

Senior TechLeaders: Leading Across Cultures

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Culture Workshop Results

A significant portion of Senior TechLeaders: Leading Across Cultures was spent in a culture workshop. The culture workshop goals were to:

- Illuminate organizational and individual assumptions and challenges caused by the merging of cultures (ethnic or corporate)
- Identify practical leadership strategies to be more effective and inclusive when leading across cultures
- Increase awareness of leadership styles that work in merged cultures

The women broke into groups to discuss these questions:

- What is the culture of engineering or science?
- What are some of the assumptions, rules, and unspoken agreements in this world?
- What is it like being a woman in that culture? What are some opportunities and challenges?
- What is the sub culture of management and leadership in this environment?
- What can we do (from a cultural perspective) to bring in and retain the next generation of women?
- How can we grow the next generation of women leaders?
- Are the 'problem statements' the same for women of today as of tomorrow?

The groups then reported back on the challenges they'd discussed and solutions, including advice for technical women, leaders, and companies. The results of this very rich discussion will be the basis for a group paper. What follows is an outline of the groups' report-outs.

For more information contact Caroline Simard at the Anita Borg Institute for Women and Technology.

Challenges



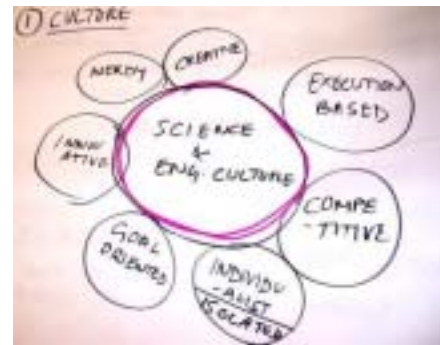
Current Culture

Barriers to Entry

- Parents' ideas/influence
- Media images of ideal woman
- Societal images of ideal woman
- Lack of information/accurate info

Science and engineering culture

- Nerdy
- Creative
- Execution-based
- Competitive
- Innovative
- Goal oriented
- Individualistic/isolated



Assumptions/rules

- Old boys club
- Glass ceilings
- Just do it!
- Branding and exclusion
 - Based on schools
 - Based on technical achievement



Women in engineering and science

- “Mother” concept
- Limited spots to grow to
- Lonely
- Lack of role models and champions
- Competitive/no gender collaboration
- Not self-promoting as men are



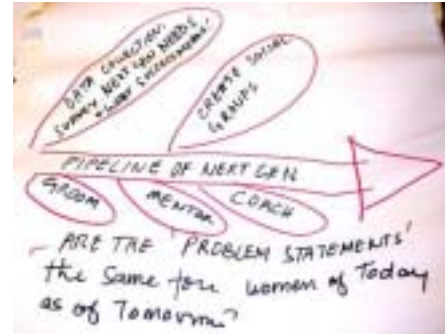
Solutions

What needs to change

- Work Rhythms
- Marketing
- ↑ Role Models
- Strategy to drive cultural shift
- Tooting Horn

Pipeline of next generation

- Data collection; survey next generation needs & what success means
- Create social groups
- Groom
- Mentor
- Coach



How to grow women leaders

1. Change the field

- Better support for part-time & sabbaticals – hiring, pay, promotion, management
- Courses on work life to career entrants and mid-career – how to assess & plan
- Greater variety of entry points – collaboration between academic/early education and industry to help get foot in the door
- Greater emphasis in academia on possible applications of field

2. Support women in the current environment

- Mentoring – organized and advertised within and outside organizations
- Encourage and support career “slow-down” (e.g., to raise children) instead of break
- Support/training for more assertive behavior and standing up against aggressive behavior
- Different definitions of success

Advice to Companies

- Take cultural differences into consideration in job evaluations
- Educate executives on cultural differences
- Encourage recruitment of more women in technical jobs
- Educate male executives to **NOT** stereotype women
- Require each Executive to take one “up and coming” women to lunch each month

- Ensure pipeline is fed and nurtured at all levels

Advice to Leaders

- Foster awareness of cultural differences
- Value inclusion and diversity in own team
- Coach to eliminate submissive behavior, e.g.:
 - Lowering eyes
 - Qualifying remarks
 - Turning statements into questions
- Honor/elevate and nominate women [Give recognition!]
- Seek out talented women and level the playing field
 - Foster/create women groups
 - Engage with national organizations (NCWIT, ABI)
 - ROI – Bottom line success
- Do surveys of women’s challenges/needs/wants
- Establish cross-gender networks that can feed the next generation of influence networks.
 - Local: initiate within team (sphere of influence)
 - Global: work with company to make this be mainstream
 - **Be a role model** and mentor and encourage men to do the same

Advice to Women

- Don’t give up!
- Mentors
 - Get a mentor!
 - Dialog with successful women
 - A male mentor can be good, too
- “Can do” attitude
- Position and credit yourself
- Speak up (Be more assertive)
- Develop trust/supportiveness for other women
 - Build and use support groups
- Network with others:
 - Extend existing circles and relationships
 - Make an effort to network and make it a habit
 - Use external network to get into internal network or vice versa
- Be Brave – emulate successful people
 - Own and drive your career
 - Build a network
- Don’t take it personally.
- You don’t have to be perfect (i.e., no such thing as SuperWoman)
- Understand the value of the social network.
- Don’t be afraid to ask. **Do Ask!**

Breakout Session Notes

Creating A Revolution

Desired Outcomes

- More women professors in CS/EE at research universities
- More women tech leaders/fellows
- More women corporate leaders in tech sector (policy and decision makers, mgmt, exec/C-level)
- More women creating computer games
- More young women choosing to pursue CS/EE/tech
- Pride in being in CS (a geek?)
- Public understanding of social relevance and importance of CS/EE/tech
- More interdisciplinary work

Manifesto

- Every computer scientist is regarded as a role model, rock star, and hero in the public eye – kids want to be in CS
- WE HAVE PRIDE in being computer scientists
 - BUT being a computer scientist != Geek
- EVERYONE in high school (at least) must be required to study CS
- The next US President must have a secretary of technology – we need a SCIENCE DEMOCRACY

Recommendations

- Public Service Announcements (PSAs)/ad campaign with Silicon Valley companies – NSF/NCWIT
- Get woman computer scientists on TV (Oprah, etc.)
- Get product companies to use CS people to market/advertise – get people to see the glamour
- Study Silicon Valley high schools and schools in other countries to determine whether more CS focus yields more young girls choosing CS/technology
- “This is how a road gets made” → everyday tech
- Promote use of science and technology on TV (?)
 - Use of tech for good (IRL)
 - Science + Technology League

Mentoring: Is It Real? (And What's This "Sponsorship" Thing?)

1. What is it?

- 1:1 regular communication
- Commitment
- Provides org. intro/insight/coaching/advise
- Mentee seeks relationship

2. Why do we not do it?

- "Every man for himself" Unfair?
- Sign of weakness?
- Self-reliance value
- Requires initiative – mentee requests

3. How would it change my life?

- Soft skills → advancement (or not), for example: conflict resolution style
 - In organization, what's valued in a leader
 - Transmission of organizational intelligence (politics, true meaning)
- Feedback on "RED" questions

4. How to get in on it?

- Identify mentor:
 - Women/men
 - Inside/outside organization
 - Respect
 - More knowledgeable
- TAKE INITIATIVE

5. Sponsorship

- Your PR person within organization
- High profile within organization
- Sponsor offers recommendation

Staying Technical

- Define the technical requirements of your role/get agreement
- Make it part of your performance plan
- Have courage to ask questions
- Schedule & prioritize dedicated time to learn
 - Focused time
 - No multi-tasking
 - 1 hour weekly
- Use different methods to learn
 - Reading
 - Attend conferences
 - Consult with trusted advisors
 - Lunch & learns
 - Monthly tech reviews
 - Build & leverage networks
 - Set up demo days with your team
- Facebook network **TechExecs: Women Committed to Staying Technical while in a Leadership Role**
 - <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=6382122187>
 - Learning buddies
 - Share 1 paragraph on what you learned this week

For more on this topic see Caroline's blog post at <http://anitaborg.org/news/archive/senior-techleaders-remaining-technical-while-becoming-an-executive/>

Industry/Academic Collaboration

- Industry/academia collaboration board
- Joint appointments for faculty industry/academe
- Explore specific topics such as end user programming

For more on this topic see Caroline's blog post at <http://anitaborg.org/news/archive/industry-university-collaborations/>

Effective Communication in the 21st Century

Scenario 1

- Western Project Manager, Chris, wants to communicate with Chinese/Eastern Engineering Manager, Xiang using our Communications Tool.
- Chris chooses:
 - graphical presentation format
 - Chinese language
 - Indirect communication
 - asynchronous communication
 - Context High
- The tool will generate:
 - a video clip of Chris talking
 - powerpoint slide on the side panel
 - speech translated to Chinese
 - social pleasantries will be added from the database
- YouTube contents will be minimized (using existing knowledge)

Scenario 2

- Learning Style:
 - color/graphics/pictures
 - text
 - audio
 - kinetic
- User Profile:
 - Language (e.g. Chinese, Japanese, Hindi)
 - Communication Style: direct (blunt) or indirect (more social pleasantries)
 - Time Urgency: asynchronous or synchronous (realtime)
 - Context: High (words are not important; nonverbal clues are important) Low (literal -- words are everything)
- User chooses one or more options on each menu and the recipient will receive the message based on the choices [asked exchanges method]

Communication methods

Asynchronous:

YouTube/podcast
Email
Wiki
Web group
Blog
Text Message

Synchronous:

Same time/ AIM
phone
face to face
telepresence
meeting place

