

Inspiring Women in Tech Webinar

Additional student questions answered by our speakers

Leanne Cartwright-Bradford
Head of Operations at Audible

1. If you don't have a degree, how do we get into fields like these and be appealing to an employer?

This depends on the specific area you want to pursue, however, you can often take an entry level role, show interest and work hard and move up. Keep an eye on the businesses you want to work for and look for entry level positions, including roles on reception, in admin etc. My first roles were on reception and it taught me so much about all the different roles in the business and how businesses work.

2. Did you do a lot of training to get to where you are today?

I have a BA Communications and an MA in Profession Writing, but mostly it's the on the job experience. After your first few roles, you rarely get asked about University study at interviews. It's more about what you've done in previous roles. I have had a lot of mentoring from various people and I do observe others in order to learn.

3. Do you think that having some time off, backpacking, helped you figure out what you really wanted to do?

I think travelling made me more curious about the world, and made me more resilient and confident. I think those qualities helped me in my job search after I returned and in the workplace later on. Travelling also made me pursue opportunities outside Australia, later on in my career. I highly recommend it!

Kelly Pan
Mechanical Engineer

1. Have you faced any challenges with gender-based discrimination within the industry? and how did you manage these challenges?

I have previously worked on construction sites, and definitely experienced some minor uncomfortable situations of gender discrimination. This usually appeared in the jokes that were told, but sometimes I would find people helping me more than others. I found the best way was to call it out when I didn't feel comfortable with the joke, or topic, and to stand my ground. We need to remember that we are just as capable of doing construction or design work as anyone else.

2. How do you know if you're in the right field of tech?

To be honest, I don't! As I mentioned, I've worked in a lot of different companies, in a lot of different roles, and I never planned where my career was going. I do have a feeling what I am doing now makes the most sense to me – my passion lies in understanding how things work, and this role lets me really understand what keeps the “cloud” up and running all the time. But who knows, in another year or two the tech world may dramatically change again!

3. Is it difficult to get a job in this industry straight out of university?

It can definitely be challenging to land a job straight out of university, especially if you have your mind absolutely set on a specific company. I think the most important thing is to build up to it, take as many opportunities as they come, especially while you're in university! Get involved with student societies and career fairs, it's the best way to meet people and learn what opportunities are out there. If you're consistent with getting experience, I find it is a lot easier to land a job after you graduate. But if you're dead-set on a company, just remember, the role may not be exactly what you thought it was, go in open-minded!

Krishia Catabay

Regional Sourcing Manager

1. Would you say your Year 11 and 12 subject selections were along the pathway for your current career? Could you give advice on what you should do for your HSC?

My year 11 and 12 electives were more subjects that I liked to do for fun (such economics, software development and music) so not all are what I'd attribute to my career path. That said, I also took up advanced English and Extension 1 Mathematics, which I think are key foundations in almost any career path you wish to take. You might not end up needing to use Pythagoras theory in your career, but understanding how numbers work and how to communicate effectively really makes a difference when you reach tertiary studies as well as when you enter the workforce. If you have plans to get into the Tech world, STEM subjects would be a great start!

2. If you had to change jobs, what industry would you change to?

Having worked in both the public and private sectors, I think I'd like to continue working in an environment that is both innovative and fast paced. Any industry has the potential to be innovative, you'd just need to pick out which organizations want to take the lead in their industry and are looking to revolutionize the way things are done.

3. What are things that we could be doing now to prepare ourselves for the industry

Study, study, study! Do your homework weekly so you understand the foundations of each subject. Exam questions are almost always based on your homework questions so if you understand the problem solving strategies in depth from doing your homework, you won't need to cram when it comes to exam time. Again, STEM subjects are important foundations if you want to prepare yourself for the Tech Industry, particularly if you intend on taking tertiary studies at university so if they are available at your school, take them up! Try to find yourself a mentor who you look up to, and has achieved things that you also want to achieve. They'll be a great resource to guide you in what to look out for, what to read up on and what things to consider when taking your next step.

Rajita Baniya Khattri
Data Centre Technician

1. When did you start loving technology?

I was not sure at the beginning about technology career but once I started learning about it and how infinite learning is possible with this, I started loving technology. Also, the way it is making everyone's lives easier really inspires me and I am very happy to be part of this.

2. There are obvious hurdles for women trying to enter and succeed in Tech; what have your experiences been with these hurdles, and what is your advice to young women to deal with them?

The Biggest hurdle for me was my self-doubt, I was really intimidated with my male colleagues and always doubted that I am not good enough. I overcame this by continuously improving myself through self-learning and asking lots of questions.

So, I would like to advice young women to never doubt yourself, even though there might be situations where you might feel you don't know many things, that normal; everyone goes through that phase and the only way to eliminate it is to keep learning and getting better at it.

3. What degrees did you complete to be where you are today?

I did my master's degree in Information Technology that has helped me to get this role. There are different ways you can start your tech career such as, pursuing a degree, getting relevant industry certifications, online courses, boot camps and many more.

Marina Callegeros
Health & Safety Manager

1. What drove you to get to where you are today? Was there something that happened in your schooling or early in your working life that guided you on this path?

My teachers in high school and my family taught me that I could achieve anything if I applied myself. When I took on my first role in the safety field ten years ago I was lucky to have a manager who supported my career and who pushed me to learn and improve my skills. Four jobs later I am still in contact with this manager, they are my mentor and give me advice to help my career.

2. Have you completed further studies to build your knowledge and experience for your career?

Yes, since completing my degree I have taken several online courses and certificates to further my skills. I also attend seminars and read papers throughout the year to make sure I have knowledge of new trends and practices.

3. Do you have to get a degree to get a job in Tech?

No you don't need a degree to work in the Tech industry. There are some areas in Tech that may require a degree, TAFE course or certificate but there are also roles where you can learn on the job. It depends on what area of Tech you would like to work in and the position you would like to obtain. I recommend looking online for jobs you would like to have in the future and see what qualifications are listed on the job ad.

Watch the full Webinar recording here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jq-xTXWgeOE>