



Women of Risk Community - Book of Wisdom

June 2021





Tracy Benard
National Managing Partner,
Risk Management and
WORC Executive Sponsor

“ To make real and impactful strides toward gender equality, we all need to commit to lifelong learning, challenge the status quo and empower one another. ”

“ Mentors, both informal and formal, and Sponsors have played an amazing role in my life and career. I’ve had Mentors who have become Sponsors (I define as someone who advocates for me when I’m not in the room) and Sponsors I didn’t realize were Sponsors until after the fact. I also find tremendous value in mentoring and sponsoring others – hearing their perspectives, sharing ideas, and serving as a confidence booster and informal advisor for them. One tip I heard from a mentor a couple years back was to create my own ‘personal board of directors’ – people who can give you perspectives from several angles and have your best interest in mind. My personal board of directors includes colleagues (at all levels), mentees and mentors, sponsors, clients, friends, and family. While board “membership” changes from time to time, I lean on my personal board to help me evaluate important decisions and receive guidance on the big and small things in life. ”



Lisa Rawls
Principal,
WORC Chapter Leader,
Consulting Service
Network Leader – GRC
Technology

“ Life is about choices. I choose to foster an inclusive environment where others are as comfortable with their authenticity, as I am with mine. In this environment we are ‘all in’; we are a collection of our personal experiences, we are valued, respected, and we thrive. ”



Cynthia Izzo
Principal,
WORC Chapter Leader,
Consulting Service
Network Leader -
Technology Risk
Management



Jennifer Shimek
Principal, Forensic

“ My advice to my younger self would be to have patience. This career journey is a long ultra-marathon vs. a sprint around the track. Take the time to enjoy the moments, the promotions, the experiences and the journey itself. Practice self-care, and do not be too hard on yourself – we all hit bumps in the road along the way. And finally, be kind and confident, yet humble, and don’t be afraid to fail. It’s all part of the journey. ”



Amanda Rigby
Principal,
Consulting Service
Network Leader –
Forensic

“ If given the opportunity to influence my younger-self I would have said, remember to: Take a stand for what you believe in and share your point of view;

Be Passionate:

Have a purpose: and

Be confident in your capabilities ”

“ My best advice is to make sure you prioritize your self-care and wellness. Create the boundaries necessary to take care of yourself, so you can be at your best. This means having certain non-negotiables at home and at work. Feel empowered to carve out time each day to meditate, get in a workout, connect with family or friends, and prepare healthy meals. Staying in that positive, growth mindset is key to your success and it’s about ensuring your body, mind and spirit are in the right place. ”



Allison Jackson
Director,
Corporate
Communications



Jayme Tave
Associate Director,
Digital and Creative

“ The advice I’d like to share is to take time each day to make conscience personal connections. Earlier in my career I was always work first focused and kept work and personal separate. Being my authentic self, makes my job so much more enjoyable with the people around me. I’ve learned the personal is what motivates me more and the people I work with are the most dynamic part of KPMG. The people connections are more important than ever, especially in this virtual environment. ”



Stacey Tripp
Director,
Risk Advisory Solutions

“ As you are being pulled up by other female leaders, make sure you are reaching down with the other hand to pull up new female leaders.

Stop calling it imposter syndrome because that connotation is a negative one. You are not an imposter. Change it up to be more positive. First, acknowledge how you are feeling in certain situations, and then, remind yourself I deserve to be here and leave the feelings of inadequacy behind!

Recognize that you may never achieve a balance between work and life and that is ok. Sometimes work will be in the lead and sometimes life will take priority and that is ok. Ask for help and set boundaries as you decide which part work or life needs to take the lead at a given moment. ”

“ Imposter Syndrome has been one of the biggest struggles I have dealt with in my two years here at KPMG. I always thought to myself “Why am I here?”, “I am not good enough for this”, “That person is so much better at this than me”, and other belittling thoughts like that because of how I viewed myself as young woman in this industry. I know that I am not alone in these thoughts and many others just like me think the same things to themselves, when the truth is you are here for a reason. You have worked hard and put in the time and effort to get to where you are, and you deserve to be here. Just knowing that there are others out there having the same issues as me, has helped me a lot because I know I am not alone and it has given me the courage to say to myself “I am here for a reason”, “I belong here”, “I can do this”. It is tough to enter into an industry as a young woman, but just know that you are right where you belong, and you are strong enough and courageous enough to go out there and get what you want. In hard times it has helped me to reach out to others and talk to them about how I am feeling because in the end they are probably feeling the same way and we can support each other and lift each other up through speaking about these issues we are facing. Our community of women here at KPMG are so helpful and empowering and they are one of the biggest support systems that I have used to help me overcome imposter syndrome. Just know, if you are ever feeling this way, you are not alone, and you are meant to be here. ”



Courtney Reese
Associate,
GRC Technology



Robbie Atabaigi
Lead Specialist,
CIO Advisory

“ When feeling overwhelmed, take a deep breath, and remember what C. S. Lewis stated: You can't go back and change the beginning BUT you can start where you are and change the ending. ”

“ I hold the Nike motto of “Just do it” close to heart and have made it my own by constantly reminding myself and others, “What’s the worst that could happen?”. Living by this mantra has enabled me to go for opportunities, make connections and extend my reach beyond what I would naturally do, helping me further both my personal and career growth/development. ”



Bunmi Alli
Director,
Technology Assurance



Robert Cavigliano
Manager,
Financial Services
Solutions

“ As a leader, it’s imperative to understand what makes the individuals on your team tick. If you’re able to have an appreciation for the perspective of others, you will be much more successful in communicating the objectives of any initiative and motivating the collective team members to deliver results.

Also, never underestimate the art of reflection. It is often hard to understand the gravity of our actions or decisions in the moment. At the end of each day, take 10-minutes to think critically – remove distractions and replay your interactions. ”



Delaina Sweat
Senior Director,
VC Advisory

“ Mentoring is so important, to mentor and be mentored, but sponsorship is critical for future leaders. Someone once shared with me early in my career that you should always have both arms stretched out – one forward to connect with someone pulling you up and one behind you pulling someone up with you. This resonated so much with me. While I think we probably all have more than two hand stretched out 😊, the connection of succeeding together is so powerful. ”

“ Establish boundaries early and often, and pick an outlet (mine is exercise!) that you strive for each day, even if its 20 minutes! ”



Olivia Tomoff
Manager,
GRC Technology



Joy St John
Director,
Financial Services
Regulatory and
Compliance Risk

“ One piece of advice I would give my younger self is Don't let the trials and tribulations you experience define you. How you respond to and what you learn from those trials are what makes you who you are.

Everyone experiences pain and challenges. As long as you stay true to yourself, keep a positive outlook and always look for ways to overcome, you will go far in life. Before you respond, take a step back, ask yourself, will this make me/someone a better person? Is this going to hurt someone? Will this have a positive impact on me/someone/world? In a difficult situation, am I taking the high road? At the end of the day, no one can change your character, unless you let them.”

“ To my younger self, the advice I would give:

- Be curious, ask questions, and enjoy the fascination of learning new things.
- Be kind, and always hold out your hand to a friend who needs help. And remember to be kind to yourself too.
- Laugh lots and make others laugh too.
- Have courage and don't be scared of failure. Try your hardest, believe in yourself, and learn from your mistakes.
- Be resilient. Some days will be harder than others, you are strong, don't give up.
- Be grateful every day for all that you have – focus on the positives, not the negatives. ”



Samantha Gloede
Managing Director,
Technology Risk
Management



Amanda Harrison
Director,
Technology Assurance

“ Raise your hand if you are drowning with work. You are the only one at the firm that knows everything you are doing. While you might assume people know how much you are doing, they may not – intentionally or unintentionally. So let people know if it gets to be too much, not enough, or not in line with what you want – speak up. It’s the only way to ensure you get what you want out of your career. Don’t just be a passenger. Care enough throughout your career to be the driver. ”

“ As a leader, we need to step back and allow all to be heard, not just those that share in our opinion, experiences and thoughts. As a culture champion at KPMG, I challenge myself everyday and others each day to listen to all points of view and opinions. You never know how that different idea will change your perspective and open doors into endless possibilities. ”



Lucie Wuescher
Managing Director,
Internal Audit and
Enterprise Risk

“ To my working mothers out there – when you come back to work after childbirth life and work will be crazy. There will be times you want to throw in the towel because you will feel overwhelmed and stressed from the multiple roles you now have as mother and employee and wanting to be stellar at both. I am here to tell you it’s going to be all alright. There will be days you will give more to your employer than your family and there will be days you will not take that late night call to spend more time with your family. This is balance and it is necessary for you to succeed at your new dual role. Don’t be afraid to ask for help if you need it, know that your fellow peers are there to support you as well. Most importantly, trust yourself. Trust and have faith that you are doing an incredible job. You are ferocious, you are strong but above all – YOU are undeniably amazing. ”



Ruth Agosto
Senior Associate,
Technology Risk
Management



Melinda Mothander
Director,
GRC Technology

“ My best advice is “only worry about the things that I can control” and “there is no such thing as failure – you either succeed or had an opportunity to learn. ”

“ Own your career and build your network. By building relationships beyond your group you will gain valuable insight that will help you shape and refine your career. Don't be afraid to try something new. ”



Petra Gram
Director,
Consulting National

“ My best advice is to say “yes” to as many new and challenging experiences as possible. Push yourself out of your comfort zone by getting involved in your local office, with your service line, and in your community by doing things that don’t fit your typical narrative. You never know what you might learn, or who you might meet, that will enhance your personal and professional growth. Your willingness to push yourself outside of your boundaries will resonate with your colleagues and will foster a strong and well-rounded team. ”



Kate Scanlan-Gionta
Director,
Technology Assurance



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