percent were resolved as "No Reasonable Cause."

40%

JUST OVER HALF (53 PERCENT) OF TECH EMPLOYERS SAY WOMEN MAKE UP LESS THAN 40 PERCENT OF THEIR WORKFORCE.

GENDER GAPS STILL EXIST.

Non-binary and non-cisgender individuals are a very small minority within the tech industry and deserve greater representation. Just 2 percent of tech professionals identify as non-binary, and 91 percent of tech employers say non-binary individuals make up less than 10 percent of their staff.

FURTHER READING:

2021 State of DEI in Tech Report. Download Now.

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WOMEN ARE MORE LIKELY TO FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE IN THE WORKPLACE.

Built In data also shows that women (30 percent) are more likely to disagree with the statement, "I feel comfortable being my authentic self at work," than men (24 percent).

However, we must be aware of the impact of intersectionality on how people perceive and experience the workplace. While 23 percent of white women disagree with the statement above, more than half of Black women (57 percent) disagree with it.

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How to Recruit More Women

Helping employees thrive in the workplace starts by creating equal and equitable opportunities for them to join your workforce. In this section, **Alexa Murtagh, Senior Talent Acquisition Partner at Built In,** shares advice and best practices for recruiting women professionals.

Combating Gender Bias During Recruitment

TRAIN YOUR INTERVIEWERS + HIRING MANAGERS

"In general, the first step as you begin to recruit for any open roles — whether that's at scale or just one role — is to have some sort of diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) strategy in place," says Murtagh. "That includes unconscious bias training for everyone at your company, but particularly for your recruiters and hiring managers."

Murtagh also advises general interview training for anyone involved in the process — even executives. "Typically, there's an expectation that senior leaders have hired before, they've built great teams, they know what they're doing," says Murtagh. "But that's not always the case, especially as the market and your talent pool continues to evolve."

> "In general, the first step as you begin to recruit for any open roles — whether that's at scale or just one role — is to have some sort of diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) strategy in place."

Ensuring that, as a recruiter, you effectively and regularly train the people conducting interviews is essential to combating bias, and gender bias in particular. For some interviewers, this might mean introducing the topic for the first time, or offering a refresher course. Either way, training must be the absolute first step.

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GET LEADERSHIP'S BUY-IN

Initial training helps get everyone on the same page. However, to ensure the team is aligned, you'll need to get everyone's full buy-in. "Communicate with your leadership team, and make sure there is a strategy in place regarding critical diversity metrics," says Murtagh.

Having your leaders' buy-in and those metrics in place will ensure that your recruitment strategy follows suit. "You'll pay closer attention to which sourcing mechanisms are in place, where you're posting open roles, how you're collecting referrals, and so on," Murtagh adds. "From an employer branding perspective, you can tailor your strategy in order to achieve those key metrics you have in place."

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Unconscious bias towards women's abilities happens daily. Moreover, the self-doubting nature in women might actually be the biggest roadblock for women's success in the tech industry."

DAI WHALEY
VP OF QA AND
TEST AUTOMATION
AT APPLIED SYSTEMS

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Setting Gender-Diversity Recruiting Goals

To set diversity goals around hiring and be able to track your progress, Murtagh recommends first taking a look at where your team is at today.

"For example, if it's quite a glaring issue like having no women on your team, the next step is to diagnose the problem and where it's coming from," says Murtagh. "Ask yourself whether that might be a leadership issue, a market issue, a problem with where you're posting your jobs, where you're looking for that talent, and so on."

Identifying the issue and then getting to the root of the problem will enable your team to better understand what's at play and drive a better strategy forward.

At Built In, this is a collaborative effort. "We work with our HR team, our hiring managers, and our leadership teams to set our goals," says Murtagh. "We also rely heavily on our internal diversity and inclusion leader to better inform our strategy around the market state and industry standards so that we can continue to improve."

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In order to move away from a constant struggle to help women "catch up," **our time and resources are better spent evolving our systems to better serve the diverse makeup of our workforce today and in the near future.** *For example, many companies still evaluate people on hours logged in the office or give high-visibility projects that require travel to single men, which can inherently disadvantage women who work and take on caregiving responsibilities. Instead, companies can become more expansive on what success actually looks like, such as efficiency and impact on company objectives."*

KELLIE WAGNER
FOUNDER & CEO
AT COLLECTIVE

Benefits That Help Recruit And Retain Women

"One of the biggest factors is parental leave," says Murtagh. "Having a robust strategy in place in order to provide women — and all parents — the balance between their personal and professional lives is of utmost importance."

According to Built In users' search behavior, a generous parental leave package is the eighth most sought after perk nationwide. Because it's in such high demand, employers are likely to build out more comprehensive offerings, meaning those that are lacking in this area will be hard-pressed to attract great talent.

#8

A GENEROUS PARENTAL LEAVE PACKAGE IS THE EIGHTH MOST SOUGHT AFTER PERK NATIONWIDE.

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SECTION II

"A poor parental leave package might be a deterrent for some people," says Murtagh. "If a candidate has two job offers and one company provides a really robust program while the other [employer's program] is more limited, that will be a deterring factor for a lot of women."

To better recruit and retain women to your company, Murtagh advises implementing or enhancing your parental leave policy. "Being the first working parent at a company is always really tough — no one wants to have to create their own leave plan," says Murtagh. "Including this within your employee benefits package and having it be equitable, fair and robust, is critical."

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I think that there's a specific type of advocation and sponsorship we need more of, and it has to do with the cultural caretaking position that many women have. This impacts all caretakers, but disportionately affects women. **I believe one of the first steps is the normalization of caretaking.** *We must elevate the issue above just being a woman's issue to being a worker's issue before we will be able to create equitable sponsorship opportunities for women across the board."*

KRISTEN ELLERBE TAYLOR
VP OF TECHNOLOGY
AT PRECISIONHAWK

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Writing A Job Description

As a recruiter, the process of writing a job description can be reactive. Oftentimes, a hiring manager hands a job post to a talent acquisition partner and asks them to start sourcing candidates.

"It's our job as talent professionals to really go over those in depth and think critically about the ask," says Murtagh. "That means considering who the hiring manager is, what biases they might have introduced based on the candidate they're looking for, whether those are reflected in the job description, and how we can adjust the language to address them."

For example, a hiring manager may ask for an "analytical ninja," which can deter a lot of applicants because the language is inherently masculine. **An inclusive job description is void of gendered language.**

It's also free of unnecessary job requirements. <u>Men tend to apply</u> to jobs if they meet 60 percent of the criteria, whereas women apply to jobs when they meet 100 percent of the requirements. This means that including non-essential requirements within your job description will unintentionally weed out women from your applicant pool.

60%

MEN TEND TO APPLY TO JOBS IF THEY MEET 60 PERCENT OF THE CRITERIA, WHEREAS WOMEN APPLY TO JOBS WHEN THEY MEET 100 PERCENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS.

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Employer Branding to Attract Diverse Candidates

Attracting diverse candidates starts with telling the story of your employees — how they've grown on your team, what they're working on, what they're passionate about and how they have an impact on the business.

MAKE STORYTELLING A PART OF EVERY STRATEGY

To help ingrain storytelling within your recruitment process, Murtagh recommends making it part of your outreach strategy. "In my outreach messages to candidates, I'll often include a perks flyer that shows the employee benefits we offer or one-pager that specifically shows the growth path of some of our female talent," says Murtagh.

"Recruiters often have canned outreach messages, but I think it's important to change your approach based on who you're reaching out to in order to ensure the language is inclusive and relevant to each individual."

LEVERAGE YOUR EMPLOYEES

Turn to your people to help tell the story of your company. "Look for people who have awesome stories to tell," says Murtagh. "Those individuals who have been recently promoted, leaders with diverse, professional backgrounds, or employees who changed careers paths and are now top performers on your team."

Once you've identified these individuals, lean in to better understand their story and what they're comfortable sharing. "Some individuals may not want to tell the story of being a 'woman leader on the sales team,'" explains Murtagh.

"Instead, they may prefer to tell their story from the perspective of a badass salesperson. The story must be authentic to the individual and their journey."

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Build a culture that supports work-life balance. In my experience, **women and POC employees work themselves to the bone to prove themselves and rise above our historic workplace marginalization...** but it isn't sustainable to do so when it leads to burnout and departure from the industry."

MICHELE CANTOS
SR. ORGANIZATIONAL LEADER, PR SPECIALIST, WRITER AND SPEAKER

builtin

How to Support Women in the Workplace

From the moment an employee joins your company, the people team must work diligently to provide each individual the resources and support they need to thrive in the workplace — as a professional and as a person. In this section, **Kelly Keegan, Vice President of People at Built In**, shares strategies for empowering women to succeed at work.

Strategies for People Leaders

TRACK EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

One of the most important responsibilities of the people team is to ensure every employee feels valued and respected. A key strategy to achieve this is by measuring employee engagement. "We spend a lot of time focused on our team's engagement and overall happiness," says Keegan. "We do that through various engagement survey tools, and then make sure we assess that data by each team."

Keegan also advises analyzing engagement data based on key demographics to ensure engagement is felt across the board and by each individual. "Whether that's by race, or by gender, or by age, it's about identifying different trends and gaps, and ensuring that everyone feels a sense of inclusion and belonging in your workplace."

IMPLEMENT EMPLOYEE RESOURCE GROUPS

Leveraging these insights promotes better understanding and helps teams account for intersectionality in the workplace. Intersectionality looks at how multiple identities converge and contribute to different experiences and specific challenges. In addition to engagement data, Keegan advises implementing employee resources groups (ERGs) to better support employee diversity and unique identities.

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"Having executive and HR sponsorship in all of our ERGs allows us to have greater insight into some of the more vulnerable feedback that exists within each group," says Keegan. **"As an HR and executive team, we can cultivate a better awareness of our employees and ensure that we're trying to be as inclusive and equitable as possible."**

Keegan's team uses this insight to train managers on being better leaders for their direct reports. "We want to ensure that each manager has a greater level of compassion for their directs' experiences, whether that's through various trainings related to DEI or specific HR coaching, it's about cultivating a greater awareness of those intersectionalities."

DEFINITION

INTERSECTIONALITY:
Intersectionality describes and examines how multiple identities converge and contribute to different experiences and specific challenges.

PRIORITIZE YOUR OWN LEARNING

Keegan stresses the importance of continued learning, and strongly recommends that learning start with HR leaders. "Doing the work on a regular basis and ensuring that there's some sort of learning taking place each week is vital," says Keegan. As an HR leader, set broader goals for your entire team, and encourage each individual to set specific goals for their own learning.

"As a team, you can facilitate more conversations around your learnings, support each other's growth and continue to elevate the conversation around your education."

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Addressing Pay Inequity and the Broken Rung

Pay inequity has long been a problem in the workplace, and it's estimated that the wage gap won't officially close <u>until 2059</u>. Cultivating equity and mutual respect within the workplace includes establishing equal pay across the board.

To do so, Keegan recommends regular pay equity analyses. A pay equity analysis examines pay rate for similar work and roles, accounting first for factors like location and experience, and then investigating discrepancies based on factors of identity such as race and gender.

"At a minimum, companies should do this annually," says Keegan. "If you've never done it before, it might be overwhelming. But just like any other DEI work, it's about getting started and recognizing where some of the gaps exist."

DEFINITION

PAY EQUITY ANALYSIS:

A pay equity analysis examines pay rate for similar work and roles, accounting first for factors like location and experience, and then investigating discrepancies based on factors of identity such as race and gender.

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Despite broad gender balance entering institutions, men reach the first level of management 2:1 over women. This gap persists, agnostic of people leaving the workforce to have children or provide care. **Fix that first rung and you solve the majority of the gap at the top.** *It will take time, likely a generation, but if we don't start now, this gap will perpetuate. To do this requires rewiring the system that evaluates performance to ensure uniformity in the standards and the process."*

BETSY ZIEGLER
CEO AT 1871

Eliminating Discrimination and Sexual Harassment

STATE AND TRAIN EMPLOYEES ON YOUR ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY

The pay gap isn't the only issue women face in the workplace. Sexual harassment and discrimination are ongoing problems. In fact, 81 percent of women have experienced workplace sexual harassment in their lifetime. Preventing and eradicating harassment in the workplace starts with an employer's stance.

Having a clear, no-tolerance anti-harassment policy sets the expectation that every individual in the workplace will treat one another with respect and are safe to be their true, authentic selves. The policy should be written out, clearly explained to each employee, and made available for reference in an employee handbook.

LEVERAGE UNCONSCIOUS BIAS TRAINING

From there, company-wide training is essential. "But it's not just running a training that employees are forced to take and sign off on," says Keegan. "Having a conversation afterwards and facilitating it with specific questions helps heighten everyone's awareness of these issues because it's most often the stuff that you're not aware of that has the greatest impact on a woman's ability to thrive." For that, Keegan emphasizes unconscious bias training.

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SECTION III

"For example, when you're aware of small factors like how men are more likely to participate in a meeting than women, leaders are able to facilitate meetings so everyone participates," says Keegan.

Unconscious bias training helps employees become aware of their tendencies and stereotypes against certain groups that form outside of an individual's awareness. This type of training encourages individuals to act more thoughtfully and in a manner that fosters true inclusion.

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*Research suggests that 73% of women experience microaggressions or discrimination which is rooted in bias. **It is the responsibility of leadership — men and women — to draw the line when we see evidence of this.** It's also critical to focus on succession plans and to create and support development plans that help women to obtain the skills and experiences needed to break down gendered career paths."*

NIKKI GRIGSBY, PHR
SVP OF GLOBAL CUSTOMER
SUCCESS & SERVICE AT CISION

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Fostering a Culture of Trust and Transparency

Above all, creating a culture of open communication encourages employees to speak up and address issues when they arise. Microaggressions — subtle or indirect actions or statements that are derogatory to an individual of a marginalized group — often go unnoticed. They also often go unreported because they seem too small or insignificant to escalate.

"It comes down to having a culture of transparency and trust, which can be a really challenging recipe," says Keegan. "Ensuring there's an open-door policy so that people feel there's a sense of inclusion and belonging so that even if they have something difficult to share, they still feel comfortable doing so."

DEFINITION

MICROAGGRESSIONS:
Microaggressions are subtle or indirect actions or statements that are derogatory to an individual of a marginalized group.

Facilitating conversations where employees have the opportunity to share their experiences and understand their coworkers' experiences helps build a foundation of trust among colleagues.

"Having a facilitator or moderator is essential to create the space necessary for sharing," says Keegan. "Ask every member of the conversation to commit to collective agreements, which are ground rules for the discussion but with a two-way commitment." This helps establish safety within sharing and openness among the participants.

A facilitator is also tasked with moderating the conversation. "When somebody completes their share, especially if it's a vulnerable share, the facilitator thanks them for their share and gives everyone an opportunity to take a breath, so there's a little more spaciousness between what was just shared and the next speaker," adds Keegan.

"Having a facilitator or moderator is essential to create the space necessary for sharing. Ask every member of the conversation to commit to collective agreements, which are ground rules for the discussion but with a two-way commitment."

Paired with training, open conversations like these help build trust between leadership and employees, as well as connection and respect among colleagues.

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*Great leaders are honest and **maintain a transparent line of communication** where employees, especially women, are empowered to speak up and feel like they truly belong here."*

VIDYA SRINIVASAN
SENIOR PM OF PRODUCT &
GROWTH AT MICROSOFT TEAMS

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Advice From the Experts

We know that getting started on a new initiative or program is often easier when you have advice from leaders who have already been through the process. That's why we turned to 10 senior leaders for their advice on career development, tackling the gender gap, and raising up the next generation of women.

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Career Growth

WHAT WAS MOST IMPACTFUL IN HELPING GROW YOUR CAREER?

"Not focusing on vertical growth and embracing many lateral moves into different areas enabled me to learn new spaces and make impacts in different domains. From HR, Finance, Technology, Consulting and Operations, **these moves allowed me to gain broad perspectives, develop a diverse career portfolio and become a more 'function agnostic' leader.** Also, having a couple of true sponsors who advocated for me and truly championed me for the roles without me even being aware of this at the time."

— OLGA BRAYLOVSKIY
VP of HR for Technology and Customer Success at Intuit

"I knew I didn't have all the answers or resources I needed, so I spent my early career reading every career website geared toward women and people of color (learning about personal branding, the job search, leadership, salary negotiation, etc.), and **I took every opportunity to meet potential mentors.** Now, I have expertise in what I do and I have a network of mentors, peers, and sponsors who seek me out proactively for opportunities."

— MICHELE CANTOS
Sr. Organizational Leader, PR Specialist, Writer + Speaker

"I had a female tech leader and mentor of mine once tell me that **the best thing you can do is lean into conflict, uncertainty, and difficult times.** That has been the foundation that I built my career. I am a problem solver and solution finder. Hard problems, turmoil after acquisitions, client loss, and failed releases have been the most pivotal moments in my career. When the wind howls, turn toward it and step up to meet its challenge."
 — **KRISTEN ELLERBE TAYLOR**
VP of Technology at PrecisionHawk

"Over the years I've built a small, but powerful circle of strong male and female leaders that have excelled in their respective careers. I call this circle my 'Board of Directors.' Every member of my board **brings a unique skill set that closely matches a skill set in my life that I'm trying to hone to become a better, more successful leader.** More importantly, they believe in me and are always willing to take the time to answer questions, coach, guide, brainstorm, and even straighten my crown when it slips a little."
— **MAJALIWA BASS**
VP of Product Marketing at Thomson Reuters

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My mentor once shared with me what differentiates a good leader from a great leader is emotional intelligence. Being a leader is hard. It's not just hitting goals, setting a vision, but **the most essential role of a leader is driving emotions in the right direction while hitting those goals.** *Without emotional intelligence, one will never be a great leader. This piece of advice has always been my guiding star and made me the leader I am today."*

AIHUI ONG
CEO AT WHISTLE.COM

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"Three principles have been most impactful in helping me grow my career: 1) I've taken a lattice versus ladder approach to my career and have taken on roles that have been lateral, diagonal or vertical to help gain cross-functional experience, broaden my perspective, learn more and move across the organization. 2) **I firmly believe in the idea of 'ready-enough'. I keep that in mind when pursuing a new challenge just as much as when I'm in the position to hire, promote or assign a project to someone.** 3) Years ago, I had a mentor share the following quote with me: 'Find your voice then listen to it. Even when it shakes. Especially then...' It was impactful years ago and still is!"

— NIKKI GRIGSBY, PHR
SVP of Global Customer Success & Service at Cision

"For me, one of the most impactful things that helped me thrive in my career was getting explicit permission from people I respected. Permission to speak up, to contribute, to take risks. In environments where stepping out of line could be seen as make or break for your career, **having managers that encouraged me to take up space and stretch myself helped me build the confidence** to do those things automatically later on down the road."

— KELLIE WAGNER
Founder & CEO at Collective

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"I have been very lucky. I have had mentors my whole career who really cared about me and my personal success as a person and as a leader. As I look back, it's a series of discussions, a compilation of advice, and the confidence of knowing that people have my back that have led to my ability to continue to grow."
— BETSY ZIEGLER
CEO at 1871

"Taking the first step — even when I felt I wasn't the right person or lacked the skills to succeed. Taking the first step and pushing myself outside my comfort zone helped me gain experiences that not only accelerated my career but also taught me valuable life lessons."
— VIDYA SRINIVASAN
Senior PM of Product & Growth at Microsoft Teams

"One of my former managers said to me, **'If you want to be a leader, you need to think and act like a leader."** This sentence started my journey into tech leadership."
— DAI WHALEY
VP of QA and Test Automation at Applied Systems

Supporting the Advancement of Women

WHAT IS MOST PROMINENTLY MISSING FROM THE WORKPLACE THAT IS CRUCIAL TO SUPPORTING THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN? WHAT IS THE SOLUTION?

"I can't speak for all women, but I know one of the top reasons I'm where I am today is because of sponsorship. This came from other women primarily, but all individuals, irrelevant of gender, believed in my talents enough to vouch for me. One of the barriers to advancement I faced was opportunity and being seen. People who think of you and then speak good of you and broaden your opportunity and give you chances you'd miss otherwise."
— KRISTEN ELLERBE TAYLOR
VP of Technology at PrecisionHawk

"Sponsors. Most corporations have figured out that it's important to have mentors and have done a good job of ensuring that women have mentors in the workplace. However, the men that have advanced in the company often did so because of **sponsors — people who didn't just coach but advocated for them."**
— MAJALIWA BASS
VP of Product Marketing at Thomson Reuters

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"Advancement of women in the workplace is a journey that hinges on the contributions from everyone. There are many women and allies who go above and beyond their day-job to contribute to this journey — be it by challenging stereotypes, building a community, mentoring others, etc. Each of these efforts take time, effort and energy, and have proved to be quite impactful. But, oftentimes, such contributions are considered 'extracurriculars' and are not factored into the rewards and promo discussions. **There are little to no incentives in place today to recognize people who are helping move the needle.** At best, it goes unnoticed. At worst, it may negatively impact your career if these contributions do not align with your team's business goals.

If we want to help women advance in their careers, we must build a system that recognizes the impact, and rewards people working towards this cause. Equality and equity in the workplace must be a part of everyone's job description. This will create a ripple effect and benefit other communities beyond just women."

— VIDYA SRINIVASAN
Senior PM of Product & Growth at Microsoft Teams

Advice for Leaders and Employers

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO LEADERS AND EMPLOYERS ON HOW THEY CAN HELP WOMEN RISE IN THEIR CAREERS AND/OR IN THE TECH INDUSTRY?

"Do not assume that women who take time off for their kids' activities or time off to take care of their aging parents are less competent and less committed to their career. **Do not assume that mothers or caregivers are less willing to take on challenging assignments or travel.** Leaders and employers need to establish a fair policy to ensure women, regardless of their commitment outside of work, be presented with equal opportunities as their male counterparts."
**— AIHUI ONG
CEO at Whistle.com**

"Create a meritocratic environment by providing transparency in how everyone is reviewed and build options for flexibility for everyone. Professional services firms are best at this. I knew every step of the way at McKinsey what good, great, and distinctive performance looked like and how it was evaluated. **Everyone needs flexible options as their lives change, not just women.** On-ramps and off-ramps have to become more ubiquitous, more standard so that they can be normalized for all to take advantage of."
**— BETSY ZIEGLER
CEO at 1871**

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"There is an amazing wealth of knowledge, passion, and moxie that sits before us. We just need to push to open those doors. It starts with fair and equitable relationships. Reach out and spend the time to get to know your circle of women. **Don't forget to invite them to the bar after work to watch the basketball game or out to lunch just to chat. These moments are where relationships, coaching, and growth begin.** With strong relationships, all the rest of the work will fall into place. You never know what you are missing out on. I spent time with our office manager and quickly learned she had a Computer Science degree and wanted to get closer to technology. That gets missed if you don't lean in and get to know the women around you."

— KRISTEN ELLERBE TAYLOR
VP of Technology at PrecisionHawk

"Build a meaningful community inside your company to support women in tech. **Encourage women to participate in the tech community outside of the company.** Give challenging and highly visible projects to women, providing mentorship and support along the journey."

— DAI WHALEY
VP of QA and Test Automation at Applied Systems

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Quite frankly I don't think women need help to rise in their careers. The world does not lack talented, driven women. Women aren't rising in their careers because leaders and employers are standing in their way with walls of bias, gender wage gaps, and outdated, preconceived notions of what a good leader looks like. As a result, talented and capable women are overlooked. ***My advice would be for those leaders and employers to simply move themselves out of the way, and let those women do what they do best... rise and lead!"***

MAJALIWA BASS
VP OF PRODUCT MARKETING
AT THOMSON REUTERS

As Majaliwa Bass put it, women don't need help rising in their careers. What they do need is for employers to break down the walls that stand in the way of their advancement. **According to these 10 leaders, that's best done through sponsorship, not mentorship, and increased transparency across the organization.**

Start looking at the systems in your company that lead to advancement: are they truly equitable, accounting for the many challenges and obstacles women face?

Remember, equity is not the same as equality; though every individual may have the same opportunities before them, that doesn't mean they have the same chance of success. Understanding where and why inequities exist is the first step in creating a truly equitable system in which all individuals can excel.

For more resources on supporting women in tech, <u>check out our website here.</u>

GET MORE RESOURCES

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United We Tech.

Built In helps tech professionals stay on top of trends and news, expand their networks and carve out futures at companies they believe in.

Let's work together.

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