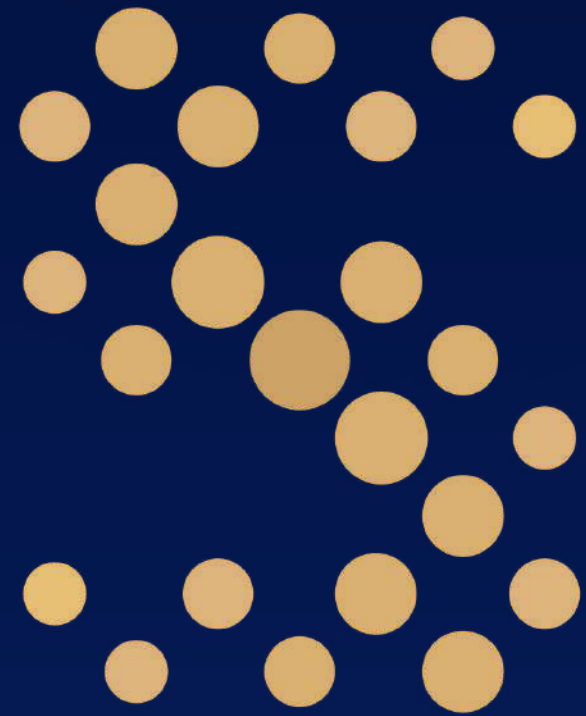


#strongwomeninit



STRONG WOMEN IN IT 2023 GLOBAL EDITION

Meet successful, hard-working, and inspiring women
in the world of the tech industry.



FUNDACJA
NETWORK
CREATIONS.

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STRONG WOMEN
IN IT 2023

#strongwomeninit

Hello!



Thank you for your interest in our Strong Women in IT report. We create it with passion and a belief that we want women in the technology industry to be more visible and appreciated. We aim for them to inspire each other and others with their experiences and knowledge, serving as role models.

This year's edition is our third attempt to showcase exceptional women who contribute to international innovations. It highlights the challenges and trends that matter most to them. The ever-changing pace of our lives, automation, digital security, and technology dependence is just a fraction of what not only Strong Women in IT but all of us observe and face in our daily lives.

I hope this publication will be a valuable source of knowledge for you, providing a better understanding of the market and serving as a networking tool. I encourage you to explore the profiles of 251 remarkable women who, through hard work, ambition, and creativity, can teach us a lot. Our goal is to promote more equality, mutual understanding, and support in the world of business, especially in the technology sector. Despite this report being about women, it wouldn't have been possible without exceptional men who nominated them and support them every day in their professional and personal lives.

Congratulations from the bottom of my heart to our Strong Women in IT. I know from some of you that this year's questions provided an opportunity for reflection, required focus, and at the same time, provoked some changes. I am delighted that with each report, our numbers continue to grow!

Anita Kijanka

CEO Come Creations Group

Founder & President of Strong Women in IT

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Methodology

For the third time, we are pleased to present the "Strong Women in IT - Global Edition" report, featuring successful, hard-working, and inspiring women who have achieved success in the technology industry.

As in previous years, we encouraged women in key positions in organizations operating in the field of new technologies from around the world to participate in the project. The study focuses on women in C-level, Director, or "Head of..." positions in IT companies. For the first time, we have also included representatives of turquoise organizations who have demonstrated their impact on their respective organizations.

The project work continued uninterrupted since May. This included inviting women to participate in the research, collecting responses, analyzing results, and developing the report's graphic design.

Data for the report was obtained from anonymous responses provided by women in key positions in IT organizations. The questionnaire, which served as the basis for the research, consisted of 56 questions, with a predominance of open-ended questions to gather more personal insights.

The report comprises a statistical section developed based on over 12,750 responses submitted by women in their surveys, expert comments from the report's jury members, and 251 pages dedicated to distinguished female leaders, where you will find answers to 4 selected questions.

The study focuses on several key areas, such as the role of women as leaders professionally and personally, work-life integration, challenges faced by women as leaders in the current market situation, the phenomenon of "technology overload," and key trends in the IT industry.

An important goal of the report is also to promote diversity and support the success of women in the IT industry, as well as to inspire women seeking role models in the world of technology. While there is a wealth of statistical data, research, and analysis on this topic, only one report presents the individual stories of these exceptional female leaders.

This year, for the first time, the creation of the report was supported by involved strategic partners: Billennium, BNP Paribas and UiPath.

#strongwomeninit

Statistical data



STRONG WOMEN IN IT 2023



251 inspiring women stories coming from Strong Women in IT 2023 from Europe, America, Asia and Africa, a record ever. I remember when 5 years ago, other women nominated me to the Report and I got accepted by the organization, and Jury. I was touched, privileged and motivated to even enhance my engagement into shaping a more inclusive and better world. Almost 400 women got nominated to our Report 2023 which is really rewarding for us, the SWIT Team. Quite a number of these women did not qualify due to lack of process completion, profile not meeting the criteria or lack of readiness to complete our questionnaire, still so valid and important for us.

Each of the finalists gives inspiration to others, shares her challenges, brings different perspectives, is ready to serve as a role model for others to look at. My big discovery which so much corresponds with my own needs and all what I have been doing for years – over 50% of the SWIT finalists chose mentoring as their preferred learning method. Different than 2 years ago. So many of you is ready to support other women, build communities of practice and share experience to help others to learn & grow. You talk openly about your fears connected with living in turbulent times, dealing with uncertainty on a daily basis. You still do not give up, you get inspired by new technologies, learn and adopt them constantly. You completely change your workspace – only 3% says that you deliver in the office, as the stationary model. All the rest looks at future of work as a combination of full remote or hybrid model. What a change.

With this motion, you realize that you need to learn constantly and give your remote Teams, your organizations, a strong motivation to deliver and a reason to believe. True values and ability to inspire others in the hybrid model as well as technology adoption and automation, for me become even more important than ever before. So proud to co-shape our SWIT global initiative, act with passion to help Women to unleash their potential, partnering with other women & these of men leaders who respect, include and build a more fair world.

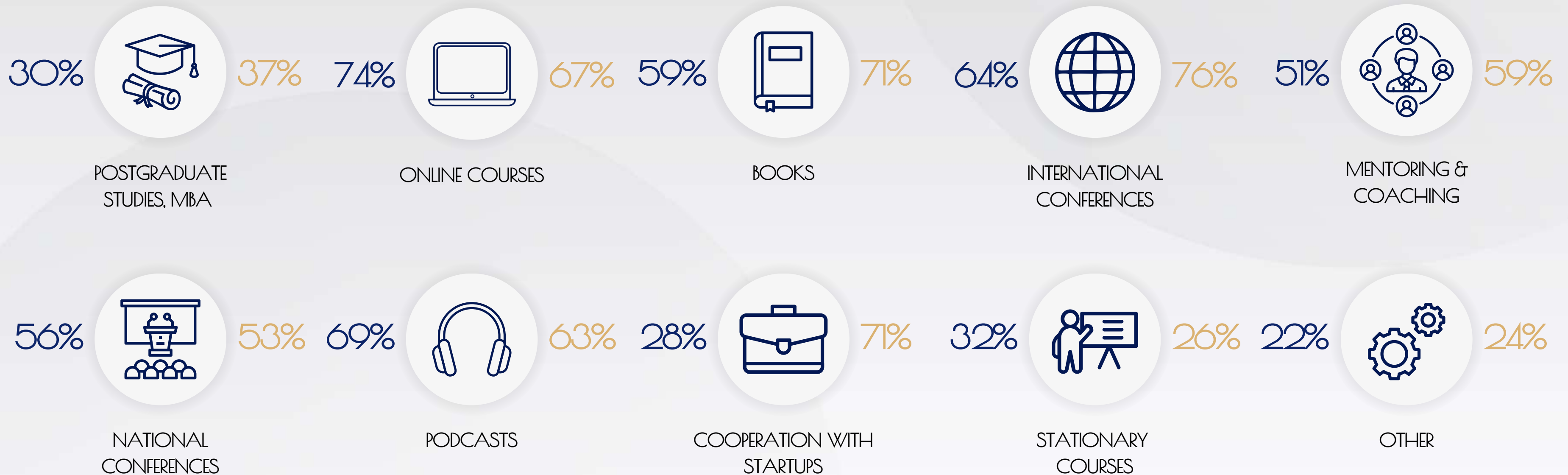
Małgorzata Gryz
Vice President of Strong Women in IT

How do you gain knowledge about new technologies?

THE RESPONDENTS HAD THE POSSIBILITY OF GIVING A FEW ANSWERS

● CORPORATION

● STARTUP



Eva Blaisdell Founder at Copernic Space



I found results of the Strong Women in IT 2023 report very meaningful and surprising, especially difference in answers between corporate and start ups. Also low importance of interaction between corporations and startups.

Also it was good to see consistent presence of books as sources of information for both categories as well as use of podcasts. I also noticed importance of on line courses in corporate environment, which is probably relevant to importance and resources corporations have in providing internal training as well as scholarship assistance provided to corporate employees. It implies that start ups engage participants and employees with lesser needs or opportunities to focus on expanding capabilities through organized education!

Very interesting result was represented by nr. 6 position obtained by “Mentoring” in both start up and corporate category. It is my impression that “Mentoring” held higher position, especially during times of “Lean In” book by former COO of Facebook - Meta, Sheryl Sandberg. Another surprise - relatively low importance of MBA and graduate degrees! Times are changing!

Do you have a university degree?

95%
YES

 CORPORATION

 STARTUP

93%
YES

MANAGEMENT & BUSINESS	28%
IT	22%
ECONOMICS & FINANCE	18%
SOCIAL STUDIES	12%
HUMANITIES STUDIES	11%
SCIENCE STUDIES	7%
LAW & ADMINISTRATION	6%
PSYCHOLOGY	3%



27%	MANAGEMENT & BUSINESS
18%	ECONOMICS & FINANCE
17%	SOCIAL STUDIES
12%	SCIENCE STUDIES
12%	HUMANITIES STUDIES
11%	LAW & ADMINISTRATION
10%	IT
7%	PSYCHOLOGY

What situation in your career made you learn the most?

THE RESPONDENTS HAD THE POSSIBILITY OF GIVING A FEW ANSWERS

 CORPORATION



 STARTUP



Do you have someone you consider your role model?

65%
YES



35%
NO

MOST COMMON ANSWERS:

SUDHA MURTY

STEVE JOBS

MALALA YOUSAFZAI

MICHELLE OBAMA

SHERYL SANDBERG

BRENÉ BROWN

KAMILA ROWIŃSKA

MELANIE PERKINS

JULIA HARTZ

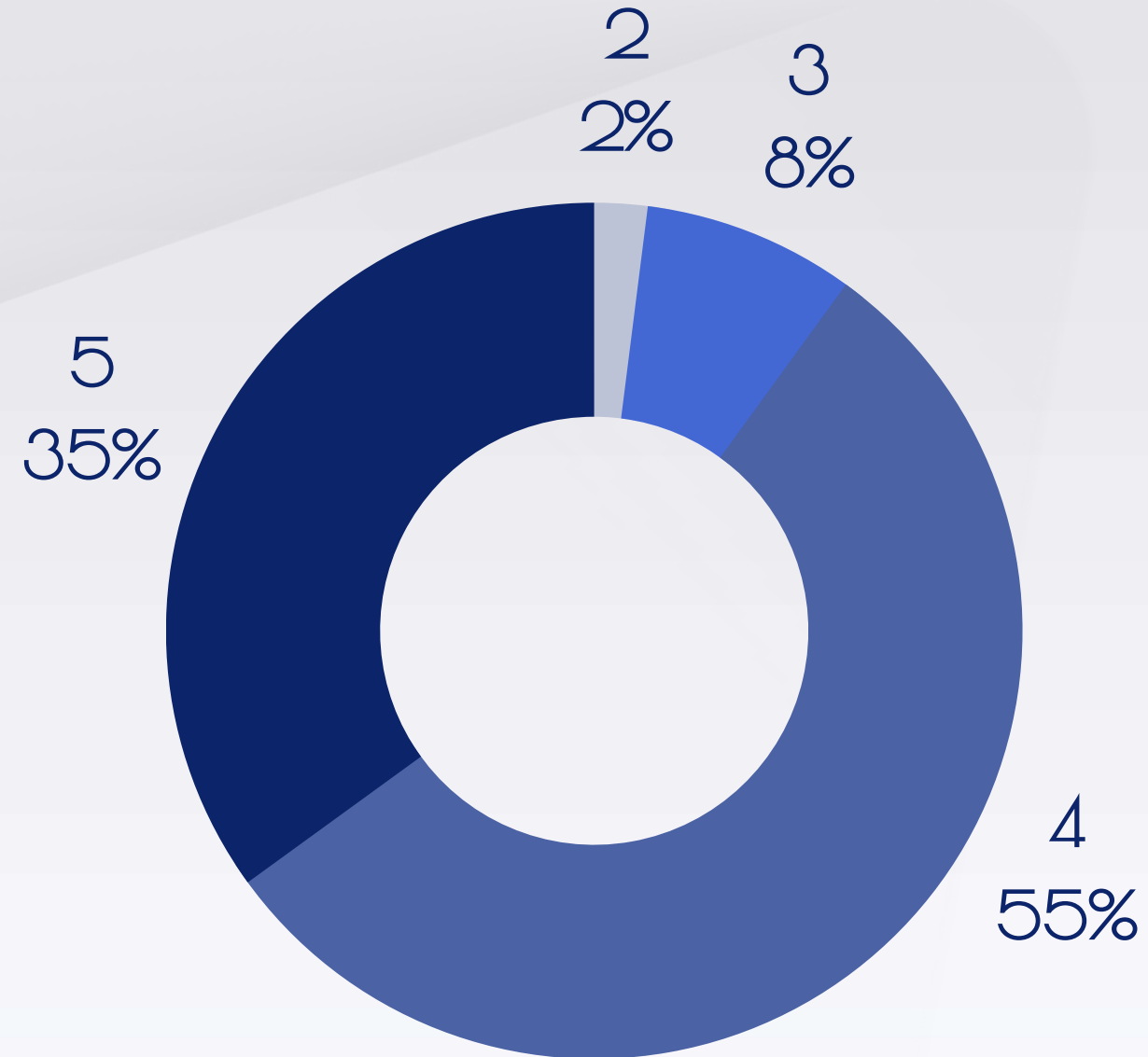
SANDY LERNER

MADELEINE ALBRIGHT

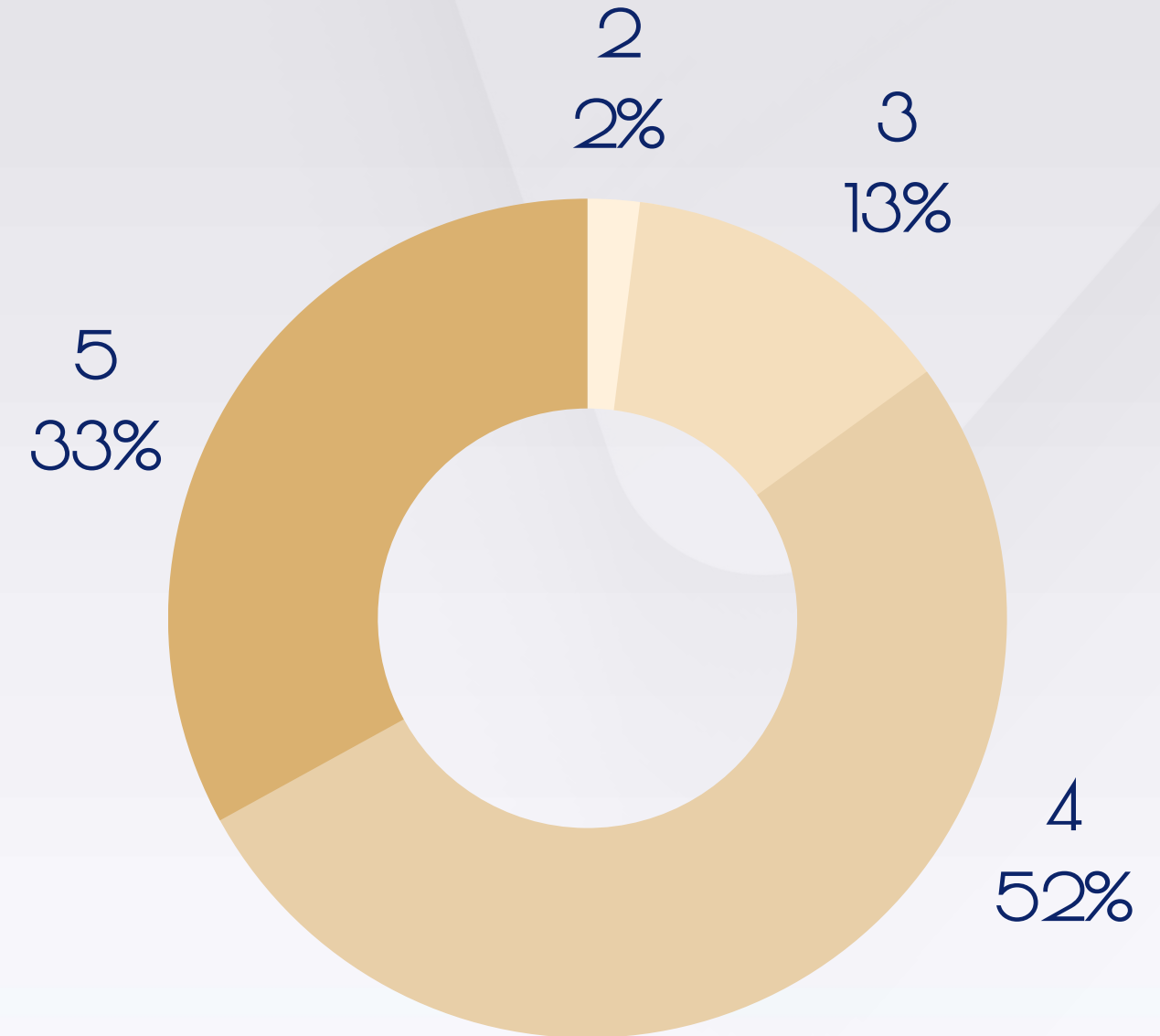
SERENA WILLIAMS

On a scale of 1-5, how do you think you use your potential at work?

 CORPORATION



 STARTUP



What do you currently need most to be able to develop?

THE RESPONDENTS HAD THE POSSIBILITY OF GIVING A FEW ANSWERS

 CORPORATION



 STARTUP



Would you consciously choose a career path in the IT industry for the second time?

 CORPORATION

 STARTUP

97%

YES

3%
NO

95%

YES

5%
NO

Monika Kordowska

Tribe Leader of Operational Excellence Tribe in BNP Paribas



Strong Women in IT Report provides a unique view from all nominated candidates concerning various building blocks of their development and career advancement. The first element which I would like to comment on is the question, of nominees would consciously choose a career path in the IT industry for the second time. Regardless of the starting point of a career in the IT industry, whether as a conscious decision or by a lucky plot of circumstances, results show, that 95% of women in start-ups and 97% of women in corporations, confirm that YES – they would engage themselves again in the IT area. It proves, that the way they develop their careers in IT, is rewarding and future-proof. It shows also that nominees perceive the IT industry as a place of potential for further development. The hunger for growth is strengthened in the next question from the survey, concerning the usage of their potential at work. The results don't differ much between start-ups and corporates, as a great majority – respectively 85% and 90% - answered that fully and almost fully their potential is brought into play. Still, room for further blooming is there. Personally, I read it as a sign of healthy ambition and desire for the next milestones in nominees' careers.

The next element of the survey concerns the need to be able to develop. Although there are 2 dominating needs, which are: (1) More time and (2) Taking care of personal development, with respect to other points the differences between women working in start-ups and corporates differ. Looking at the 2 dominating elements expressed as needs, the fact is that, as long as women all over the world are greatly charged with house and care work, the time factor will be critical. Growing in a career requires commitment and goal-orientation, as well as attention to networking, relation-building, and visibility along the way. Speaking of intentional building personal branding, the majority of nominees declared YES, that for 68% of women in start-ups and 65% of women in corporates, personal branding is an activity of choice. In IT industry, due to underrepresentation of women, this activity can be read as one of the success factors, just next to competencies and talents. And it should not be undermined. Diving deeply in the personal branding topic, the majority of women declare their activity on personal branding as 1 hr per week and only 5% of women in start-ups and 3% of women in corporates declare the time spent on personal branding as more than 5 hrs per week.

Concluding, the crucial factor for being a strong woman in IT is to make a conscious decision to be involved in this industry with commitment and straightforward goal setting, leveraging on personal branding, and being a day-to-day activity.

How do you rest and relax?

THE RESPONDENTS HAD THE POSSIBILITY OF GIVING A FEW ANSWERS

 CORPORATION

 STARTUP

41%



SPORT

33%



BOOKS &
PODCASTS

33%



FAMILY &
FRIENDS

32%



TIME IN NATURE

46%



BOOKS &
PODCASTS

39%



SPORT

33%



FAMILY &
FRIENDS

28%



TRAVELING

25%



TRAVELING

22%



YOGA &
MEDITATION

13%



WALKING

12%



MUSIC HOBBIES

28%



TIME IN NATURE

17%



YOGA &
MEDITATION

16%



WALKING

14%



MUSIC HOBBIES

Are you trying to achieve a work-life balance in your life?

 CORPORATION

NO
4%



96%
YES

 STARTUP

NO
13%



87%
YES

What do you do to maintain work-life balance?

THE RESPONDENTS HAD THE POSSIBILITY OF GIVING A FEW ANSWERS



CORPORATION



STARTUP

26% SET BOUNDARIES BETWEEN WORK AND PRIVATE LIFE

23% EFFECTIVE TIME MANAGEMENT

21% HAVING A HOBBY

18% SCHEDULED FAMILY TIME

17% ASSIGNING TIME FOR SPORTS

14% PRIORITIZING AT WORK AND IN PRIVATE LIFE

11% NOT WORKING WEEKENDS AND HOLIDAYS

EFFECTIVE TIME MANAGEMENT 33%

SCHEDULED FAMILY TIME 29%

SET BOUNDARIES BETWEEN WORK AND PRIVATE LIFE 22%

NOT WORKING WEEKENDS AND HOLIDAYS 18%

HAVING A HOBBY 17%

ASSIGNING TIME FOR SPORTS 16%

PRIORITIZING AT WORK AND IN PRIVATE LIFE 14%



What habits help you maintain work-life balance?

 CORPORATION

THE RESPONDENTS HAD THE POSSIBILITY OF GIVING A FEW ANSWERS

 STARTUP

23%

REGULAR SPORTS

21%

13%

DETAILED CALENDAR PLANNING

20%

12%

SCHEDULED FAMILY TIME

19%

11%

WORKING DURING SCHEDULED HOURS ONLY

14%

10%

MEDITATION

14%

9%

DIGITAL DETOX

14%

9%

SCHEDULED TIME FOR YOURSELF

13%

9%

GETTING UP EARLY

9%

How does your team work?

● CORPORATION

● STARTUP

REMOTELY



74%

52%

HYBRID



24%

45%

STATIONARY



2%

3%

Sonia Wędrychowicz
Partner in McKinsey's Dubai office



I second people's preference for the remote and hybrid work. I believe that a healthy balance between human interaction in person, as well as a very efficient work remotely will determine the future ways of working. During the pandemic it was proven, although in a forced way, that remote work can be very efficient. It has also opened up the work market to many people including women who in the past spent a lot of time commuting to work.

Hybrid work every day allowed them achieve a better work-life balance because they had the time more time at home with the family while also able to take care of their work. Post pandemic people were missing human interaction, and therefore a healthy balance between remote and in person work which is called a hybrid work is something that I believe is the way word for work of our future work.

I am not very much in favor of any company that is mandating and increasing the number of days in the office but I believe that the best way is for the employees to find a way a bottom-up way, a preferred way on how they can work together the most effectively.

If your team works remotely, do you organize regular offline team meetings?

● CORPORATION

● STARTUP

YES
86%



YES
90%

How does your company care about employee integration?

THE RESPONDENTS HAD THE POSSIBILITY OF GIVING A FEW ANSWERS

● CORPORATION

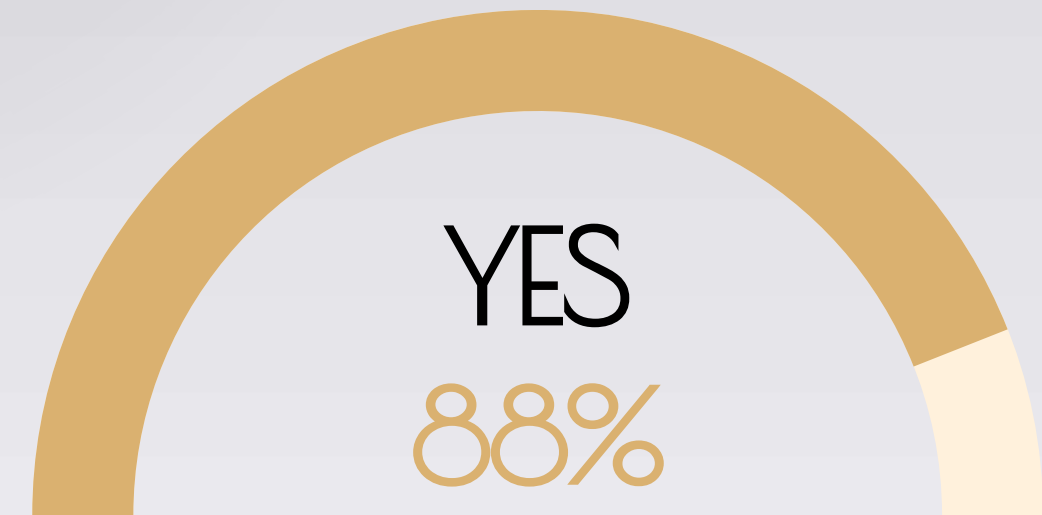
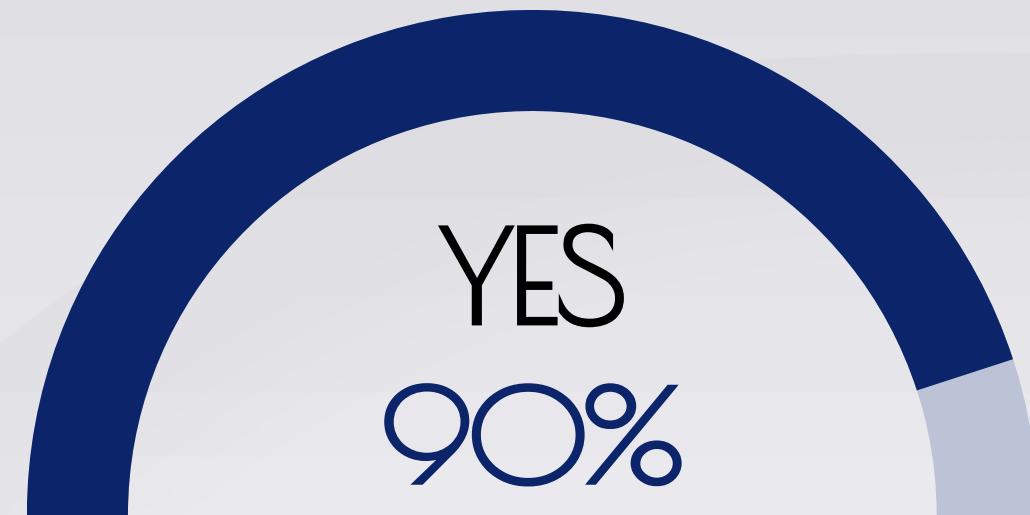
● STARTUP



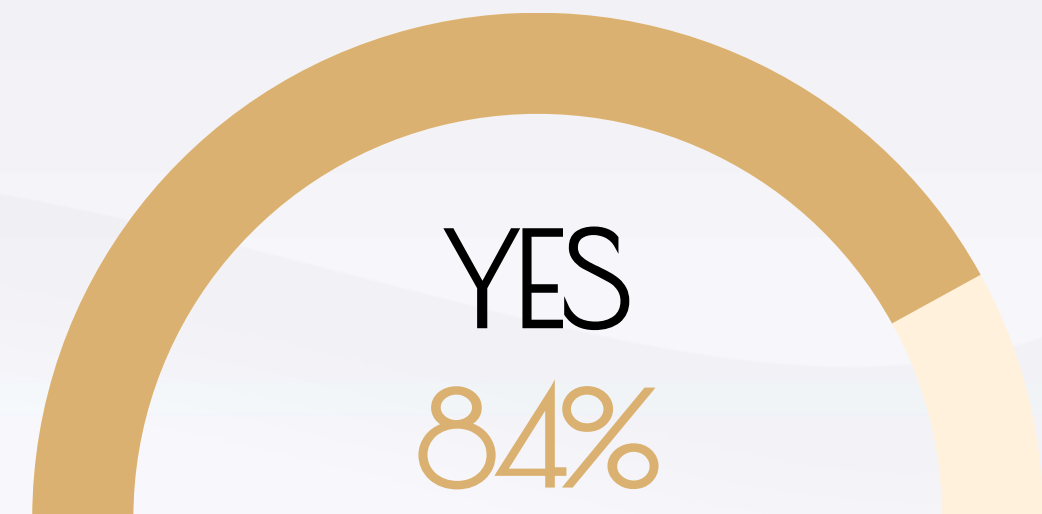
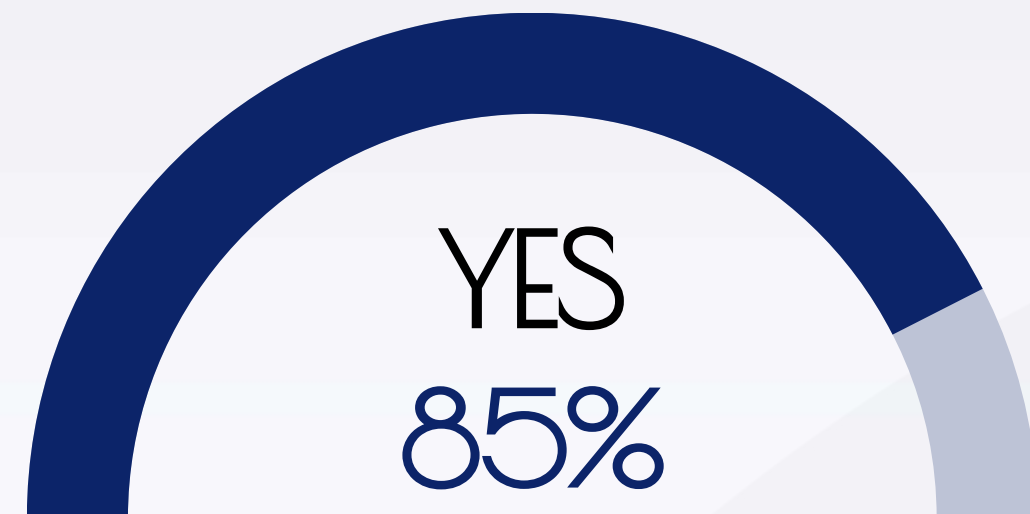
Do you think women support each other in their careers?

 CORPORATION

 STARTUP



Have you been supported by other women in your career?



Nicola Whitehead

General Manager of the European Network for Women in Leadership



Achieving gender balance in the IT industry, at all levels, is not a goal that can be reached overnight. However shining examples from across the world, in places as far-afield as Asia and the Balkans, combined with the experiences of women in this year's Strong Women in IT report, are testament to what is possible when the conditions are right and the necessary support networks are in place.

Women in technology and other industries need to believe that success is possible and that coveted leadership opportunities are within their reach. This means seeing examples of other women who have made it and who can inspire. "Role models" can take various forms, and many women will attest to being as inspired by successful male leaders as female ones. Yet unless women coming up the ranks believe that someone in their shoes can become CEO or CFO of a big tech company, then this will be a difficult goal for them to aspire to.

Of course not all ambitious women in IT wish to become the next Christel Heydemann (Orange) or Amy Hood (Microsoft), and nor should they have to. Many simply want to have their hard work and commitment recognised and to find the right senior leadership role that enables them to make a difference. This is where female-to-female support can play a big role. Hearing and learning from the experience of women who have overcome obstacles to achieve their unique professional goals can provide renewed perspective and ideas, and be incredibly emboldening for all involved, whether it be in an official context, such as an employee mentoring or training programme, or in the context of informal exchanges in the work canteen.

The impact of women supporting women goes beyond intergenerational collaboration. Equally important is peer-to-peer discussion between women in different sectors, which can be powerful in highlighting the commonality of the challenges that women face across industries and provide a much-needed source of support.

Only if companies and organisations set up the necessary structures to enable these kinds of conversations to happen will they encourage enough talented women moving up the career ladder – and not only the lucky few - to develop the tools and confidence to get a seat at the same table as their role models; and to stay there.

Do you support other women in career development?

 CORPORATION

 STARTUP

99%

YES

1%
NO

97%

YES

3%
NO

Michalina Konkel

Organizational consultant, co-creator of DEI strategies in multicultural environments,
inclusive leadership expert at Diversity Hub



Supporting other women, by Strong Women in IT in their development path is critical to build a net of equity in the workplace. As soon as the company recognizes your competence and effort in a way you become responsible for wisely sharing your newly gained power with others, not abusing it. Not to build walls between those who are WonderWomen and those who can only aspire.

Building engagement in various DE&I programs in your organization is being seen as an important aspect by many of the Strong Women in IT as a way to support other women in the company. At the same time, very few of them are actively searching for DE&I materials or research.

Expanding knowledge about Diversity & Inclusion issues such as unconscious bias, and inclusive communication builds awareness of its impact not only on recruitment processes but also on talent development, performance assessment, and everyone's self-esteem. Developing skills in reacting to microaggression is another very important aspect of becoming an Ally in women's development journey. To become an Up-stander instead of By-stander. Choosing right DE&I initiatives to support, challenging the status quo, asking uncomfortable questions, and saying their own truth is impactful role modeling for others on how to build the best conditions for all women to become STRONG.

How do you support other women?



THE RESPONDENTS HAD THE POSSIBILITY OF GIVING A FEW ANSWERS



- 48% MENTORING
- 18% SUPPORTING EXTERNAL INITIATIVES FOR WOMEN
- 16% GIVING THE OPPORTUNITY TO DEVELOP WITHIN THE COMPANY
- 13% POPULARIZATION OF THE IDEA OF DEI IN THE COMPANY
- 11% SHARING THE EXPERIENCE
- 10% FLEXIBLE WORKING CONDITIONS
- 9% THE COMPANY'S INTERNAL WOMEN'S SUPPORT PROGRAM
- 8% MOTIVATING TO WORK



- MENTORING 49%
- GIVING THE OPPORTUNITY TO DEVELOP WITHIN THE COMPANY 18%
- MOTIVATING TO WORK 17%
- SHARING THE EXPERIENCE 17%
- POPULARIZATION OF THE IDEA OF DEI IN THE COMPANY 16%
- FLEXIBLE WORKING CONDITIONS 14%
- WOMEN'S COMMUNITY MEETINGS 11%
- PARTICIPATION IN EVENTS FOR WOMEN 10%

Does your organization offer activities to support women?

75%
YES

 CORPORATION

 STARTUP

63%
YES

INTERNAL WOMEN'S
COMMUNITY 29%

TRAINING AND REFRESHER
COURSES 26%

EQUALITY POLICY IN THE
COMPANY 26%

MENTORING PROGRAM 25%

EVENTS DEDICATED
TO WOMEN 15%



32% TRAINING AND REFRESHER
COURSES

21% MENTORING PROGRAM

18% EVENTS DEDICATED
TO WOMEN

18% FLEXIBLE WORKING C
ONDITIONS

14% EQUALITY POLICY IN THE
COMPANY

Nina Nourafrouz

Managing Director of Billennium GmbH



Charles Darwin's profound insight, "Survival isn't determined by the strongest or most intelligent, but by those most responsive to change", is a principle that resonates equally with startups and corporations. It underscores the imperative for both to adapt, learn, and innovate in the face of technological advancements.

One common challenge faced by companies is the struggle to find individuals with the requisite skill set, a gap that can impede progress and result in a scarcity of qualified talent. To address this, leaders must prioritize investments in training and development programs, enhancing the capabilities of their existing workforce while attracting fresh talent.

Another hurdle is the quest for individuals who are not just skilled but also motivated and adaptable, especially in a dynamic, tech-driven environment that demands continual learning and evolution. Effective leaders cultivate a culture of innovation and growth, actively seeking candidates who relish challenges and excel in a constantly changing landscape.

However, these challenges also usher in opportunities. The adoption of technology can streamline operations, elevate productivity, and catalyze innovation. Leaders who adeptly navigate the tech terrain can gain a competitive edge, tapping into a global talent pool by embracing remote work, thereby expanding access to motivated individuals. Automation can further free up employees from routine tasks, empowering them to take on more creative and strategic roles.

In this era dominated by technology, successful leaders strike a delicate balance. They invest in the development of their current workforce, actively seek adaptable individuals with the right skills, and cultivate an environment that fosters innovation and growth. While the pace of change may present challenges, those who embrace it stand to reap the myriad opportunities technology offers. Ultimately, leaders who skillfully navigate these challenges are well-poised to thrive in our ever-evolving digital landscape.

What in your opinion are the biggest IT management challenges today?

THE RESPONDENTS HAD THE POSSIBILITY OF GIVING A FEW ANSWERS



27% THE PACE OF TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE

19% SKILLS GAP AMONG IT SPECIALISTS

17% CYBERSECURITY RISK

16% TALENT RETENTION IN ORGANIZATION

15% REMOTE TEAM MANAGEMENT

12% KEEPING EMPLOYEES MOTIVATED

12% UNCERTAIN MARKET SITUATION

THE PACE OF TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE 29%

SKILLS GAP AMONG IT SPECIALISTS 29%

CYBERSECURITY RISK 16%

KEEPING EMPLOYEES MOTIVATED 16%

UNCERTAIN MARKET SITUATION 16%

REMOTE TEAM MANAGEMENT 14%

BUILDING COMMITTED TEAMS 13%



Howard Steinberg Business Development Professional



It's not overly surprising that the pace of technological change, the skills gap (IT specialists) and cybersecurity risk sit in the top three most given responses. It did intrigue me that so many responses were logged by more than 10% of women - from each of startups and established companies - and thus shows just how many challenges female executives in technology face today.

I would have expected more responses would have included both the uncertainty of the macro / global market and retaining talent in the organization. Coupled with the other question under "Current Market Situation" in which "Talent Recruitment" was the most frequent response, I would have expected more responses around macro business conditions and retention.

Given the long duration and depth of layoffs that we've seen globally, there is a good deal of talent available in the market. I'd think that employees - women and men - of both startups and corporations would seek security and longevity in their current positions, making retention less of an issue.

I live with and count my partner as a female leader of a cybersecurity company. As such, I'd think that cybersecurity would be the top response to the question of IT management's biggest challenge today. This response was logged by less than 20% of each cohort's responses. We should continue to realize and take seriously the effects that a cybersecurity event can have on any sized business.

I am encouraged to see that women execs answering this question overwhelmingly do not view "The shortage of women in the industry" as a current issue (9% in startups / 7% in corporations.) This is very encouraging. I'd suspect that this number would have been higher in the recent past ... surely, we're making progress and we should all be encouraged by this trend.

What are the biggest challenges in IT you are currently facing in your company or seeing in the market?

THE RESPONDENTS HAD THE POSSIBILITY OF GIVING A FEW ANSWERS



CORPORATION

20% TALENT RECRUITMENT

15% CONSTANT INDUSTRY CHANGES

14% DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

12% GENERATIONAL DIFFERENCES IN THE TEAM

12% REMOTE TEAM MANAGEMENT

12% ECONOMIC CRISIS

11% CYBERSECURITY RISK



STARTUP

TALENT RECRUITMENT 21%

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION 19%

ECONOMIC CRISIS 17%

CONSTANT INDUSTRY CHANGES 16%

TALENT RETENTION IN ORGANIZATION 13%

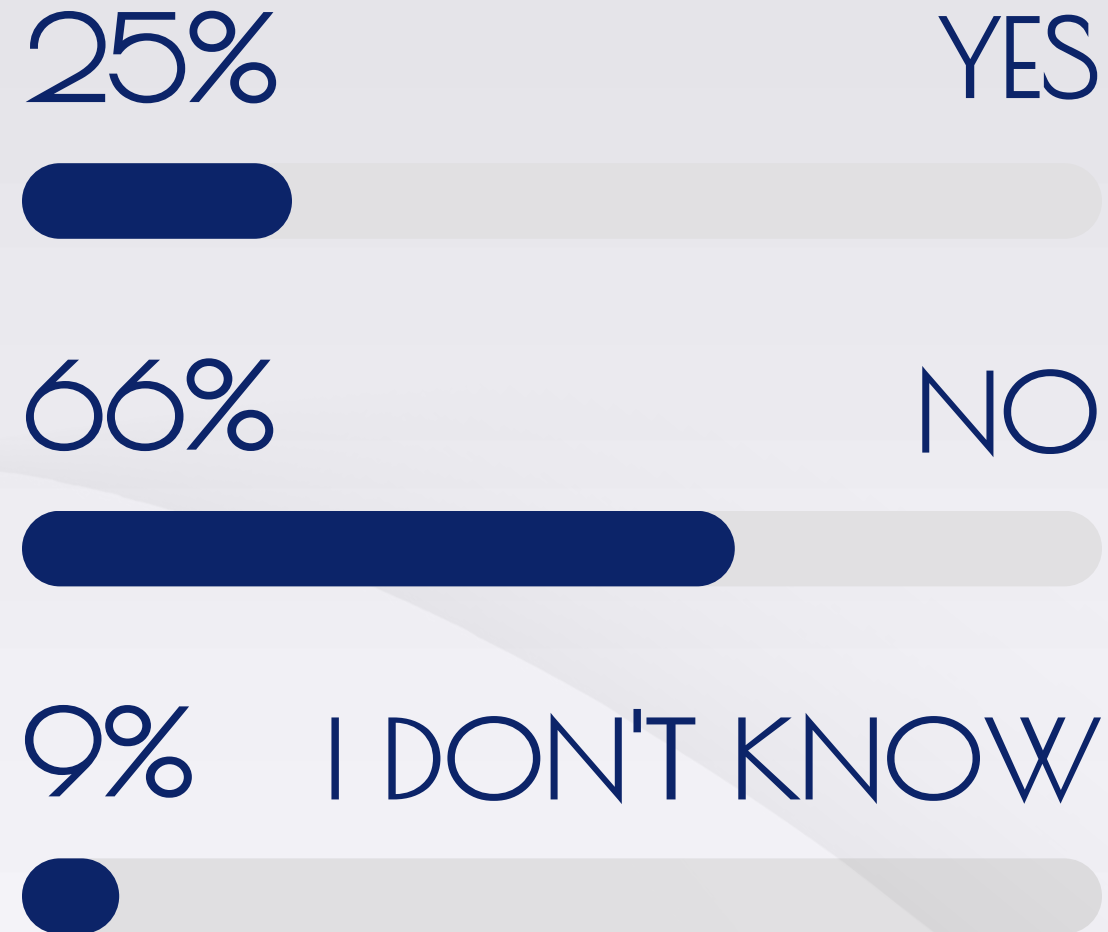
GENERATIONAL DIFFERENCES IN THE TEAM 11%

BUDGET CONSTRAINTS 10%



Is the wage policy in your company/workplace made public?

 CORPORATION



 STARTUP



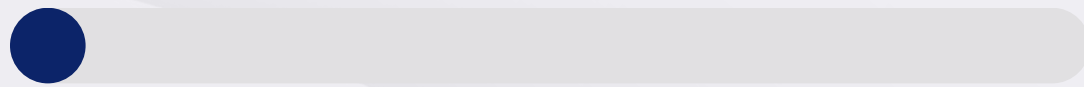
Under the wage policy adopted in your company/workplace are women and men remunerated equally for the same work?

 CORPORATION

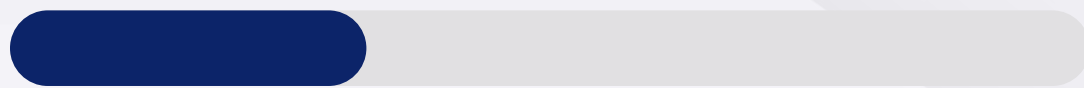
61% YES



6% NO

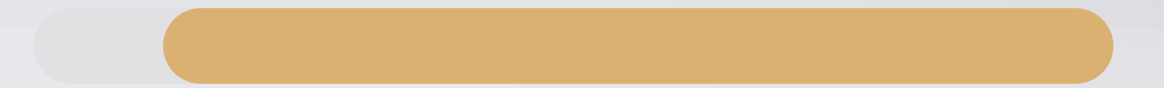


33% I DON'T KNOW

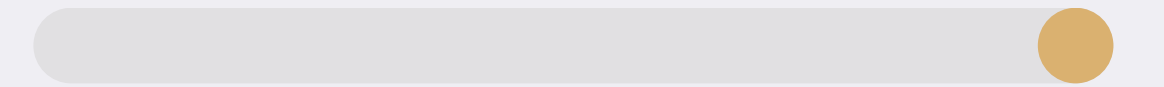


 STARTUP

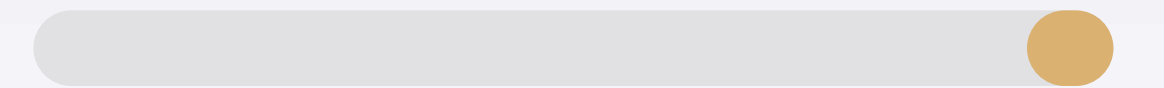
YES 88%



NO 4%



I DON'T KNOW 8%



Agnieszka Filipiak

Deputy Editor in Chief of Forbes Women



The question about remuneration policy in the IT industry caught my particular attention. More than half of those surveyed, both in corporations and startups, do not disclose information about payouts. I understand companies' concerns.

However, the lack of pay transparency (recommended by the European Union) is one of the reasons for the existence of the gender pay gap. Yes, as much as 88 percent working in startups says that the compensation decisions are equitable.

On the other hand, I regret not asking this question: where does this certainty come from? How do you measure it? It also worries me that one third of women in corporations do not know whether their company has a non-discriminatory pay policy. This shows how much there is still to be done in this matter.

What are the key trends in the IT industry?

 CORPORATION

THE RESPONDENTS HAD THE POSSIBILITY OF GIVING A FEW ANSWERS

 STARTUP

93% AI & MACHINE LEARNING

30% CYBERSECURITY

28% CLOUD COMPUTING

15% DATA MANAGEMENT

14% AUTOMATION & ROBOTIZATION

13% ESG

12% REMOTE WORK

9% INTERNET OF THINGS



AI & MACHINE LEARNING 87%

CYBERSECURITY 20%

CLOUD COMPUTING 18%

REMOTE WORK 16%

INTERNET OF THINGS 16%

DATA MANAGEMENT 13%

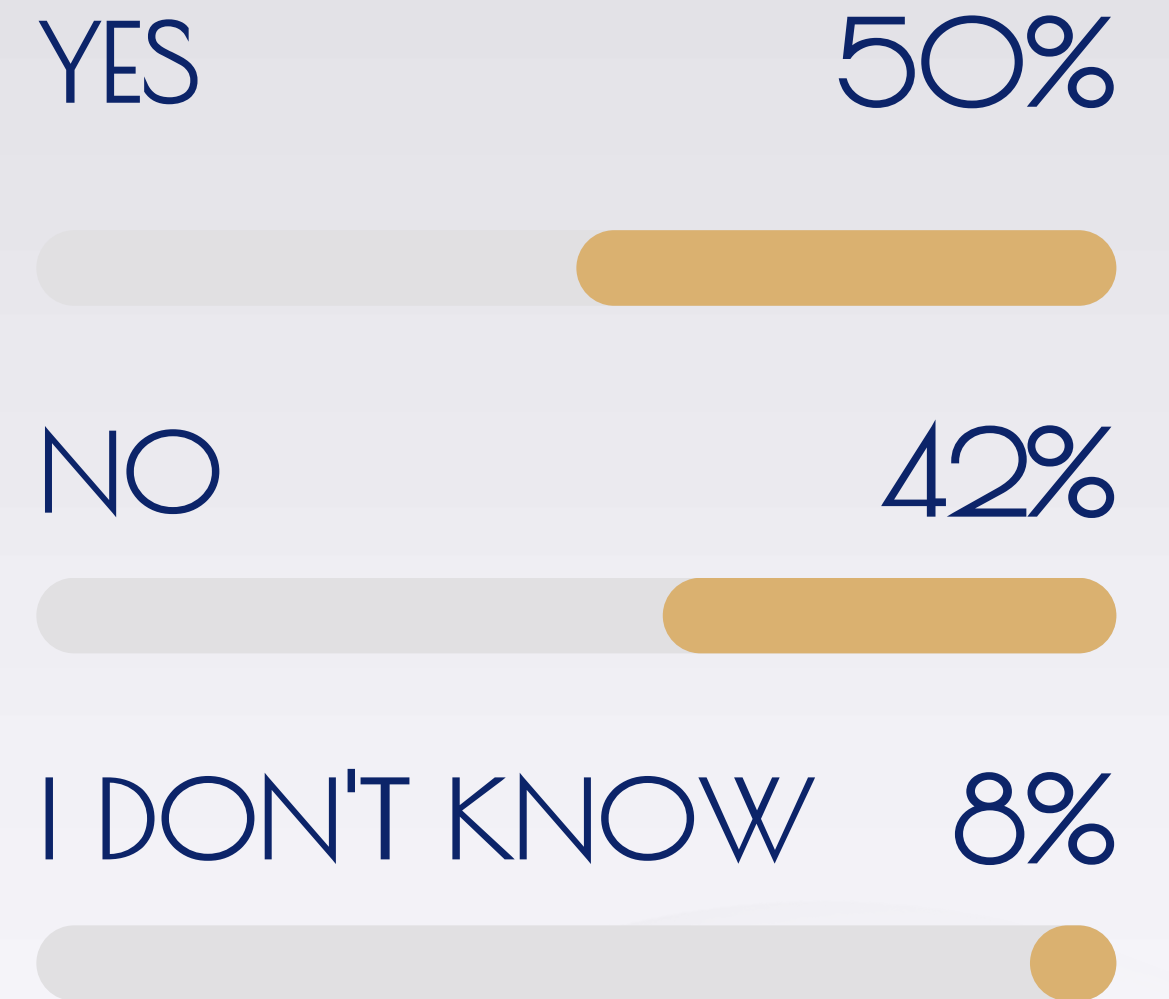
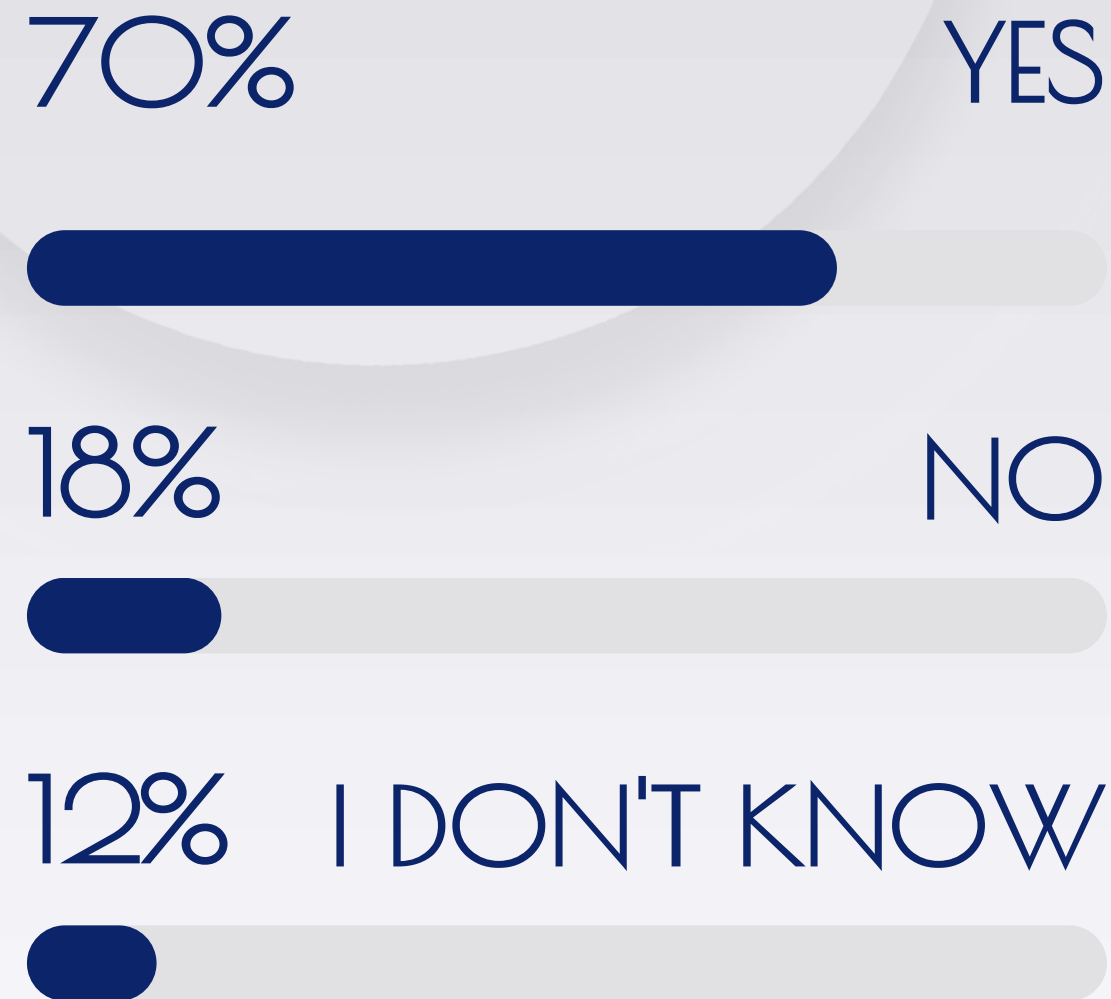
AUTOMATION & ROBOTIZATION 13%

VR, AR 10%

Does your company have an ESG strategy?

 CORPORATION

 STARTUP



Do you notice Technology Overload (discomfort resulting from the excess of stimuli provided by new technologies)?

 CORPORATION

NO
44%



56%
YES

 STARTUP

NO
47%



53%
YES

What bothers you the most?

THE RESPONDENTS HAD THE POSSIBILITY OF GIVING A FEW ANSWERS

 CORPORATION

 STARTUP

45%

TECHNOLOGY ADDICTION

48%

27%

FOMO

27%

16%

IMPACT ON HEALTH

27%

15%

IMPACT ON THE YOUNGER GENERATION

19%

29%

OVERLOAD OF APPS AND TOOLS

15%

21%

BAD INFLUENCE ON OFFLINE RELATIONSHIPS

13%

12%

HATE ON THE INTERNET

10%

14%

FAKE NEWS

8%

What do you see as the future of work organization?

THE RESPONDENTS HAD THE POSSIBILITY OF GIVING A FEW ANSWERS



CORPORATION



STARTUP

40% GREATER USE OF AUTOMATION AND AI AT WORK



32% HYBRID WORK



25% FULLY REMOTE WORK



23% FLEXIBLE WORKING CONDITIONS



16% DEVELOPMENT OF DEI IN COMPANIES



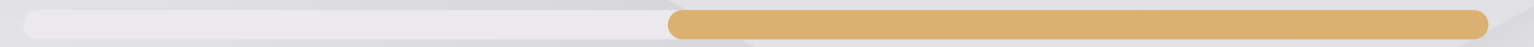
15% GREATER ATTENTION TO EMPLOYEE NEEDS



14% TAKING CARE OF WORK-LIFE BALANCE



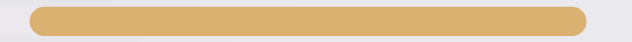
GREATER USE OF AUTOMATION AND AI AT WORK 28%



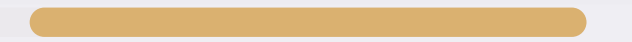
WORK FOCUSED ON RESULTS, NOT WORKING HOURS 20%



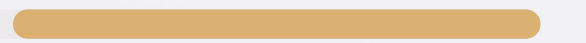
FULLY REMOTE WORK 19%



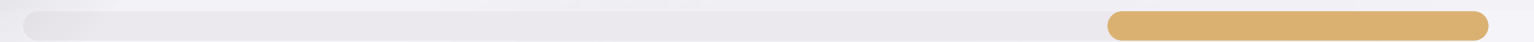
FLEXIBLE WORKING CONDITIONS 19%



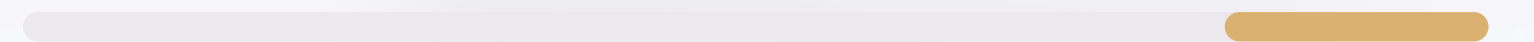
HYBRID WORK 18%



GREATER ATTENTION TO EMPLOYEE NEEDS 13%



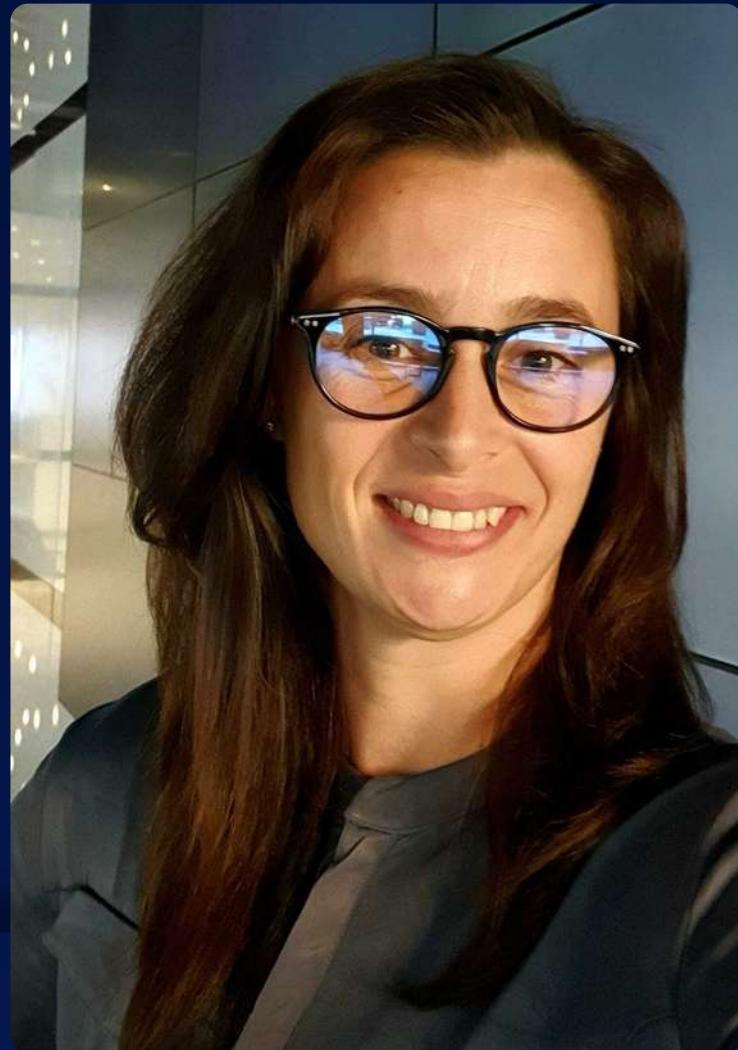
TAKING CARE OF WORK-LIFE BALANCE 9%



#strongwomeninit

Alina Iliescu

Automation Innovation Director at UiPath



The future of work will bring profound transformation to organizations, driven by a confluence of factors that include technological advancements, shifting employee expectations, and societal changes.

From the rise of automation and artificial intelligence (AI) to the emphasis on outcomes over the number of hours one spends at work and the increasing adoption of remote work and flexible and hybrid work models, the future of work organization is a complex tapestry that demands our attention. Add to that the growing focus on employee well-being to the imperative of fostering diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in companies, and you'll have the perfect mix for change. It is already evident how game changers such as AI, crowdsourcing and the sharing economy are combining to rapidly transform business structure and the way people work.

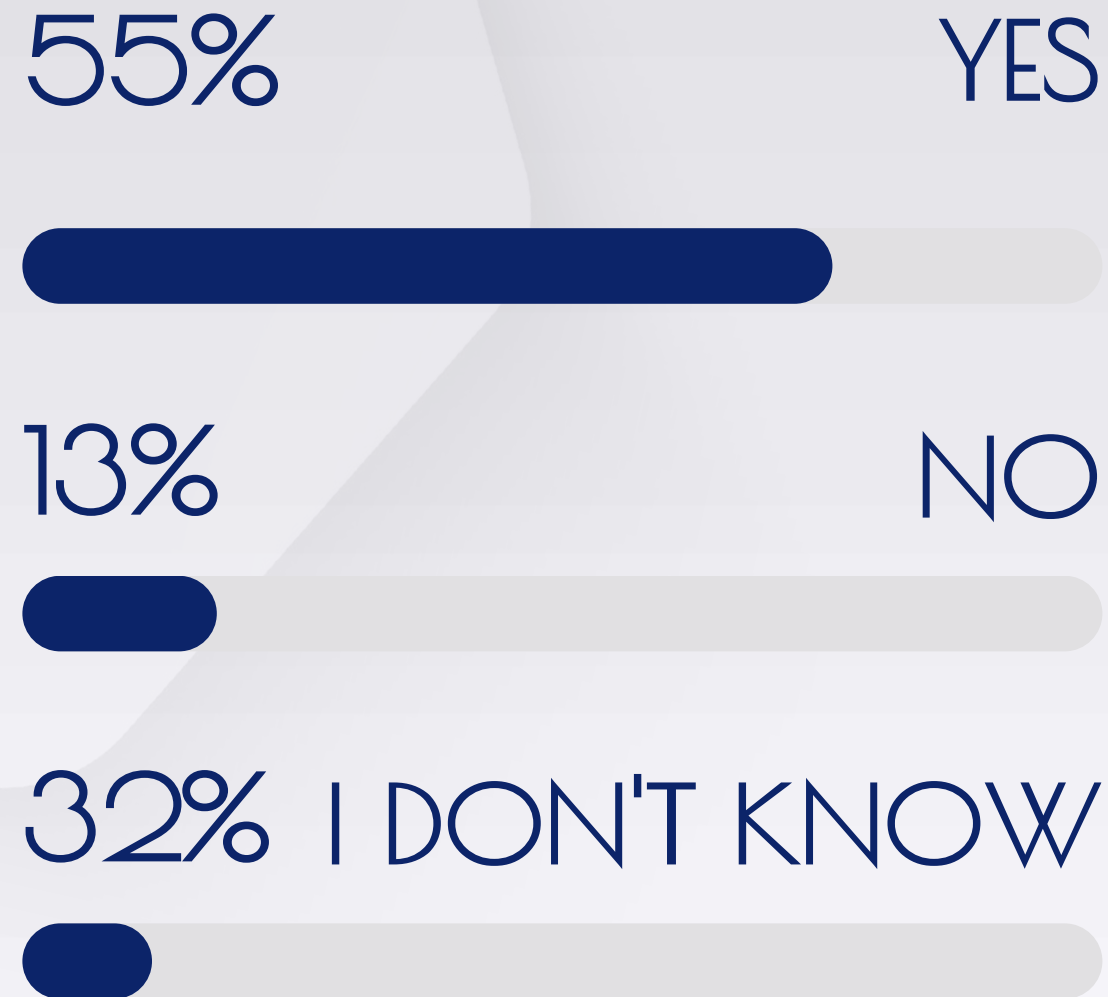
Now, the pivotal question looms: Will automation and AI be the architects of our professional demise or our greatest allies? The answer is unequivocal: automation and AI are not our adversaries; they are our allies. Embracing automation and AI is not a choice. For 40% of SWIT participants, they are a necessity for staying competitive and fostering innovation.

Now, can an employee-centric approach genuinely drive success, or is it just a passing trend? The resounding answer is YES. Employee-centric organizations are more than just buzzwords—they are redefining the very DNA of the workplace. Employee-centric organizations empower employees to take ownership of their work, fostering a sense of autonomy and responsibility. Organizations are recognizing that a happy, healthy workforce is more productive and resilient

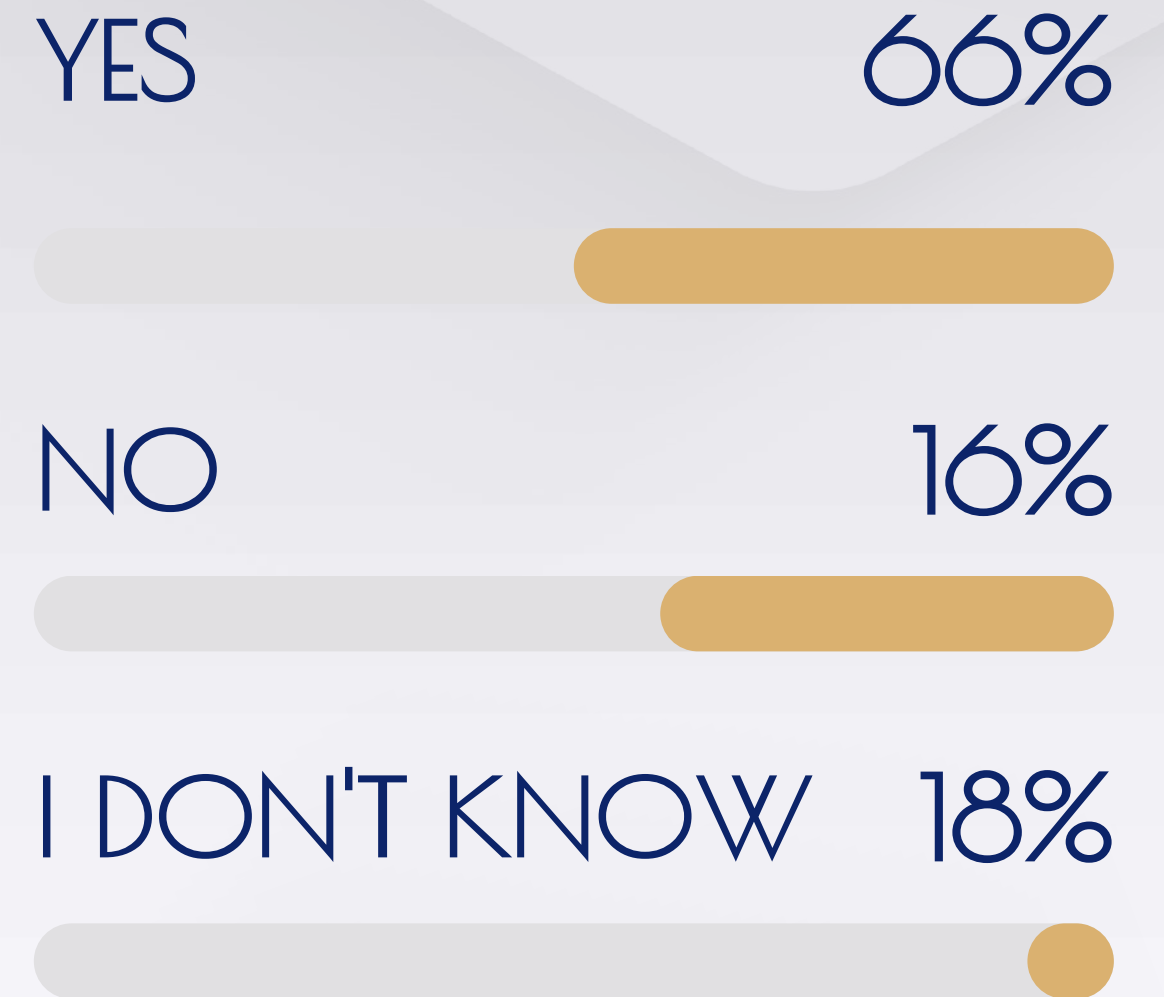
In conclusion, an organization that's poised to thrive in the future is one that fosters a dynamic landscape characterized by innovation, adaptability, and a commitment to meeting the evolving needs of employees. Greater use of automation and AI, a shift towards results-oriented work, the rise of remote and hybrid work, flexible working conditions, a focus on employee well-being, the pursuit of work-life balance, and the development of diversity, equity, and inclusion are all integral components of this transformative journey. By understanding and embracing these trends, organizations can position themselves to thrive in the ever-changing world of work, where the only constant is change itself.

Is your company introducing/planning to introduce innovative forms of efficiency and working time management?

 CORPORATION



 STARTUP



What innovative forms of efficiency and working time management is your company introducing?

 CORPORATION

THE RESPONDENTS HAD THE POSSIBILITY OF GIVING A FEW ANSWERS

 STARTUP

48%

SHORTENING OF THE WORKING WEEK
(4-DAY WORKING WEEK)

39%

32%

FLEXIBLE WORKING HOURS

34%

31%

GOAL-ORIENTED WORK

33%

8%

FORM OF WORK DECIDED BY THE EMPLOYEE

23%

7%

ADJUSTING THE PLACE AND MODE OF WORK
IN TERMS OF NEURODIVERSITY OF EMPLOYEES

10%

What tools do you use to organize your work better?

 CORPORATION

THE RESPONDENTS HAD THE POSSIBILITY OF GIVING A FEW ANSWERS

 STARTUP

30% CALENDAR

20% TEAMS

15% GOOGLE

14% ONENOTE

11% OUTLOOK

10% TRELLO

10% SLACK

SLACK 27%

GOOGLE CALENDAR 20%

ASANA 16%

NOTION 14%

TRELLO 12%

JIRA 12%

TEAMS 11%



Do you use social media?



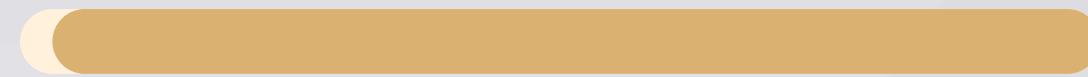
97%
YES



HOURS PER WEEK

< 3	20%
4 - 6	32%
7 - 10	33%
11 - 15	4%
> 15	8%
HARD TO SAY	3%

97%
YES



HOURS PER WEEK

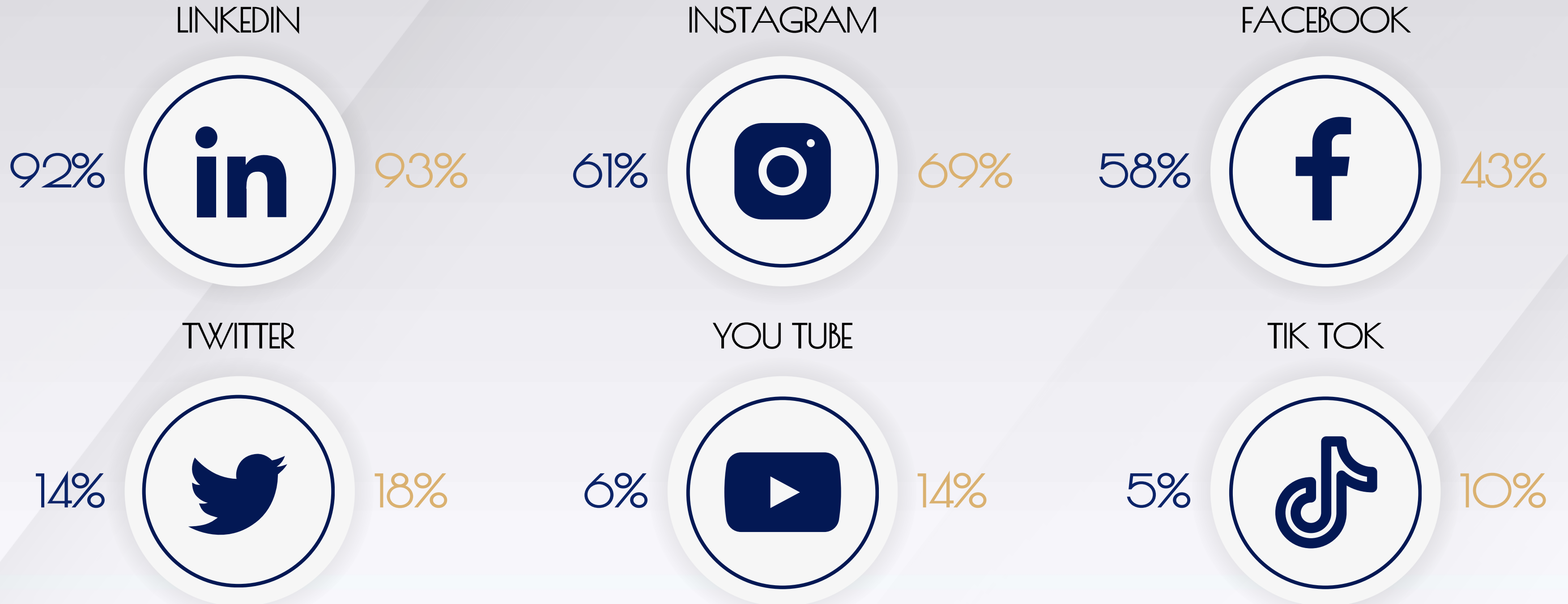
16%	< 3
21%	4 - 6
30%	7 - 10
13%	11 - 15
14%	> 15
6%	HARD TO SAY

What social media do you use?

 CORPORATION

THE RESPONDENTS HAD THE POSSIBILITY OF GIVING A FEW ANSWERS

 STARTUP

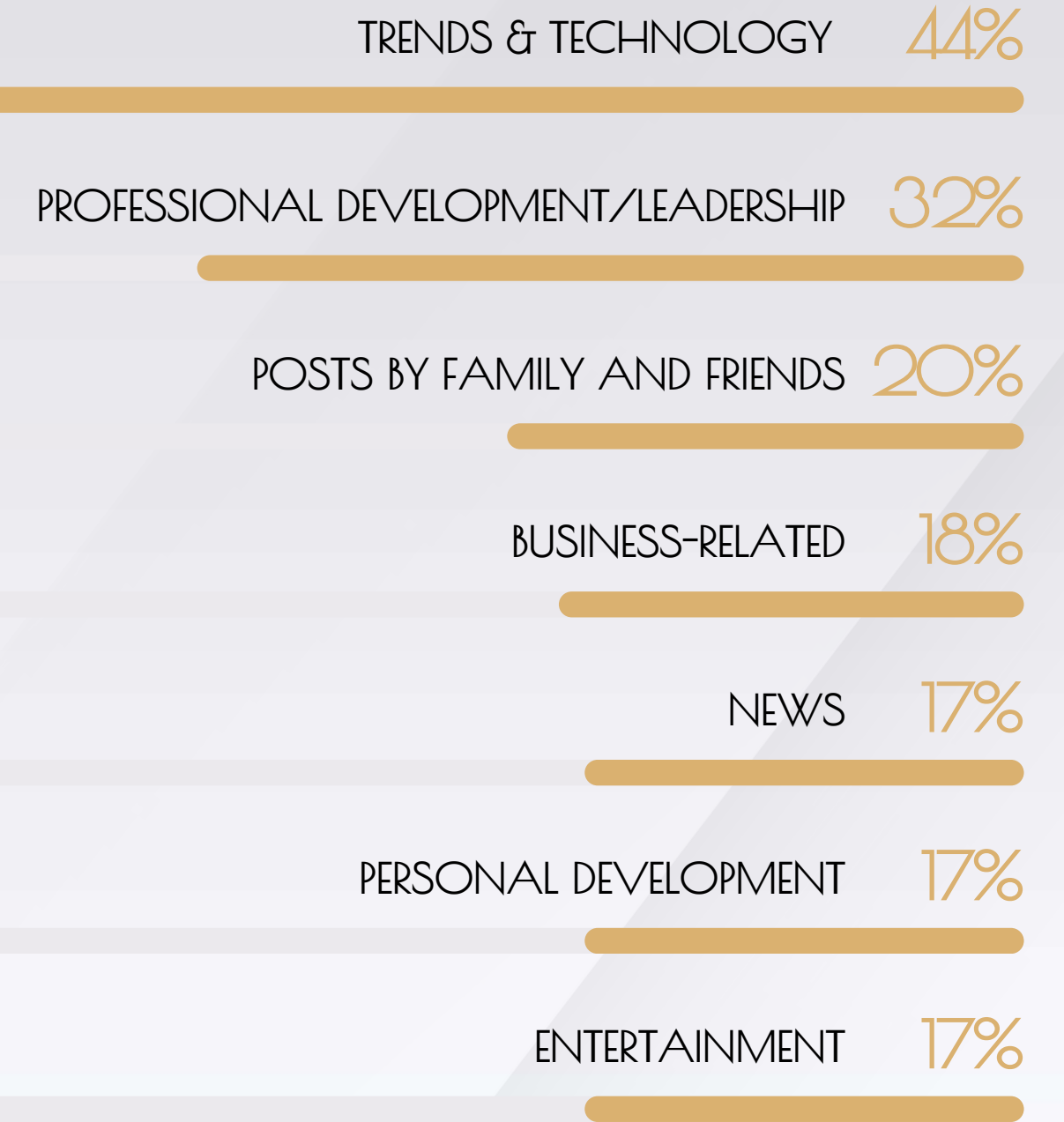


What kind of content are you consciously looking for on social media?

CORPORATION

THE RESPONDENTS HAD THE POSSIBILITY OF GIVING A FEW ANSWERS

STARTUP



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Recommendations

Strong Women in IT recommend ...

BOOKS



CAROLINE CRIADO-PEREZ: INVISIBLE WOMEN

RAY DALIO: PRINCIPLES

BRENÉ BROWN: DARE TO LEAD

ED CATMULL: CREATIVITY, INC

JAMES CLEAR: ATOMIC HABITS

PHIL KNIGHT: SHOE DOG

ED MYLETT: THE POWER OF ONE MORE

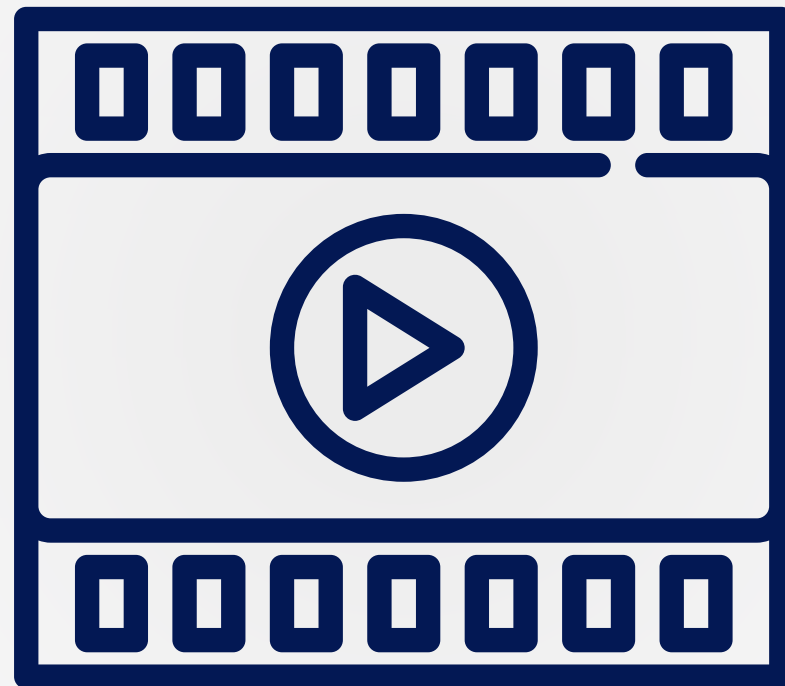
ADAM GRANT: THINK AGAIN

ANDREW CHEN: THE COLD START PROBLEM

JIM COLLINS: GOOD TO GREAT

Strong Women in IT recommend ...

FILMS & SERIES



BLACK MIRROR

BABY DRIVER

INVICTUS

THE SOCIAL NETWORK

FREE GUY

BORGEN

MANCHESTER BY THE SEA

THE INTERN

BIG SHORT

THE PURSUIT OF HAPPYNESS

BARBIE

12 ANGRY MEN

THE DIPLOMAT

SUCCESSION

SUITS

TED LASSO

Strong Women in IT recommend ...

PODCASTS



DZIAŁ ZAGRANICZNY (PL)

MAKING THE BREAST OF IT

DRIVEN BY DATA

WORK + LIFE HARMONY

HOW I BUILT THIS

HUBERMAN LAB

LEADERMORPHOSIS

PRODUCT PODCAST

DIARY OF A CEO

THINK FAST, TALK SMART

VOICE HOUSE

THE MEL ROBBINS PODCAST

RAPORT O STANIE ŚWIATA (PL)



How could we support your SWIT journey?

- Individual and group mentoring
- Helping to shape and manage your Women's community practices
- Conducting leadership and talent development sessions for an inclusive and fair organization culture
- Bringing top technology experts to enhance your technology readiness and advocacy
- Establishing modern PR and communication standards and practices for growth with quality & efficiency.

You may always get in touch with Anita Kijanka, Małgorzata Gryz, and Justyna Burghardt-Sokłdyga - if you just need a short sync or a virtual coffee.

We all shape a better tomorrow for many.

raport@strongwomeninit.com +48 606 691 708 strongwomeninit.com



#strongwomeninit

Strong Women in IT 2023

Hanna Abdel Hamid

 Head of Sigma Software Canada

 Sigma Software Group

Hanna is an experienced Managing Director with a diverse set of skills and expertise in various aspects of business management. With a Master of Business Administration (MBA), Hanna has demonstrated a strong aptitude for negotiating, developing sales and business strategies, managing operations, and leading multidisciplinary teams. Currently, Hanna is the Head of Sigma Software Canada where she leads the operations of the company in Canada.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I decided to embark on a career transition into the tech industry due to my genuine passion for the challenges it presents and the remarkable opportunities it offers. Beyond personal growth, I am committed to inspiring and empowering women and girls to overcome the barriers they often encounter in this field, by setting a positive example for them to follow.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I successfully revitalized a struggling recruitment firm by devising and implementing a comprehensive survival strategy. This involved crafting a new and effective business and marketing approach. Additionally, I strategically built a robust workforce to support the newly established strategy, resulting in the firm's turnaround and sustainable growth.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

One of my most demanding endeavors was assembling a skilled IT recruitment team in North Africa while being based in Canada. The task proved challenging as I lacked familiarity with the North African employment market and had no direct support in the field. Despite these obstacles, I tenaciously tackled the challenge and ultimately succeeded in building a highly efficient and proficient team.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

I was pleasantly surprised by the incredible support and camaraderie among women in this predominantly male-dominated field. Connecting with other women in tech allowed me to learn from their valuable experiences and share my own journey. The tech industry can be particularly stressful, especially for newcomers, and having this network of support made a significant difference.



Katarzyna Abramowicz

 CEO

 SpecFile Project, Legal Networks

Katarzyna Abramowicz is a legal counsel. She co-founded such services as Przelewy24.pl, Bilety24.pl, Sygnanet.pl, Specfile.pl, Specprawnik.pl and OdUslug.pl. For more than 20 years, she has been interested in the transfer of information and data over the Internet, e-commerce, new technologies and the areas of cybersec, regtech and fintech. Katarzyna is a speaker at many LegalTech and Cybersecurity conferences and panel discussions and a mentor for Women in Law.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

To improve online communication and information transfer.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

It's always the same; building first product sales.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Building several companies that still exist despite not being owned by us and which are growing faster than ever.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

How absorbing technology can be versus how simple it should be.



Esra Abu-Suleiman

 HR Manager

 Billennium

Esra is a professional with a passion for both technology and human resources. She possess a unique combination of technical expertise and HR proficiency: a bachelor's degree in computer information systems and a post-graduate diploma in Human Resources Management.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

Combining my technical knowledge with my passion for people, I strive to bridge the gap between technology and HR, ensuring that organizations have the right individuals to drive success. I am excited to continue growing professionally and making a meaningful impact in the intersection of technology and human resources.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I consider my greatest professional achievement to be successfully transitioning between industries and shifting my focus from pure IT to a combination of HR and IT. Within a few years, I progressed from a technical role to a managerial position. I also had the opportunity to lead the HR department for a leading IT consultancy firm, which was a significant milestone in my career.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Handling team conflict and addressing interpersonal issues, particularly when on a tight deadline. This situation impacted performance and the team's overall work environment. However, I swiftly took action to resolve the situation. My approach was both empathetic and assertive as I held separate meetings with each team member, attentively listening to their perspectives and identifying the main sources of tension.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

The most surprising aspect of starting my journey in the IT industry was its rapid and continuous evolution. One day, you may be working on cutting-edge technology, and the next day, something even more advanced is introduced to the market. This fast-paced environment leaves no room for complacency, as continuous learning and adaptability are essential. Additionally, I was amazed by the sense of limitless possibilities in IT. There is always a solution for any problem, and all ideas have the potential to be developed and realized.





Johanna Ahrens

 Business Development Manager

 Cisco

Born in 1987 in the German democratic republic, and financially independent since the age of 17, Johanna passed state exams as a pedagogue whilst holding down a job as a receptionist, and then stayed for 11 years with an IT systems integrator. Subsequently she became the manager of an independent cost & profit unit with services for IT products. In 2021 Johanna moved to a thought leadership position in a corporation. She has three children; 5y, 4y and 5 days old.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

The love and affinity for IT and technology was already apparent in my early childhood. For someone who needs and wants to constantly develop herself and her environment, IT is exactly the right industry. Furthermore, this industry has always offered me a high degree of efficiency and creative freedom. We can really make a difference with new technologies, exert influence and bring about change.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I went from being a receptionist who makes coffee to managing a financially profitable department that I built up completely on my own. I did all of this in a lateral move into IT, after taking my state exam as a teacher. I have since been recognized with many awards year after year for my pioneering work in IT adoption and IT transformation.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

For me, the biggest challenge was the balancing act between building and developing a new business and being a leader for the employees. When you enter completely new fields (in services) where there are little or no templates nor existing models, and where you need to build a large team because you can't implement the vision alone – well, no-one can prepare you for such roles.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

What I've always enjoyed about the IT industry is how different you can be. My origins which lie in a country that no longer exists, my career change, my young age, the fact that I am a woman and also the mother of three children: This industry allows for individual careers.





Alison Alexander

 Co-Founder, COO & Director of Ethics

 metacampus.ai

Acclaimed for employing Web3 tech in transformative ways, Alison, with 30+ years across public service and technology, reshaped citizen services as a local government CEO in the UK. Her leadership spanned education, child and adult care, and health. In 2021, she co-founded Metacampus, a Web3 startup aiming to promote inclusivity and individual growth in our rapidly digitalizing world. With an impressive background and a reputation for pioneering change, Alison's vision seeks to uplift humanity in this era of exponential growth instead of swift expansion.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

My commitment to using technology to enhance lives is unwavering, and I firmly believe that Web3 has the potential to revolutionize vital sectors like education and healthcare. I view Web3 as a democratizing force that can introduce transparency, decentralization, and security to our essential services. By harnessing the capabilities of these decentralized platforms, I aim to expand access to quality services, breaking down systemic barriers. To me, Web3 isn't just a technology trend—it's the key to reshaping our society for the better.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

One of my significant professional feats was the strategic restructuring of council services into a number of community interest companies. This deliberate move was designed to safeguard these services against potential cuts, thereby ensuring that children and families continue receiving the necessary support they need for their success. It was a testament to strategic foresight, professional acumen, and a deep commitment to community welfare.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

As a leader overseeing thousands, I faced the daunting task of standing up to political leaders for workforce bullying. It took immense courage to risk my job in the process. However, my commitment to my team and my self-respect demanded I resist such treatment, choosing integrity over personal security.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

Embarking on my second career in IT during my 50s, I was startled by the stark gender imbalance, particularly disadvantaging women of colour and those with disabilities. All-male panels were a common sight at industry events. Even in the rapidly emerging Web3 space, notably the metaverse realm, leadership was predominantly male. This glaring inequality intensified my determination to champion diversity and inclusivity in the tech sector.



Monika Ali Khan

 Founder

 QuantShift

Monika is an early adopter of Web3 and blockchain technologies. She has a Ph.D. in Organic Chemistry from the University of Bath, UK and an M.Sc. in Chemistry from the University of Wrocław, Poland. Recently, she founded QuantShift; a tokenized personal development platform with scientific digital assets. Monika collaborates closely with companies like Copernic Space and she is an active investor in blockchain based digital assets. Monika is also a member of many prominent Web3 communities.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I'd made a groundbreaking decision to establish the World's first Web3 tokenised personal development company, aiming to revolutionize scientific research using blockchain technology. By pushing the limits of what's achievable, I seek to drive profound societal advancements.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

My greatest professional achievement was during my first scientific job in the UK. Within just three months, I successfully introduced new instruments that significantly sped up our work processes and increased monthly profits for the organization by tenfold.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

As my own boss, I faced the challenge of learning new skills such as website design, NFT creation, and blockchain technology. I immersed myself in online resources, sought guidance from colleagues, and attended many workshops. Despite initial hiccups, I persevered and improved. This experience taught me the value of continuous learning, and adaptability in a managerial role.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

When I started working in the IT industry, what surprised me the most was the significant underrepresentation of women. It became evident that there were fewer women in technical roles compared to men. This realization highlighted the importance of promoting diversity and inclusivity within the industry.





Tejaswini Allikanti

 CEO & Co-founder

 LearnMigo

Tejaswini is deeply passionate about empowering individuals to reach for their dreams and fulfil their potential. With over 5 years of experience in the Edtech and AI industry and a family background in education, she aspires to make a significant impact in the field of Education for India. An avid-reader, solo traveller, feminist and lover of playing badminton.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I have always been fascinated with the wonders that tech can make in the world. How impactful it can be on a large scale.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

The hardest part was to lead with more feminine characteristics such as nurturing and care, and to convince a male leadership that these are required in the long term.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I single handedly built a one of a kind in India MLOps course from scratch while working with 8 engineers, 6 experts and cross functional teams.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

The most surprising thing was how people assumed that a girl would not be able to crack tech.





Anna Andrych

 CMO

 PayEye

Anna Andrych, M.Sc. Graduate of the Silesian University of Technology in Gliwice, the University of Silesia and the Academy of Economic Development in Katowice. An experienced trainer and lecturer at Event Manager Training Group in Warsaw, the School of Banking and the Wrocław University of Economics, where she is also a doctoral student. For more than 20 years Anna has been associated with the marketing industry and has been creating activities for market leaders both on the agency and client side.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I have no doubt that technology changes the world for the better, and so I believe that marketing support for innovative processes is an indispensable part of popularizing solutions in the industry for both B2B and B2C markets.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

My greatest professional achievement has been gathering around me a team of people who know how to work together, support each other and understand each other's interdependence.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

As a manager, I always try to pay attention to the human factor, but the early days of management required learning how to balance it all with human values and how to achieve goals which often required difficult decisions.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

The huge responsibility for decisions whose implementation runs the software machinery. Also the fact that people who are focused on their tasks need dedicated attention and communication, and also the discovery that they thrive on the dynamics of change.



Elena Antoneac

 CEO & Co-Founder

 xpath.global

Elena Antoneac, co-founder of xpath.global, simplifies international assignments through their technology. The company connects HR professionals, expatriates and service providers, offering a collaborative global mobility ecosystem with a marketplace of vetted suppliers across 183 countries. Elena, a law graduate and former HR executive, recognized the need for technology in HR compliance and global mobility after founding her boutique consultancy specializing in Immigration Tax and Labor Law.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

services. Client feedback highlighted the need for innovative, accessible solutions. Embracing technology, I built a scalable platform; automating processes, ensuring accuracy and affordability. With a diverse team, we aim to revolutionize global compliance, empowering businesses and individuals to focus on core goals.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

My greatest professional achievement would be successfully completing the challenging task of constructing an entire tech system for mobility as a non-tech person with no prior knowledge of coding or software development. I overcame hurdles, learned the importance of collaboration and delegation, and ultimately achieved project success, reaffirming the value of teamwork in complex endeavors.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

As a non-tech female HR Executive turned entrepreneur, I faced hurdles building a tech system for mobility. Learning to delegate and collaborate with a skilled team was key to success. It taught me that expertise lies in teamwork, not personal knowledge. Overcoming challenges led to project success.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

The most surprising aspect for me when I entered the IT industry was the contrast in predictability compared to my previous experience running a consultancy boutique company specialized in Immigration and Tax. Previously, I could confidently inform clients of specific timelines, and 96% of the time, those predictions held true. However, in the technology field, estimating the time required to fix or build solutions proved to be much more challenging due to the myriad of technological barriers



Sharala Axryd



Founder & CEO



CADS



A pioneer in the field of data science education in Southeast Asia. Sharala Axryd is the founder and CEO of CADS; a skill intelligence platform in the region. Sharala is a strong advocate for women in STEM and envisions a future where data professionals are working in every industry to solve complex problems. She is helping to shape the future of data science in Southeast Asia.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I chose it because I believe that “work” as we know it is fundamentally changing. The future of “work” will be more skills based and no longer role based and so the critical factor for it to be relevant is the level of data literacy.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I never knew how much my daughter understood about my work ethic until she wrote a newspaper article about me in her school paper. She was only 11 years old at the time, but she saw how much I had worked to achieve my goals. She wrote about the long hours, how I always seemed to be on the phone, and how I never seemed to have enough time. But she also wrote about how proud she was of me, and how she knew that I was doing it all for her. I was so touched by her thoughts.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

One of the most challenging situations I've faced was dealing with unconscious bias. This is when people make assumptions about abilities based on your gender, rather than skills and experience. One way I've dealt with this is to be proactive about setting expectations; I made sure to let my team know that I was just as capable. I also made a point of speaking up in meetings and contributing my ideas.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

The importance of soft skills. I was surprised to learn that soft skills, such as communication and teamwork, are just as important as technical skills in the IT industry. This is because IT projects often involve working with people from different backgrounds and with different skills. The importance of lifelong learning. The industry is constantly changing, it is important for professionals to be lifelong learners. This means being willing to learn new skills and adapt to new technologies.



Agata Bajek

 Automation Tech Manager

 UBS

Agata joined UBS recruitment in 2012, continuing her HR journey. In 2015 she made a career turn and joined IT at UBS, initially building up technical delivery teams, then later working globally and focusing on DE&I and culture topics. She initiated the Polish Chapter of UBS's Women in Technology network and led it for 4 years. Presently, Agata manages EMEA & UK Automation Support and is the Robotics Global Service Manager for Wealth Management Operations.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

What was planned as career break resulted in a life changing career turn, as I found the area I had chosen (IT Security) super interesting. My initial plan was to switch for a year and gain completely new experiences and perspectives that would enrich my professional portfolio. I immediately felt that the biggest worry I had in my previous job – that I would burn out - was no longer there, and that this new beginning had allowed a (stereotypical) woman in HR to become (an uncommon) woman in tech.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Becoming the keynote speaker at one of the biggest conferences for women in tech: Perspektywy Women in Tech 2022, and having the unique opportunity to share my story with a few thousand current and future technologists. All of this matters, proving for myself the path I chose was the right one and that I am accepted as a technology representative. This was a very significant step for me and helped in fighting with imposter syndrome.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Stepping into IT without an IT background is one difficulty, but entering a room (even virtual) to work with a team at solving technical problems whilst making people talk with each other, focus on solutions and not finger point, and to be considered a partner in this discussion with engineers, is another challenge. But I have quickly recognized that the ability to navigate through organizational structures and bringing the right people to that table is the skill I have and is in high demand.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

My IT experience is specific to the financial industry. What was surprising at first was that our IT departments hire almost 30% of the firms' total employees and that they truly sit at the heart of the company. Secondly, how many of the people involved are actually not engineers and how important they are for the overall success.





Izabela Bany

 Head of Communication, CEO

 The Batteries, Aper Ventures, Apeiron Synthesis

Izabela Bany is a tour de force in the startup world, placing Aper Venture and its deep tech portfolio on the European stage. Having cut her teeth at Nethone, the Polish Development Fund, and Huge Thing, she's made her mark across the startup ecosystem. With a knack for driving venture-building programs to a successful PLN 90 million investment, she's a force to be reckoned with. A graduate of UCL, she delivers unique insights into CEE deep tech.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

New technologies? They're the ultimate canvas for creativity, the purest form of rebellion against the status quo. And I am all in. The heart of my adventure lies in deep tech, which in my case includes solid-state battery technology, ruthenium catalyst, and much more. This tech isn't just new, it's revolutionary. Imagine shaking up the energy world, kick-starting a green revolution, one battery at a time. Now, that's the kind of change I signed up for!

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

My most outstanding professional achievement? Undoubtedly, it's been resurrecting a pioneering startup which had been developing an ingenious solution since 2017, but had yet to be known for the waves it was making. It was like finding a diamond in the rough and polishing it until it shines brightly for the world to see. The moment the industry finally turned its gaze toward our breakthrough? It was a testament to the power of effective communication and the steadfast belief in our vision.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Stepping into a managerial role, the challenges multiply. Still, one stands out – spearheading a communication strategy for a complex deeptech project. Think of it as translating a foreign language; only this language is an intricate mix of tech jargon and scientific concepts. It's like being the bridge between two worlds – the engineers and the public. But the thrill of successfully conveying the groundbreaking potential of our project? Priceless!

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

The undervalued role of communication. It's like an undiscovered superhero. You've got your lawyers and accountants, but the communication specialist is often overlooked. Deep tech maestros tend to swing between high-level tech-talk or being too generic. But let's crank it up! With the right communication, we can turn their solutions into a symphony that resonates with the world. The untapped power of good science storytelling!



Katarzyna Bargielska

 CMO & Co-founder

 Radio Net Media



Kasia Bargielska is the CMO and co-founder of the leading audio advertising platform; AdTonos. She has worked with Agora, Wirtualna Polska, Polskapresse and ClickMeeting. As Marketing Director at IVONA Software - an Amazon subsidiary that develops TTS technology - Kasia created a marketing strategy that helped the company achieve a top-ranking position in the industry. Kasia utilises her 25 years of experience assisting media and advertising companies to be at the forefront of the digital revolution.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

My adventure with the digital industry started in 1999. I joined the WP team as a marketer. Back then it was a classic start-up. A friend of mine discouraged me from taking this upon myself and asked me: "What is this internet anyway?". However, I was excited to discover a completely unknown land in the field of marketing. Funnily enough, a similar story happened again 5 years ago regarding the AdTonos project. A friend of mine asked me: "What is this audio programmatic anyway? ".

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

It is difficult to choose the most outstanding professional achievement when looking at over 20 years of marketing experience in the media and technology industry. There have been many successes. What I am most proud of is building the brand awareness of WP from scratch. Our marketing team has created a strong foundation for the further development of this brand. These were not the times of great marketing budgets. Creativity and a non-standard approach to marketing activities were crucial.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

In the life of a manager, challenges are a "daily bread". It is nothing new that managers face many different difficult situations on a daily basis. There are times of splendour in the company, but also days of failure when it is close to collapse. Especially in start-ups. In one of the old ones, I experienced such a challenge, and the hardest part was motivating the team and building trust that everything would be fine and that the problems would be resolved. It was hard, but we made it.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

The most surprising thing for me, when I started working in the IT industry, was how differently the IT and R&D teams understand the world compared to the business teams. They are two different worlds and the art of management in such a situation is the communication and translation of the company goals in a way that the IT team understands them, follows them and receives the support to implement the right thing at the right time.



Małgorzata Barska

 Head of Experience Design & Head of Mobile Development

 GFT Poland

Małgorzata is a designer, a manager, a martial artist, and a mother. She studied IT science and continued on by starting a Ph.D. in graphic design only to realise that she didn't want to focus on theory but preferred to work with people and for people. She has over 20 years of experience in designing human-centric solutions for digital, virtual, and print media. She's been in leadership and managerial roles for over 10 years.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I chose IT because I believed that it is one of those industries that has a tremendous impact on our daily life. It can either make our lives easier or harder. I'm all for making it easier with new tools and solutions. I want to make the world around me as inclusive and human friendly as possible. And to be honest I love the fact that my work can help others in their daily activities.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I hope that my greatest professional achievements are still ahead of me. Achievements are related to goals, and I personally don't like to set goals for myself. I believe a specific goal might limit you and prevent you from achieving more. As a designer I feel pride every time I see people using a solution I designed, and I can see them enjoying it. As a leader seeing my mentees achieving their goals and observing them reaching for more is the most satisfying thing ever.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

If you work with people you need to be prepared to deal with their emotions, problems and conflicts. Managing a toxic person and their impact on the team is probably one of the most difficult things I needed to take care of. If you have a real star in your team but the star is toxic for the team, you have no choice but to let them go if you don't want to lose the whole team. When you take care of the team, don't forget to take care of yourself. You are also a part of the team.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

Initially I thought that IT is a place for technical minds only. I quickly realized that wasn't true. Yes, there are many people with incredible technical skills, but this industry needs other talents too. And there are many roles for people who are not developers – testers, business analysts, designers, scrum masters, project managers, PMOs, etc. All these great companies wouldn't achieve their goals without all the people in all those various roles and without all their expertise on board.



Beata Bartos

 International Delivery Unit Manager

 GFT Poland

Beata is a business consultant, people and account manager with over 13 years of commercial experience in the IT Industry. She grew up moving between Poland and Italy which had a significant impact on her education, mindset and chosen career path. Interdisciplinary studies and cross-cultural experiences helped Beata to navigate through the invisible boundaries of doing international business, build & lead multinational teams, and understand and respond to the client's & stakeholders' needs.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

IT gives us the continuous opportunity to learn, develop skills and work with top level professionals from all over the world. I am part of the global digital transformation, and enjoy high flexibility and a good work/life balance.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

In the past I used to consider myself and my university background as not being sufficient to be able to work or advance in the IT Industry. The funny thing is that over the last few years diverse HR Industry reports have shown that the skills that I thought were not at all useful have been identified as key future competences. Agility, flexibility, interdisciplinary and language skills allow us to keep up and respond to a Client's needs in this fast changing IT reality.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Being a manager means handling difficult situations by definition. It's part of a job description. So it's really hard to identify one particular event that I could use here as an example. As managers and leaders we are here to face challenges, remove obstacles & provide business continuity. This requires perfect preparation, flexibility and innovative approaches on a daily basis. In my humble opinion this is the biggest challenge; to keep up with the pace of the dynamic environment we work in.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

- Plenty of development opportunities.
- A Collaborative work environment.
- The benefits of a work / life balance.





Faylene Bell

 Senior Director, Digital Marketing

 NVIDIA

Faylene has worked with leading corporations such as NVIDIA, AT&T, Digita, American Express, American Cancer Society, and Fiserv. As Senior Director of Digital Marketing at NVIDIA, Faylene serves as a leader in the Global Digital Marketing Organization. She is instrumental in setting the strategic vision and operations for the Marketing Technology Stack across NVIDIA's digital footprint. Faylene holds a BS in Marketing from Florida State University and a MBA from Roosevelt University.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I chose to pursue a career in marketing technology because I thrive on change and understand the importance of staying current with the latest advancements. My desire for a fulfilling and lucrative lifestyle led me to explore career paths that valued expertise in new technologies and offered ample opportunities for growth and advancement. Being inquisitive about technology and possessing a creative and innovative mindset, I knew that a career in technology aligned perfectly with my personality.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

One of my proudest professional achievements was during my time as Director of eCommerce Digital Experiences in the telecommunications industry. In this role, I was responsible for managing product development, device support, content optimization, chat, and agent tools to reduce customer friction. Through a series of strategic initiatives designed to combat friction for users, we improved customer satisfaction and functionality, while also reducing call center costs by 30%.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

I was faced with a challenging situation where the team had made mistakes while developing and releasing software into a web production environment. Unfortunately, the code that was pushed caused significant customer issues and errors on customer accounts, leading to a spike in call volume with customers complaining. I had to not only deal with the customer issue but also work with my team for the next 24 hours to revert the software code, troubleshoot the issue, and summarize the resolution.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

The IT industry offers a surprising diversity of job roles and career paths, contrary to the common perception that IT professionals are primarily programmers or developers. Roles such as data scientists, project managers, and UX designers are just a few examples of non-technical positions that are available in the industry. This was a surprise to me when I first started out in my career. Now I realize many roles do not require technical skills or a background in computer science.



Dominika Biardzka-Jaworowska

 Head of Azure Business Unit

 Altkom Software & Consulting

Dominika has 10 years of IT experience, specializing in projects involving migrations to the cloud and new cloud architecture. She combines business needs with technical points of view in Cloud migration, application development and consulting projects. At work Dominika strongly focuses on the development of the team, believing that positive motivation drives and benefits the entire organization.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

From a very young age, I loved mathematics and technological innovations. I couldn't imagine any other way forward than studying at the Warsaw University of Technology.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

The greatest achievement is every single compliment I have received from my employees. Projects delivered to the customer are important but the most important thing for me is when I get proof that the way I manage the team is right and that people can grow in my team.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

I took my first managerial position when I was very young, and convincing many older colleagues required effort and dedication. In addition, the first task I had was to reduce the number of employees. It was months of hard work and great exercise for strategic thinking.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

This industry is a man's world and I have two older brothers, so I am in my element.



Pricilla Bilavendran

 Team Leader

 Billennium



Pricilla is a passionate Test Engineer currently working with Billennium - Malaysia, with a decade of experience in Quality Assurance. She has experience with various flavors of Testing including Functional, EDI, ETL, Automation, and API Testing. She is a Postman Supernova and speaks at various events regarding APIs and Postman. She is passionate about Cloud computing and is an "AWS Community Builder". She is a certified mentor and helps many test engineers through her mentoring sessions.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I love working closely with new tools and technologies. I strongly believe that learning keeps me alive.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Of course, people have conflicts. I respect everyone's opinion and I like to build a relationship beyond just work. So I will always teach my team to be patient and understand others' points of view.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I am happy with what I am today. Recently I was invited to a technical conference in the United States and I took my family along. This was a culmination of hard work, dedication, and perseverance, all of which I am very proud of.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

This might sound cliché, yet true. I didn't see many women associates beyond the level of Manager and especially in the C-Suite. I agree there are many who achieved a great deal and I salute every one of them, however, comparatively, the percentage was low. That surprised me a lot during my training days.



Sylwia Bilska

 General Manager

 Edenred

Sylwia is a dynamic business leader experienced in technology, eCommerce and Payments. She is commercializing digital and digitizing businesses in developed and developing markets and is currently General Manager of Edenred; a global leader in technological / FinTech solutions for employee motivation and engagement. Sylwia worked at C-level for Tesco Central Europe, PayU Central Europe, Avon, and Philip Morris. She has been supporting women and startups for nearly a decade. A lawyer by education, Sylwia is a graduate of the European Executive MBA.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

In choosing the tech industry, you are at the heart of innovation, solving problems creatively alongside brilliant minds. Many tech businesses also have strong social missions, so you can truly make a meaningful difference with your work.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Finding my way and being successful in digitizing and transforming a variety of businesses and industries from FMCG, retail, ecommerce to payments.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Managing your former peers while taking on my first managerial position was quite a challenge for me.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

That I can innovate the way we work, that the pace is fast and that you can feel the vibe of growth every day.



Aleksandra Bis

 Co-CEO

 Dare IT

Aleksandra is an experienced design leader and an impact entrepreneur. Co-founder of Dare IT - an impact organization that each year assists hundreds of women and minorities in entering the tech industry. Also the creator of experienced-based learning programs - a concept developed in partnership with Stanford University's Golub Capital Social Impact Lab. She is a strong advocate for inclusive tech and a PhD candidate. She believes that design has the power to be a force for good in the world.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I wanted to have an impact at scale and I believed technology could provide it. Since the beginning of my professional career I've been using my skill set and available tools to better the world. As a designer I chose products with a positive impact: enhancing consumer rights, professional legal support, improving circular economy practices, helping volunteering organizations. And I'm an outspoken advocate for inclusive technology and empowering women in IT - and that led me to Dare IT.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I always knew I wanted to help others and in 2018 my vision crystallized. I founded Dare IT - an impact organization with the goal of reducing the gender gap in the tech sector by helping women transition from other careers. My North Star goal is to help 1 million women step into the IT world. We work with over 50 top companies, have an amazing research partnership with Stanford University and the biggest mentoring program in IT in Poland plus a community of almost 30,000 women.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

When leading a team of Designers, UX Researchers and UX writers at AirHelp, I successfully navigated the design team through the travel industry's toughest year (Covid 19 Pandemic), ensuring consistency despite a severe crunch on resources and motivation. Those were extremely adverse and high-stress circumstances which demanded from me, as a leader, not only razor-sharp focus and prioritisation, but also immense empathy and the emotional support of the team.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

I didn't have many assumptions regarding the industry and in all honesty I didn't feel it was an industry towards which I strived. I followed my ultimate passion which is design and it was this passion that led me towards creating digital products, hence the IT industry. So no particular surprises, but what I love about it most is the constant changes and opportunities to learn - your growth and development is never done!



Katarzyna Blachowicz

 COO

 The Centre for Information Technology



Katarzyna is an experienced manager with many years of experience gained in one of the largest law firms in the country. She has held high-level managerial positions and served as a member of supervisory boards. Professionally, Katarzyna is a legal advisor. She can effectively manage organizational change and lead digital transformation. She emphasizes teamwork and open communication. Katarzyna has been associated with the Centre for Information Technology company since March 2022.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

Working in IT offers the opportunity for continuous learning and improving one's skills, as well as the possibility of transitioning to a different profession. Observing the job market, it is easy to notice how significant reskilling and upskilling have become. IT is an ideal place for personal growth. Stagnation and lack of development are not options here. It is essential to acquire the skills to adapt to the changing needs of the job market. The progress of new technologies cannot be stopped.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

As of today, the preparation and launch of the "Nowa Ty w IT. Profesjonalizm nie ma płci" program. This program aimed to provide not only free education but also serve as a mentoring initiative. This is also a program that promotes awareness in society about the importance of diversity and demonstrates that professionalism is not determined by gender. Every one of us can pursue whatever we dream of, or at least, we can give it a try.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

The transformation from being a manager to becoming a leader. Occupying managerial positions is not an achievement in itself. My focus is on being a leader for the teams I manage. Since the beginning of my career in managerial roles, my main objective has been to become a leader and continually improve in this area. I want to bring out the best in each team I work with. I prioritize the development of the people I work with and amplify the talents within the team. I provide people with the space to take on challenges and make mistakes.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

One of the biggest surprises was how much teamwork plays a vital role in the IT industry, where soft skills are of enormous significance. We rarely realize how many elements need to come together to complete an IT project successfully. No area is less important, and everyone contributes something valuable. At the end of the day, it always comes down to the human factor, and we should never forget that, especially in a time when we are witnessing the rapid development of artificial intelligence.



Karolina Bluma

 COO, Board Member, AI Specialist

 Grantera

Karolina is the COO and Board Member of Grantera, a grants expert, an AI specialist, medical physicist, certified Design Thinking facilitator, and business mentor at YBP Foundation. She has been awarded with, among others, the statuette Top Woman in Power 2022, Business Lioness 2022 and the title of expert in finance, technology and HR in the database created and/or promoted by Forbes Woman Poland. Karolina has given interviews for, among others, the book "50 Business Personalities" and "33 Women of Power".

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I have always been interested in new technologies. I believe that continuous development is very important, both personally and in the broader field of science and technology. Even as a child I liked to know how something is built and why it works the way it does, so that I can improve it later – this has stayed with me to this day.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

My greatest professional achievement is certainly where I am now. I am fulfilled as a manager, and the projects I carry out are extremely interesting. Every day I learn something new in different fields, and this satisfies my curiosity about the world and helps me see analogies in processes and make further improvements. I feel that I am in the right place, and working with new technologies is never boring.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

The hardest part was understanding that different employees have different work styles. I realized that not everyone has to spill ideas, and there is nothing wrong with that. Realizing that not everyone, like me, "kicks into sixth gear" before a deadline, and there are even some who feel lost at this point, allowed me to tailor tasks not only to a person's competence, but also to their working style.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

What surprises me most about IT projects and programming itself is how much is still unknown, even though as a society we already know more and more. What also surprises me is that many different solutions can be implemented to solve the same problem, that there is not only one right way, and this spurs creativity.





Agnieszka Bochacka

 Cloud Strategy & Transformation - CEE

 PwC

Agnieszka guides global organizations through transformation, leveraging a decade of experience at firms like Maspex, Deloitte, PwC. She is a collaborator with MIT SLR, a leader of the Singularity Cracow Chapter, PMI Transformation Team, and creator of innovative programs for ICAN, IBM, ProBusinessDesign. As the pioneer of Poland's first Digital Transformation Manager program and a mentor at MIT EF CEE, she nurtures growth and change.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I chose the new technologies industry because it's the future. We're amidst a technological revolution and soon everything will be sifted through technology. We hold the power to shape our future. Merging technology and business, implementing it via digital transformation, fuels my passion. This industry allows us to forge tomorrow, today.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

My proudest professional achievement is transitioning into the technology field and discovering an area within it – digital transformation – that ignited my passion and shaped my career. This shift wasn't easy, but it was undoubtedly rewarding.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

As a manager, my greatest challenge was juggling three key areas: strategic planning, handling operational emergencies, and team development via task alignment to individual strengths. Mastering the balance was a true test of leadership.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

The vastness and diversity of topics in IT surprised me initially, alongside its unique nomenclature and myriad of acronyms. Yet, the openness to questions and continuous opportunities for growth in this dynamic industry turned these challenges into exciting learning opportunities.





Hanna Bogucka

 Poznan University of Technology, RIMEDO

 Professor, Director of the Institute of Radiocommunications, Co-founder, Head of Cooperation

Prof. dr hab. inż. Hanna Bogucka is a full professor and the Director of the Institute of Radiocommunications at the Poznan University of Technology. She is the co-founder and the Head of Cooperation at RIMEDO, a spin-off from PUT. She was IEEE Communications Society Director of Europe, Africa, Middle East Region (2014-15), IEEE Radio Communications Committee Chair (2015-16), and is a Member at Large of the IEEE ComSoc Board of Governors in 2023-25. Dr. Bogucka is a member of the Polish Academy of Sciences.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I did my Ph.D. in telecommunications. At that time cellular radio networks started developing, and I found radio communication technology an exciting field of research, with a high potential for future development toward global connectivity. When I succeeded in my scientific career, together with my colleagues, we decided to commercialize our knowledge and started a company called RIMEDO Labs which develops open radio access networks technology.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Regarding my scientific achievements, I think it is admission to the Polish Academy of Sciences. In 2020, I received the prestigious award of Leader of Polish Teleinformatics and the Golden Cyborg statue. I have also been included in the Perspektywy list of Top 15 Women in 5G, published by Forbes and Perspektywy monthly. Regarding my organizational achievements, I highly appreciate my positions in the IEEE Communications Society, currently as Member at Large of the Board of Governors.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

As Director of the University Institute, it was and still is a challenge for me to manage its development in a fast-growing field; radio communication, whilst receiving limited public funds. Coordinating a group of bright, highly skilled, and individualist researchers is also a challenge. As the co-founder of RIMEDO and a Head of Cooperation, the challenge for me is to select opportunities and not miss chances for cooperating with the right partners for our mutual benefit.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

I am surprised that despite such huge progress in ICT (Information and Communication Technologies, which are now closely related), not enough young people choose this area for their studies and career and there is still a lack of engineers on the market. In particular, there are very few female engineers in IT and ICT.



Sylwia Bogucka

 Head of B2B Transformation

 Orange



Sylwia is an executive manager with over 15 years of professional experience in the B2B market. Her areas of expertise are strategic management, multidimensional transformations incl. IT landscape, business change, customer base management, sales channel-mix and execution. Sylwia is leading one of the largest and most challenging projects to change the working environment in B2B through the implementation of Salesforce. She is a leader of the diversity program at Orange oriented towards the empowerment of women, LGBTQ+ and neurodiversity.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

There are a few reasons why I decided to work in technologies industry:

1. Innovation: technology provides the opportunity to shape our future.
2. Diverse job opportunities and continuous learning: the tech industry offers a wide range of roles from software development and data analysis to cybersecurity or artificial intelligence and delivers continuous learning opportunities.
3. Collaboration and teamwork: working with a diverse team is what motivates me the most.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

In the second half of 2021, I temporarily took over a team responsible for IoT solutions sales. The target for the second half was 300% higher than the first-half target. The team was demotivated, and no one believed such significant growth was possible. Through direct and regular work with the team, openness to new projects, and full engagement, we managed to achieve the target, even with a minimal surplus, resulting in 400% growth year on year. I am proud of the work we did together as a team.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

The most challenging situation happened to me right after taking over a managerial position. As a manager who was promoted from within the team, I was met with significant dissatisfaction from my coworkers. They questioned my competence and management style which was very stressful for me. Forceful solutions were not effective, so I decided to explain my expectations and prepared an anonymous survey. Based on this feedback, we developed a collaborative working model.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

The most surprising thing in the world of new technologies is that there are many people who, despite having no prior experience, consider themselves specialists after obtaining a certificate. They can work on several projects at once and the quality of their work may cause more harm than good. There are no regulations in this regard. Secondly, security – how easy it is to fall victim to a cyber-attack, lose sensitive data, or disrupt a company's operations.





Yona Brawerman

 CMO

 OVHcloud

Yona is CMO at OVHcloud. After 5 years as Director of Strategy and CSR, she started her mission as CMO in 2023 to define OVHcloud's marketing strategy. She is responsible for 3 key areas to ensure the success of product launches, strengthen OVHcloud's differentiators and support international growth: product marketing, communication and branding, customer and UX. She has over 16 years of experience in defining and implementing strategic projects to support the hyper-growth of technology.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

The Tech sector has always been familiar to me. My father is an operational research engineer, and started as a computer scientist and programmer. At the time it was a new field and he had a computer store where he configured and programmed accounting software. So, it's an environment to which I have been exposed since I was very young and in which I am comfortable. Also, technology is shaping the future. I think that our credo "Innovation for Freedom" best reflects both my choice and approach.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

The way I've crafted my professional life which led me to OVHcloud is something of which I am proud. OVHcloud is a great adventure and its values are totally aligned with mine. Its mission to develop a European Tech Ecosystem makes a lot of sense to me and drives my energy. Pursuing the opportunity to collaborate with people I admire and who inspire me, I have found a place in the company that puts employees first. Also, we have a great visionary Octave Klaba and a great leader Michel Paulin.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

The most challenging situation is when you need your teams to perform and at the same time drive transformation to prepare the future. You need to ensure that the teams contribute to the business in the short term but also keep taking the time to challenge the status quo.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

I'm constantly impressed by the pace of change that happens in the industry. We can never say "the work is done", because there is always something that could be improved. I'm still astonished at how Technologies impact every aspect of our lives: they can support pro-health initiatives, help to expand knowledge or reduce distance. The Covid-19 period was a time when we put IT solutions to the test, and technology passed the test admirably.





Nathalie Brähler

 CMO

 EleaTek

Nathalie has led companies and brands in the field of tech, charity, education, and creative comms. You'll often find her at the crossroads of creativity, business, and innovation. Carving creative paths, while setting up a (tech) brand empire that speaks to humans. Nathalie likes to work with the latest tech, rich data, and create a warm, energetic team. Additionally, she enjoys sharing her insights as a speaker and serving on juries at international festivals such as SXSW.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

When I was architecting the Bachelor's & Master's program Creative Business to train the next-gen creative CMOs, we were integrating AI and blockchain. I discovered blockchain's potential in fairer business systems, and I got hooked. Since then, I worked as a CMO in Web3 and Web2.5. Today, I see immense potential in AI and blockchain for data ownership and countering AI tech monopolies.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

In terms of personal achievement: how I adeptly embraced tech as a typical non-STEM 'alpha'. In terms of legacy: Creative Business, the accredited Bachelor's & Master's university program that prepares the next CMOs for the future. After its launch, the program swiftly tripled in size, attracting students from all continents. My next achievement? To grow EleaTek, which has the potential to revolutionize the charitable & social impact industry.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Working 100% remotely with near-anonymous people. In the blockchain space, it's not uncommon to keep the camera turned off in calls and to go by an alias. I had to get used to it but it's hard to create a team spirit like that. Meetings in the metaverse help: sitting as avatars together around a virtual fireplace under a starry night and dancing or high-fiving together makes it more 'human'.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

How incredibly kind engineers and developers are. And how creative they are, too.



Natalia Buczel

 CC BA&BPO Director

 Sii Poland



Natalia Buczel currently holds the positions of BA&BPO Director and Regional Director at Sii Poznan. She specializes in building BPO services, business process transformation, RPA, marketing, and HR management. Natalia holds an MA in Economics and a BA in Sociology. She has been with Sii for 15 years; assuming various roles, including Client Manager, Branch Director, International Sales Director, and Competence Center Director.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

IT is the future. I was always into new trends, new appliances and was always a fan of new electronic toys. I wanted to learn how they were made. IT was a field that had very few females when I started working and this made the job even more interesting.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Two years ago I took on the role of BA&BPO Competency Center Director at Sii. I built our company's BPO offering from scratch, started cooperation with over 40 customers and currently have a team of almost 200 professionals. Additionally I founded our branch in Poznan 13 years ago and have developed the site to 650 people.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Most of my day to day work is connected to sales. Working in sales is very dynamic and very often connected with making tough account management decisions. 3 years ago I had to transfer most of my international Clients and 75% of my business to another director and still remain motivated towards both myself and my team.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

Soft skill competencies are often more important in projects than technical skills. A person can learn new systems, a new programming language but great communication skills, proactiveness, ambition are difficult to acquire.



Magdalena Budek

 CTO

 Gamescape



Magdalena is a French philologist and passionate puzzle room designer. She is the co-creator of Gamescape & Escapecity and an expert in high-tech props, online escape rooms and AR graphics. Magdalena has been involved in prestigious projects for Krakow Philharmonic & "zagrajwsztuke.pl". She has spent 10+ years promoting tech in education & culture, empowering women. Magdalena has worked with Akamai, IBM, Intel & many more. At Gamescape, she leads design and tech implementation. Magdalena enjoys travel, upcycling & drawing comics.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I chose the new technologies industry because of its ever-evolving nature and limitless potential for innovation. Being part of this dynamic field allows me to contribute to shaping the future and explore creative solutions that positively impact society.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Surviving and thriving through three major crises stands as my greatest professional achievement. Navigating the crisis in the escape room industry, the pandemic and lockdown, and the war in Ukraine with resilience, adaptability, and innovation has shaped me into a stronger and more resourceful professional.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

The most challenging professional situation I faced was adapting traditional escape room concepts to the digital realm. I had to find innovative ways to create immersive experiences and engaging puzzles that retained the essence of the physical escape room while leveraging the unique capabilities of the online platform. Embracing a user-centric approach allowed me to refine the online escape room, ensuring it delivered a captivating and memorable experience, comparable to its physical model.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

The most surprising aspect when I began working in the IT industry was the rapid pace of technological advancements. Witnessing groundbreaking innovations and how technology constantly reshapes our world was awe-inspiring and ignited my passion for staying at the forefront of this dynamic field.



Magdalena Bulak

 Head of Data & Product

 Sunrise System



Magdalena graduated from SGH in marketing research and ALK with postgraduate studies in big data management. With a strong focus on data, she gained experience in business and product development in international business (Bauer Media Group, WPP, Ringier Axel Springer) as well as Polish companies (Agora SA, NEUCA SA) in the b2b services area for SMEs.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I am a researcher and explorer by nature. My passion is to look for new solutions, learn them and share them with others. On the other hand, I need my actions to bring visible / measurable results. The technology industry gives me the feeling that I have an impact and makes my work my passion.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

My greatest achievement in recent years has been to build a data culture with the knowledge, tools, and an entire infrastructure that provides data to create a data-informed environment. From spontaneously filled excel sheets, we moved to the Snowflake cloud platform, we built reporting in PowerBI, we model, forecast and actually support business with data. I measure KPIs and we understand dependencies. I'm proud of the team that made it happen with me.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Funny one: I became a manager whilst looking like a teenager, and it was very difficult for me to build my authority, especially among men. Challenging one: building a feeling in the team that the manager is not the teacher who has the answers to all their questions – that is, dealing with this not very wise perception of bosses or leaders. The most difficult one: restructuring - entering the company as the person who will quickly make big changes – this is a trap for young bosses.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

What surprised me? How great the people are here; incredibly talented and creative, involved and curious. At the same time, due to a very strong focus on technologies, the industry needs to learn soft skills for communication, project management or customer relations – these standards, so far less important, are building their permanent place in IT.



Anna Bumbar

 Board Member

 Neadoo Digital Poland, Neadoo Digital

Anna was born in the Kłodzko Valley, where she spent her youth. She has always known that she wanted to develop professionally and work in business, and this influenced her decisions regarding education. After high school, Anna started studies at UAM in Poznań, majoring in Polish and Czech philology. During those studies, she took her first job in marketing. Currently, Anna is the co-owner of two companies; one in Poland and the other in the UK. She loves playing squash and spending time at home with a book in hand.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I didn't choose new technologies – they chose me. I somewhat stumbled into the SEO/SEM industry, but it was love at first sight. I adore the opportunities this field offers. It allows me to pursue my business ambitions, grow professionally – because it's an ever-changing industry, and one must stay up-to-date. Moreover, as a humanist, I can unleash my creativity through new technologies.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Unfortunately, I am very critical of my achievements and tend to see what I haven't accomplished more often than what I have. That's why I still believe that my greatest success lies ahead of me.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

The real specter of the company's bankruptcy. The departure of one of the co-owners, the pandemic, and the loss of many customers significantly impacted the company's financial situation. As if that weren't enough, one of our largest clients left shortly afterwards, and due to post-pandemic policy changes, creditors decided not to extend our credit line. It was the most challenging yet exceptionally motivating situation. We had to save the company, and we succeeded.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

When I started working, it was an entirely new industry for me, and I had no expectations or preconceptions. I was very open-minded and eager to absorb all the novelties. The fact is that many years have passed since then and I may not remember my biggest surprise ;)





Ludmila Charton

 Customer Success Director

 UiPath

Born in Poland, from an early age Ludmila was passionate about technology. She studied at Politechnika Gdanska and at the Franco-Polish School of New Technologies and then moved to France for an internship at Orange Lab. Ludmila met her husband and stayed in France where they founded a family. Her first job at Capgemini gave her a 360-degree view of IT projects. After almost 10 years, Ludmila moved to Manpower to deploy innovations internally. She currently works at UiPath driving innovation and leading an amazing and skilled team.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I didn't choose IT, it chose me. My school career was obvious; I couldn't choose anything else. I was very strong in mathematics and I looked for the most demanding school in this field. So, I went to Engineering school. During my studies I experienced the birth of the Internet, email, and the first social media with IRC. We were no longer closed off in an "Eastern European Country", we were citizens of the world, and the world was open to us. Projects in the year 2000 confirmed that IT was a very good choice.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

At ManpowerGroup, together with my team we developed a very innovative solution for recruiters; Digital Room. The candidate was guided through the assessment process by a virtual recruiter, an avatar. Thanks to Artificial Intelligence, the avatar was able to analyze the candidate's attitude, his knowledge of the profession, and his ability to adapt. Personally presenting Digital Room at Viva Technology 2017, Microsoft experiences 2017 and the World Economic Forum 2018 in Davos is my greatest professional achievement.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

I was once obliged to let go of certain people in the company; their situation did not correspond to the objectives of the company. Unfortunately, being a manager means that we sometimes have to make tough decisions and see them through. Good communication in these types of situations is key.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

The speed at which technologies change. We know what exists today but we cannot predict what will be possible tomorrow.



Sylwia Chmurkowska

 COO

 Neti



With over 13 years of HR experience, including 11 years in IT, Sylwia is an expert in recruitment, HR processes, business processes, employer branding and employee development. As COO of Neti, a blockchain-focused company, she bridges the gap between candidates and businesses, emphasizing a human-to-human approach. Recognized by the Strong Woman in IT 2023 Award, Sylwia is dedicated to fostering meaningful connections and empowering others in the evolving tech landscape.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I chose the new technologies industry because of its dynamic and innovative nature. Being a part of the blockchain industry allows me to constantly learn and grow, pushing boundaries and exploring cutting-edge solutions. The fast-paced environment excites me, and I am passionate about leveraging new technologies, such as blockchain, to drive positive change. Embracing this industry enables me to make a significant impact, bridging the gap between talented people and business to shape the future.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

One of my greatest professional achievements is receiving the Strong Woman in IT 2023 Award. This acknowledgment highlights not only my individual accomplishments but also signifies the progress I have made in breaking gender barriers in the tech industry. It showcases my dedication, leadership, and contributions to the field. This achievement is an inspiration to other women in technology, encouraging them to pursue their passions and strive for success in the IT industry.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

One of the biggest challenges I faced after taking a managerial position, apart from being a mother of two small children (which was a challenge in itself :)), was to lead the organization through change. This involved growing the team from 14 to 40 people in 1.5 years, changing roles and implementing new processes. The task required effective communication, empathy and strategic decision making. By fostering open dialogue, transparent communication, and providing support, I managed these tasks successfully.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

When I started working in the IT industry, contrary to the perception of tech professionals as solitary individuals, I discovered a vibrant community where teamwork and collective problem-solving are highly valued. Cross-functional collaboration, brainstorming sessions, and knowledge sharing were common practices. The willingness of colleagues to support and work together towards shared goals was truly impressive. Innovation and progress in the IT industry are often a result of collective effort.



Agnieszka Cichocka

 Head of Acceleration

 Huge Thing

Agnieszka's biggest passions are Art and Tech. Currently she is Head of Acceleration at Huge Thing, responsible for acceleration programs in partnership with Google for Startups or Żabka. When it comes to art she has been acting as an Advisor for a NYC-based art tech accelerator; Fuelarts and writing about art and technology for DailyArt Magazine. Agnieszka is the leader of various initiatives supporting women in tech - such as TOP 100 Women in AI in Poland and TOP 100 Women in Cloud Computing in Poland.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I was always a great fan of merging different areas like art and science or art and education so I took the chance to change careers to edtech after years of working in culture. Every few years I need a solid change in my life and I wanted to meet new people and work on new projects. After that it all happened really fast - I got so into technology, startups and the quick-changing world, that I took over the Startup Development Department of my company in no time.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

It has to be my career switch from culture & education to tech - believe me it was not easy for an art historian. Since then I am proud of each of "my" startups which developed, each funding that I supported, each program that I created. My biggest achievements are not those big projects that I was part of, but the personal support that I gave each one.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

The hardest part of my career has always been laying off people. I am a person who always fights for each employee and it took me a long time to understand that sometimes you just have to stop and face the hard truth that someone might not be a good fit for the team or might not want to be one. When such a situation lasts too long, it becomes toxic for both myself and the team.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

That everything happens so fast, that you always have to be up to date. I also started thinking in totally different categories in terms of the value for the client, and the indicators of each project. Before, working in culture, everything was more vague and what brought the biggest value was artistic in nature; space for your own reflection and interpretation. In tech all had to be measured with very clear impacts and it was great and difficult at the same time.



Kamila Cichocka

 Marketing Director, Central Europe

 Microsoft



Kamila is a marketing director at Microsoft, where she leads strategy and execution of marketing activities for Central Europe. Kamila has over 18 years of experience in the IT industry, working with global brands. She is passionate about creating engaging and impactful stories that showcase the value and potential of technology for various audiences and sectors. Kamila is a technology enthusiast, who combines the use of the latest marketing solutions and trends with the social responsibility of brands.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I studied political marketing and was fascinated by the concept of globalization, which was then related to the internet revolution. Twenty years ago, I realized that the future would be shaped by technological development, and I decided to pursue a professional career in technology companies, to stay close to the latest trends. I am passionate about technology and its impact on human life and society. I believe that business and marketing communication have a role in shaping the world.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

My greatest professional achievement was leading the marketing and communication campaign for Microsoft's cloud region launch in Poland. The project aimed to help local businesses use the latest technology solutions to innovate and thrive. I led an international team to design a marketing strategy and produce a narrative and content that highlighted the cloud's benefits and opportunities for different industries and sectors. The campaign reached millions and established Microsoft as a leader in the cloud market. I am proud of the value and impact we created.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

As a manager, I faced a major challenge when our organization underwent a significant change. The change required us to adapt to new structures and processes. It was a difficult and ambiguous period for everyone involved. I had to align the interests of the business with the needs of my team. I did this by creating a positive energy, demonstrating optimism, resilience, and empathy, and caring for the well-being of my team members.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

When I started working in the IT industry, I was surprised by the diversity and dynamism of the field. I learned that IT is not only about coding or programming, but also about solving problems, creating value, and working with people from different backgrounds and disciplines. I was impressed by the range of projects, technologies, and domains that I could work on and learn from. I also enjoyed the fast-paced and constantly changing nature of the industry.





Vanesa Cotlar

 VP of People & Culture

 PolicyMe

Vanesa Cotlar is an ambitious, people-first leader. She is passionate about building flexible workplaces and advocates for work-from-anywhere practices as well as transparency and ongoing feedback to increase attraction, retention and satisfaction of top talent. In her spare time, Vanesa contributes to People & Culture thought leadership and offers guidance to start-ups that need help structuring their HR practices. Vanesa holds an MBA from Queen's University.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

Vanesa's career started in Management Consulting at Deloitte, where she provided strategic guidance to some of the world's largest companies. There, she was fascinated by the power of innovation and technology, and how all companies are either technology companies or technology-enabled companies. In her role as VP of People & Culture, she looks for ways to integrate technology-enabled practices and robust people analytics to create effective work environments.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Effectively building the team and culture at PolicyMe. Since I joined we have doubled in headcount and I am proud to have been at the center of introducing clear values in our organization that have become integral to how we hire and how we operate daily. This, coupled with creating a work environment where individuals have flexibility, autonomy and enjoy their day to day, has been highly fulfilling for me.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Learning how to delegate effectively. It is hard to balance giving enough context, without giving too much specific direction. It takes time to build trust and create effective strategies to enable ownership of work. Letting others fail is one of the best ways for them to learn and giving space for failure is essential for growth. As a manager, finding the balance between work which has space for failure and work which doesn't is also complex and critical.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

Some people think that to be in IT, you have to be a software developer. That is far from the truth. There are so many other roles that are at the intersection of business and technology, like Product Management, and others that fall even stronger on the business side, like Growth and Marketing. The technology industry has jobs that can appeal to everyone, it is more about being excited to work in a space filled with innovation and disruption, more than it is about the ability to code.



Andrada Covaci

 Senior Director, Strategic Engagements & Transformation

 UiPath



Andrada is an innovative and creative leader with extensive international experience, adept at combining vision and determination to turn ideas into reality. Known for her expertise in building and motivating international teams, Andrada has focused her career on the banking and insurance sectors, working with major organizations such as Société Générale, Crédit Agricole, Volkswagen Bank, AXA and AVIVA.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

As an early adopter and champion of intelligent automation since 2017, I have been committed to helping companies strengthen their digital transformation journey. Prior to joining UiPath, I held a pivotal role at AVIVA France, where I led the innovation and intelligent automation department. Alongside my dedicated team, we focused on enhancing the customer and employee experience, foreseeing the future of work, and maximizing business value creation while minimizing operational risks.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

My greatest professional achievement has been successfully creating and implementing an intelligent automation approach during its early days. With a strong focus on the future of work, I managed to establish and lead an international team that significantly contributed to the organization's value. Through this unique journey, my team and I pushed the boundaries of technological innovation and efficiency, laying the groundwork for a more sustainable and agile workplace.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

One of the most challenging situations I faced as a manager involved tackling legacy applications, regulations, and organizational change, amid fears of strikes in France. To overcome these hurdles, I emphasized adaptability, collaboration, and open communication, while proactively addressing concerns and fostering an environment that turned challenges into opportunities for growth and innovation.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

Upon entering the IT industry, I was most surprised by the male-dominated environment and the existence of silos, highlighting the importance of fostering inclusivity and cross-functional collaboration for a progressive workplace.



Monika Cwynar-Kępa

 HR Director

 Capgemini

Monika is the HR Director of Software Center, Capgemini Poland, a graduate of Human Resources Management at the Wrocław University of Economics, an ICC Coach and certified Business Trainer. For over 20 years she has been responsible for the creation and development of HRM strategies in Polish and international companies.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

16 years ago I chose as my workplace a Wrocław based IT company focused on maintaining technological solutions. Within four years we had become one of the main centers for creating new solutions in telecommunications technologies. I chose the IT industry because it offers unlimited opportunities both in terms of offering highly developmental jobs for extraordinary, creative, diverse people, as well as an opportunity to emphasize our status as experts on the international area.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

My greatest achievement, of which I am extremely proud, is building an HR team that sees itself as an integral part of the business, and is also perceived as such by the business partners. The HR team perfectly understands business challenges and is focused on achieving the organization's goals together with business. Very often I hear that it is the type of HR that you usually read about in books and rarely see in practice.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Sometimes working with business partners for whom the add value of HR function is not clear how HR can support him/her in achieving business goals. I am happy that is not at that moment. I have great opportunity to work with senior managers for whom the HR really matters.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

When I started working in the IT industry, I was most surprised that my target group – candidates, employees – were all quite unique taking into consideration their approach to work and the way they work. Over time, as I got to know them better, it turned out that they are an extremely inspiring group.



Patrycja Czarnul

 Head of Product Engineering Group RAN Services

 Ericsson



Patrycja is an experienced manager and IT professional with a proven record of driving success through people-oriented team management and a customer-focused work culture. She has a broad international background in leading multicultural teams. Her expertise in project management, business development and mentoring has resulted in the successful delivery of complex projects and organizational improvements. Patrycja has excellent communication skills and a strong focus on people and results, and continuously aims to make a significant impact.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I am excited to be part of an industry that is at the forefront of innovation and progress. Continuous learning is essential in the IT sector, and I embrace the opportunity to stay up to date with the latest trends. Besides that, I find great satisfaction in solving complex problems by finding creative and effective strategies to overcome various challenges. My chosen career path also allows me to contribute to society by creating innovative solutions that can positively impact people's lives.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

My persistence in gaining experience and expanding my network, which has led me to my current position as Head of the Product Engineering Group. It shows that my contributions have had a positive impact on the company's goals and objectives. The most significant award was becoming a member of the Advisory Board for an organization with over 11,000 employees. I had a unique opportunity to contribute at a higher level to the organization's strategic decisions and broaden my managerial perspectives.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Building and growing a product development organization at a very fast pace. While some team members had extensive experience, the majority were relatively new to the industry. Identifying skill gaps and out-of-the-box thinking in growing teams and providing targeted training and development for them became critical to ensure the success of our organization. As well as strengthening my leadership skills, it reinforced the value of embracing diversity and creating an inclusive working environment.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

The IT industry is highly interdisciplinary, and it intersects with many fields and domains. It's not just about writing code or managing hardware; it involves collaborating with professionals from diverse backgrounds such as design, business, marketing, psychology, and more. Understanding how technology aligns with these fields is vital. Surprisingly, effective communication and psychological safety to support innovative thinking are fundamental in the IT industry.



Agnieszka Czmyr-Kaczanowska

 CEO & Co-Founder

 Talenti - Women's Talent Bank, Mamo Pracuj Foundation

EB Manager, enthusiast of DEI and leadership through mission. She has been empowering women for over 12 years, working closely with employers to change the labour market to be more open to women. She is happy to share her knowledge and experience, and to speak at conferences as a keynote speaker and expert (including TEDx). She has had the pleasure of receiving several awards and recognitions including Tech Disruptor at the Master & Robots Awards 2022. She is a fellow of the U.S. State Department program and a LAP 2022 graduate.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

New technologies are already present in all aspects of our lives. It is impossible not to notice them, impossible to ignore them. I believe it is better to know, to like and, above all, to understand them in order to be able to use them to improve our lives, to make the world more accessible and open. This is why I choose new technologies. I am not afraid to use them to empower women and implement the changes that are so much needed and that we are all waiting for!

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Three achievements come to mind: 1) I have taken a professional path that has shaped my professional sensibilities forever - the NGO path. 2) Building on my experiences, together with people I trust, I have built organisations that invite women into technology, and new technologies into women's lives: the Mamo Pracuj Foundation and Talenti - Women's Talent Bank. 3) I feel I haven't yet done enough and still have an appetite for growth.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Any situation that requires change not only from me but also from the people I work with is challenging. A good example has been my partial move away from the Mamo Pracuj Foundation in order to build Talenti, a new company. Preparing myself and the team for the change has been one of my biggest challenges in recent times. But also a great adventure!

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

I was surprised by how vast the new technology industry is in terms of the variety of professions involved and the scope for development. At the same time, how few people know about it! I have discovered just how many competences are useful when developing innovative technological products, and that many people can find a place for themselves in IT!



Rebecca Dalby

 Head of Marketing

 Speaker from iHeart



As the Head of Marketing at Spreaker, Rebecca leads a team of marketing and podcasting specialists. Together, they hold the key to brand management, event activation, creator acquisition, and the art of podcast monetization. With a track record of 8+ years at the helm of marketing and sales teams in various industries, Rebecca has finally found her true calling in the dynamic world of podcasting. This thrilling journey allows her to pursue her passion while leaving an indelible mark in a field she adores.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

Throughout my experience, I have cultivated and led driven teams that excel in FMCG, PR, social media, email marketing, brand identity, and SEO—so far, it's been diverse, to say the least. These experiences have shaped me and refined my abilities. I'm most grateful that my career has granted me a fearlessness for new challenges and the ability to dive headfirst into cutting-edge technologies. My best work is done when I wholeheartedly love what I do, and the podcast industry fits that criteria perfectly.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Back in 2016, during my time at Suntory, I won the prestigious Yatte Minahare award. In Japanese "Yatte Minahare" embodies the spirit of daring to dream big, fearlessly embracing challenges, and never giving up. It's awarded to an individual who has the courage to question norms and fearlessly embark on new endeavors. It was an achievement that shaped my professional journey. It instilled in me the confidence to fearlessly ask questions, and ultimately led me to where I am today.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

The most challenging aspect of being a manager is navigating the complexities and uniqueness of individuals. People bring diverse backgrounds, personalities, and skills to the table. As a result, a substantial part of my role is devoted to empowering team members, ensuring they perform at their peak and collaborate seamlessly. Balancing these differences demands a blend of empathy, leadership, and motivation—traits that require constant cultivation to be an effective manager.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

My perspective may differ slightly because of the rapidly evolving nature of podcasting in the IT realm. What excited me the most is the realization that we possess both the power and responsibility to shape the future of this field at this very moment. It's truly astonishing because, unlike many other industries, podcasting is still in its formative stages, far from being set in its way. We are part of an extraordinary community, where everyone is actively contributing to building the future.



Cristina Paulina Dayon-Cabias

 Operations Competency Leader

 Lingaro Philippines

Cristina is an operations competency leader in Lingaro Philippines and has 12+ years of I.T. experience; specializing in cloud Data and Analytics Platforms. She manages a team of 100+ I.T. professionals delivering DevOps services to Fortune 500 clients globally. As a women-in-tech advocate, Tina leads Lingaro's Global Women Community, empowering female Lingarians and fostering industry connections. She volunteers as a mentor at an IT Women Mentoring Program, guiding female fresh graduates in their IT journey.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

As a storyteller and digital native from an early age, choosing technology for my studies felt natural. While I may not have fully grasped the boundless impact of technology back then, I now understand the immense power of storytelling in the digital space—from enhancing user centricity to connecting with relatable insights and driving innovations. I am grateful that it was my passion that led me to one of the best career decisions of my life.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

My greatest professional achievement is the culmination of years of effort, dedication, and hard work. The journey of creating a positive impact within my own team, advocating for women in IT, and nurturing my passion for storytelling through speaking at events has been the most rewarding aspect of my career so far. While my entire journey has been fulfilling, I was humbled to receive the prestigious Country Manager Award in 2022 in recognition of my contributions and dedication.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

I accepted the challenge of turning around an underperforming team after a 3-month maternity leave. The stakes were high, morale and motivation were low. In this journey, I learned to prioritize my mental health before anything else. It was crucial to holistically assess and address risks in people, processes, and tools to devise service improvement plans. Additionally, celebrating even small successes reinforced and boosted morale during tough times. The intervention proved to be a success.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

I was surprised by the gender disparity, particularly within technical teams. While I am grateful for the respectful environment I have experienced thus far, looking back, I now see this situation as both empowering and challenging. It provides women in tech an opportunity to become advocates for themselves and others, no matter how small these actions are. Battling the Imposter Syndrome and our confidence gap, it's important for women to join the conversation and be part of the movement.



Marta Derlatka-Dziedzic

 Owner, President

 eChallenge, eChallenge Foundation

Marta has been involved in the IT and new technology industry for more than 19 years. She always works with wonderful people who strongly want to develop and implement new things. Every new assignment brings new people, new organizations and projects. Each new task requires an individualized approach. Eventually we decided to establish the eChallenge Foundation to level the playing field for young people with access to technological and language knowledge.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

New technologies mean constant development, gaining new knowledge and experience, constant contact with people and many interesting new projects. Passion, novelty and creativity are the qualities that unite my work.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I think picking the right people to work with is a success; trusting the team and working on the same wavelength. In addition, because of interpersonal skills, I have been successful in working with different people / personality types and developing common values to work as a team.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

I think that holding a managerial position as a woman is already a challenge. In the IT world, despite the breaking of the so-called glass ceilings, you constantly have to prove your worth and knowledge. It is better now in my professional life, although this is due to my own opinion of myself and feeling of self worth.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

How difficult it is to prove one's worth and wisdom, which has often been undermined by, for example, young age or a youthful appearance.





Wiktoria Drozd

 Founder

 Digital Heart

Wiktoria is the founder of Digital Heart; a Growth Marketing agency with a team of 15 professionals and which specializes in supporting technology companies, e-commerce, and startups. Established during the pandemic when Wiktoria was 27, she rapidly transformed from being a freelancer into an agency. In 2023, they became the first agency in Poland to utilize Generative AI on their website. In 2022, their efforts contributed to their clients earning a combined total of 28.7 million PLN.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

In today's fast-paced business world, uniting IT and marketing is essential for sustained success. At Digital Heart, technology empowers us to break communication barriers, creating effective sales funnels and optimizing conversions, and stay ahead in a dynamic market. Without this collaboration, companies risk being left behind, facing difficulties in staying relevant, and are missing out on valuable opportunities to optimize their marketing efforts and drive revenue.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

As an entrepreneur, my greatest triumph lies in the progress we've achieved since our early days. Watching the team thrive, collaborate and embrace new challenges is the most rewarding. This path has shown me the importance of forming meaningful connections, building strong partnerships, and cherishing the exceptional individuals I've met, all of whom have played a vital role in my growth and success.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

In the Polish business landscape, the most common is dealing with payment delays and breached contract terms. Bringing success to your client is not enough nowadays in being a partner. Initially, I believed in ethical practices and fair treatment yielding reciprocity, but being an entrepreneur exposed me to a world of greed, injustice, and disrespect. Learning to navigate these challenges is a continuous journey, and being a young-looking woman does not help with gaining respect.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

Stepping into the IT industry, the biggest surprise was finding myself in rooms full of men. Negotiations, finances, and contracts were predominantly handled by them, and I often found myself engaging with them in crucial decision-making processes. Being the sole woman in such situations tested my self-confidence - it was harder when not an expert. It took time, but I eventually embraced my expertise, learning to stand tall and assert myself as an equal player in the game.





Emilia Dryzalowska

 Customer Success Manager

 Billennium

2014 - 2016: Event Manager, Corse Agency

2016 - Present: International Relations Manager, Billennium Sp. z o.o.

2018: Channel Partner Manager, Billennium Sp. z o.o.

2019: Customer / Employee Relationship Manager, Billennium Sp. z o.o.

2021: Customer Success Manager, Billennium GmbH

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I grabbed the opportunity. Coming from a completely different sector I was really curious to dive deep into new challenges and topics.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

My greatest professional achievement was receiving an internal award for successfully establishing our Indian subsidiary. During this endeavor, we not only relocated to a new office but also accomplished the refurbishment and alignment of our guidelines with the headquarters. This resulted in a remarkable growth, expanding from 20 to 100 seats within a short period.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

The most challenging professional situation I encountered after assuming a managerial position was during a crucial customer call. I faced the task of ensuring that my entire team was consistently delivering an exceptional job. It was the most uncomfortable call that I done and I had to stay calm and smile.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

When I first entered the IT industry, one of the most surprising aspects was the prevalent use of shortcuts consisting of just 2 to 4 characters. I was amazed at how quickly I filled my small notebook with various shortcuts. However, over the course of 7 years, I realized that not every individual utilizing these shortcuts truly comprehended their underlying meaning or purpose. It showed me that while shortcuts can be efficient, they might not always foster a deep understanding of the processes. So never hesitate to ask questions.





Izabela Duiwe

 Senior Customer Experience Program Manager

 Microsoft

Izabela Duiwe is the CxPM SMB Europe Lead in Teams Engineering at Microsoft. With over 15 years of experience in the tech industry, she has held various roles in engineering, sales, and customer success. In her current role, she is responsible for driving innovation via Microsoft Teams and ecosystem, and helping build the best product to empower businesses, with a focus on SMB businesses in Europe. Izabela is also a great ambassador of D&I and co-founder of the 'emPower Women' program.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I pursued a degree in Computer Science due to my passion for mathematics and algorithms. However, I did not consider the tech industry as a long-term career option until I participated in an Erasmus program in Portugal and started working as a programmer. The experience of creating new programs from scratch and seeing how they impacted people's businesses was truly magical, and I realized that the tech industry could be both fulfilling and exciting.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

My key achievement is being able to adapt and upskill quickly and it's important for me to enjoy what I'm doing surrounded by amazing talented people. I believe that enjoying the journey is crucial for both my professional career and personal growth. I'm proud of 2 accomplishments in particular: Unlocking a cloud solution in the Polish FSI industry through persistence and collaboration, and co-founding the 'emPower Women' upskilling program which aims to empower females through cloud technology

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Creating and executing a strategy for an uncharted area was a major challenge. I had to take on a leadership role in a group of colleagues because I saw that we were not heading in the right direction. The topic was very interesting to me and I knew it was important to the organization in the long run. However, it also meant facing many different perspectives and some resistance to entering the unknown. We had to start fast, fail fast, learn and adapt fast.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

I was surprised by the variety of available possibilities. As a computer science graduate, I assumed my roles would be technical such as a programmer, architect, or administrator. I quickly discovered that there were many other options. Nowadays, the diversity of roles and qualities needed in the industry is even greater. It's becoming increasingly important to create bridges between business and IT and democratize IT in a way that empowers businesses to innovate in their spaces.



Aleksandra Dziewulska

 Head of Product Design, Co-founder

 Apptension, House of Product

Alex is an experienced product expert combining a background in sociology and psychology with technical and product expertise. She has built successful teams in international companies and is a university lecturer and conference speaker, mentor and active part of the product community. Currently, she is the Head of Product Design at Apptension and started her own boutique product agency House of Product. Alex is an evangelist in design thinking and believes in an agile, lean approach in the product area.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I'm captivated by the boundless potential of innovation in the tech industry. Combining my educational background in sociology and psychology with my IT experience enables me to design products that cater to human needs and behaviors. The ever-evolving landscape of technology sparks my curiosity and motivates me to encourage more individuals to explore opportunities in IT.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

During these tumultuous times – with a pandemic raging, a war in Ukraine, and an economic recession leading to layoffs – I held a managerial position. It was a never-ending challenge to coordinate and motivate my teams, who were facing personal and professional hardships beyond anything we had experienced before. Our mental health and wellbeing was a priority. We shared tears, laughter and successes. Being successful doesn't mean promotion, money or numbers, it's all about empowering people.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

I have been in a managerial positions during the covid-19 pandemic, the war in Ukraine and the current recession with turbulence and layoffs. It seems like a never-ending challenge. Coordinating and motivating a team facing personal and professional hardships beyond anything we experienced before was tough. I prioritized mental health, building a supportive environment, and maintaining open communication. I worked, laughed and cried with my teams. We are going forward together, and we are slaying it!

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

It's not work, it's partly a mission; we are solving real-life problems considering human needs and behaviors, business goals, and the business landscape while leveraging technology. We are less strict, more agile, and we are leading world efforts as an industry. It's not about control. Creativity, freedom, and drive toward excellence create the most meaningful and successful solutions. It's self-managing teams of experts and individuals that ensure progress.



Anna Elwart

 Chief Executive Officer

 EL Passion

Anna Elwart is the CEO at EL Passion, a custom design & software agency. Appointed in the middle of the pandemic after being a Managing Director at one of the top media agencies in Poland, she took over the most passionate team in the Polish market. In the one year since Anna became CEO, EL Passion implemented their new website and rebranded their name, started working in a full Agile mode in self-managing teams, introduced a new salary formula for developers, and much, much more.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

It is one of the most innovative fields to be in and actually have a tangible impact on the world around. Also, I consider it a natural continuation of my career in the digital industry. In advertising I learnt a lot about how to promote products and services, but broadening it to creating applications that solve users' pains and have clear-cut business goals is a whole new level of creation.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

It's actually what we were able to achieve within EL Passion since my starting there. It wasn't easy; first COVID, then recession, but we managed to hustle through it, from less than 50 people after layoffs, up to a stable 70. Our revenue rose to a record number in the 12 year history of the company and we launched a number of internal initiatives. My personal favorite is ELP Coins — a virtual currency that gives our employees the right to participate in the company's financial success.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Soon after I became EL Passion's CEO, the CTO decided he wanted to go back to programming. I was yet to learn about the company and was without the most important tech person. I started talking with people internally and most of them pointed to the person ready to take on the role. It was 2 years ago and since then we managed to kick off numerous internal projects crucial for our growth. It's an important lesson for managers to recognize and reward talents within the organization.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

What struck me is how similar the services business is in general, no matter the industry. Previously I worked at a media agency, now I'm steering a product design & development agency and both of those businesses have a lot in common — you need to match experts in their domains on a very saturated market. This commonality allowed me to feel the industry and its pains really quickly after taking on the job.





Magdalena Firlit

 CEO

 Magdalena Firlit

Magdalena Firlit is a Professional Scrum Trainer and an experienced Scrum coach, Scrum Master, a certified life & business coach (ICF diploma), mentor, Agile coach, graduate trainer, and consultant. She is a founder and CEO of the company magdalena-firlit.com and Agile in the Spotlight. She collaborates with several business domains: IT, pharmacy, medicine, banking, gaming, marketing, automotive industry. In particular, Magdalena is interested in outcomes from Agile Transformation in companies.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

As an agile trainer and consultant in IT, I chose the new technologies industry because it is dynamic, challenging, and impactful. This industry is at the forefront of innovation, driving advancements that shape the future. My role allows me to contribute by helping teams and organizations adapt, improve, and thrive in this rapidly changing environment. Additionally, the constant learning and problem-solving involved in navigating new technologies keep my work exciting and fulfilling.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

My greatest professional achievement has been helping in Agile transformations for my customers. We implemented Agility and Scrum which improved their product value delivery, quality and ability to respond to market changes significantly. These transformations not only led to high customer satisfaction, but also had a broad and positive impact on their organization. Their teams became more collaborative and adaptable, which drove innovation and business growth.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

One of the most challenging situations was managing a significant shift in the organization's direction due to evolving business needs. It required recalibrating the team's focus, setting up a clear goal, and realigning our work with the new objectives. The key was clear communication, maintaining trust within the team, and leading by example to navigate this complex transition successfully.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

I started in 2005 in the IT industry. What surprised me most was the notable gender imbalance, with a scarcity of women in the field. Despite advancements in diversity and inclusion, it was clear that the IT industry still had a long way to go. This underrepresentation was not just a numbers issue, it also impacted the dynamics and perspectives within teams. It underscored the importance of continued efforts towards achieving diversity and equal opportunities in tech.



Izabela Franke

 Head of Advisory

 Future Mind



Izabela is a digital native, customer experience wizard, and product-centric evangelist.

She is an experienced leader currently serving as Head of Advisory at Future Mind; a renowned Digital Advisory & Delivery company, creating innovative digital products and guiding clients in digital transformation processes. Previous roles have included PwC, Agora, Benefit Systems, and Atos Polska.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I didn't choose the tech industry; the tech industry chose me. Starting my career in the media sector, I never imagined myself working on IT projects. However, I was thrown in at the deep end and discovered that technology wasn't just something I could use personally, but also actively contribute to. Agora provided an excellent platform to learn about technology and its impact on business, marketing, and sales.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Each completed project is an achievement, but it is the cumulative experiences that foster the ability to approach challenges from the customer's business perspective, considering a wide spectrum of possibilities. This involves crafting solutions that fit into an ecosystem of products without overwhelming them with unnecessary technological complexities. Understanding all these perspectives enables me to be a valuable partner for both IT and business domains.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

The most challenging part is to stop seeing oneself as an indispensable expert and allow the team to do things their own way. To be supportive without micromanaging. The challenge lies in building such a sense of trust that there's no need to get involved in every project on a daily basis.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

The biggest surprise was that you don't need to complete technical studies to bring real value to the tech industry. Understanding the customers' perspective, their motivations, and behavior is just as crucial as knowing the technical aspects. In the age of AI development, and against all appearances, these will be increasingly desirable competencies in this industry.





Celina Fugowska

 Business Manager, COO

 March Networks, DoIT Software

Celina is the COO and co-founder of DoIT Software; a Software development company based in Gliwice. As of last year, she is also a Business Manager of the Canadian company March Networks, with which DoIT Software merged in the autumn of 2022.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I always wanted to do something impactful; not only to observe, but also be a part of the change. The IT industry is a place where I can do this.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Running your own company is a constant challenge. Just when you think everything is going well, a storm comes and you need to start over. The biggest challenges are always related to team management; working with people is simultaneously the most beautiful and the hardest thing.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Last year my company merged with the Canadian company March Networks. It took several months of difficult decisions, crises, doubts, but also hopes, and possibilities. In my opinion, we merged at a perfect moment and only after 3 years of running the company – I am proud we were able to build a value which became a business opportunity in such a short time.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

15 years ago some IT companies didn't have lavatories for women – seriously! I was also surprised that the IT industry is not a monolith, but is composed of many different cultures, styles of work and possibilities.



Iwona Gajda

 CEO & President of the Board

 BPC GROUP POLAND



Iwona has been professionally involved in the IT industry since 1996. For 12 years she worked as a Top Manager and a Member of the Supervisory Board in various IT companies that operate in the Polish and international markets. In 2008, Iwona founded her own consulting company: BPC GROUP POLAND, which offers educational and advisory services in the field of advanced technologies. Furthermore, the company analyses the state of informatization of enterprises and introduces new IT systems to the Polish market.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I entered the world of new technologies because I was certain that they would change businesses as well as every aspect of our lives. As I became more familiar with their potential, I was fascinated by a boundless world, such as the ability to explore the history of humanity, venture into space, or discover the human body. I have been here for 27 years. It is an amazing feeling to be a part of the changes that impact the quality of life on Earth and to contribute to the building of a new civilization.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

BPC Group Poland, a company I founded 16 years ago (with a capital of PLN 00.00), is today one of the most prominent consulting businesses in Poland. It guides the greatest international industrial companies through digital transformation processes. Every year, it educates over 6,000 managers and supports hundreds of IT solution providers with its knowledge. It publishes reports on the state of digitalization in Polish enterprises.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

After several years of working as a top manager in large companies, I decided to start my own business. I had neither funds, office, colleagues, nor clients. I had to develop the first offer, sell it, execute it, and so on. Over time, I hired students to assist me, whom I introduced to the IT industry and the business world. Today, some of them are among the top consultants in Poland, guiding the largest corporations through informatization.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

I entered a world full of intelligent, focused and open-minded people. There were no unnecessary formalities among them; what mattered was knowledge, collaboration, and striving towards a goal. I was surprised by the directness in relationships between superiors and subordinates. They were just one team of consultants. Together they fought, experienced challenges, and celebrated victories. The work atmosphere was fantastic.



Katarzyna Garbaciak

 Managing Director

 Emallabs, Vercom

Katarzyna Garbaciak is a graduate of the Poznań University of Economics and currently pursuing her MBA. Her involvement with new technologies and the IT industry dates back to 2010, when she began her career as a marketer. Presently, she holds a position at Vercom S.A., a leading company in the CPaaS market within this region of Europe. In her role, she is entrusted with the responsibility of overseeing the development of the Emallabs on a global scale.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I entered the new technologies industry not by explicit choice, but rather driven by a desire to work with the best in a rapidly growing sector – e-commerce. Initially I worked at Allegro, seeing it as an ideal place for learning due to the numerous interesting services being developed at the time; such as Allegro's online stores, InPost Parcel Machines, PayU, and Ceneo. Surrounded by open-minded individuals, I sought to absorb as much knowledge as possible.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

My most outstanding professional achievement has been the consistent 50% y/y revenue growth of the SaaS platform I develop. Personally, I find great satisfaction in my role in sales. While I never considered myself a natural salesperson, I've come to realize that my expertise and experience allow me to assist customers in making informed purchase decisions. This realization has transformed my approach to sales, and I take joy in knowing that I can help people buy the solutions.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

The most challenging situation was learning to give and receive feedback effectively. It was a crucial skill to master, but initially I found it difficult. I had to work on controlling my emotions and focusing on objective facts, which required changing my natural reactions to different behaviors and words. Now, I understand the importance of being receptive to feedback, both positive and negative, as it presents an opportunity for continuous learning, improvement, and personal growth.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

As someone responsible for increasing the sales of sophisticated products preferred by well-informed customers, I was struck by the realization that modern selling is not about pushing products but rather helping customers make informed buying decisions. Unlike traditional sales presentations, where the emphasis was on showcasing the product and packages, today's reality requires a different approach. Customers independently explore the product, set up accounts, and test services.



Marta Gasik

 Data Center Lead

 Microsoft



Marta Gasik leads Microsoft's strategy around Azure Poland Central; the company's first data center region in CEE. She manages the relationship between global Azure development teams and the local market, working closely with the Polish subsidiary, Polish customers and market partners in cloud adoption. At Microsoft since 2016, she previously held the roles of Business Manager for Poland and Project Manager in the EMEA Consulting division. Marta is a graduate of University College London.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I strive to work on projects that impact society at large, and technology gave me this opportunity immediately, allowing me to work initially on connected vehicles, e-government solutions and IoT innovations. I also wanted to work in project mode, which is easy to find in technology consulting where I started. It's also an industry that promotes constant learning and even as a team junior it is possible to quickly become an expert in the chosen field.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Giving Azure cloud access to countless more Polish companies by opening Azure Poland Central. For the first time, using the Azure platform is possible with data residency of customer data being kept in Poland, which is critical for many public sector, state owned and regulated industry customers. It is great to see barriers to Cloud innovations disappear in those sectors as a result of a project I led and every new customer success story powers me to keep giving my 100% on the next market-changing project!

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Navigating a multi-year program in the middle of organizational changes. In matrix organizations, with factors outside of your control including reorganizations and role changes, you have to be resilient and agile to deliver unchanging project goals in a vastly different environment. It tested my management skills in a way I never experienced before, showing how important it is to have skill resourcing, risk management and executive stakeholder communication up to date to show to new sponsors.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

How meritocratic it is from the inside. In my first project management role at barely 21 years old, I worked daily with experts 20 years my senior. Despite this I never felt discriminated against or diminished because of my age; on the contrary, we quickly found out I was the one most familiar with Agile methodologies and could step in on innovative projects and lead project streams confidently. It was great to learn that skills are the most valued thing you can bring to the table.



Magdalena Gawłowska-Bujok

 Co-Founder, COO

 No Fluff Jobs

Magdalena Gawłowska-Bujok is the co-foundress of No Fluff Jobs; an international job board with transparent job ads. Her professional mission is to improve recruitment standards in Poland and abroad. She actively promotes inclusion and equal opportunities for women on the job market. A happy wife and mum of two daughters, Lea and Bona, Magdalena is also a zealous reader of all kinds of books, an open water swimmer & hiking enthusiast.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I didn't choose it. It chose me :) While living in Switzerland I worked as an IT recruiter and discovered how transparent, fair and candidate-oriented recruitment processes can be. After coming back to Poland I started, together with my husband Tom, a job portal for IT specialists with 100% transparent job ads with obligatory salary scales. What started as a two-person start-up in 2014 turned into an international company (130 people on board) disrupting the European recruitment standards.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I'm particularly proud of the fact that No Fluff Jobs managed to change the IT recruitment market in Poland. Thanks to our constant efforts and educating our clients about the benefits of transparency, over 50% of IT job ads today include salary scales, which in turn decreases the gender pay gap, promotes equality and prevents unhealthy practices inside organisations. Being faithful to our principles has always been a costly commitment but seeing the real change fills my heart with joy and pride.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Throughout my career there were numerous challenging and stressful situations. The most painful moment is always saying goodbye to people who helped us build the success of our company but decided to continue their career path somewhere else.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

As a linguist and a non-technical person I've always been struck by how straight-to-the-point and direct the communication between IT people is. Another surprising factor was the speed of innovations and the constantly growing number of new technologies, tools and solutions. It was also new to me to discover that IT is not only for programmers, but for a broad spectrum of talented people in multiple areas.





Małgorzata Gawrysiak

 Country Sales Director

 Genesys Telecommunication Laboratories

She is “software” lady with never give up approach, building CX/EX systems for more than 20 years. She has started her Business adventure at SAS Institute then SPIN, NTT, and Genesys today. She is very lucky having a chance to always work for and with the clients trying to optimise their processes and make businesses more efficient, creating solutions which brings real added value and becomes more end user friendly. She is a Trusted Advisor for her clients, she likes changes. She is already experienced enough to know how to eliminate obstacles with empathy.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

Accidentally life pushed me in this direction. I was a teacher of business English at the SAS Institute and was noticed by the CEO and was given a job offer. I took this opportunity and till today I am in the IT industry. I am really lucky to always work for the best brands in IT world. Since almost 10 years I have privilege to work for Genesys, CX leader in the areas of Customer Experience, EX and Operations. Genesys gives companies the ability to Orchestrate people's work, channels, events, interactions, and systems into superior, end-to-end experiences.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

This is a very difficult question because it is not me who should answer it. If I have to name one achievement my answer is My Team: they are very good people with Big heart, they are very professional, they are perfect parents and partners. Building the Genesys One Team is something I am very proud of. We can always rely on each other, we are losing and winning together and we are more friends than just the Genesys team.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

The most difficult decision in any aspect of life is always connected to people; your team, your partners etc. Empathy should always be the base of every decision we are taking. Sometimes you have to say goodbye to someone and this situation is always the most difficult one. Every Company experiences a time of transformation and very often this time is difficult not only for your team but for us (Managers) too.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

IT as an industry. It was so complicated, so difficult to understand for somebody who is an economist by profession. I was really surprised that people from the IT and business departments often fight with each other. Today this problem is much smaller and they are creating one team with the same focus but 20 years ago I was shocked that these two different worlds were able to create such good, complex projects together.





Salome Ghudushauri

 Bizon.ge, Tera Leasing, Wizard Leadership Consulting

 Founder, CEO, Tech and Communications Director

Salome is a founder of a fintech startup, a leasing company and a leadership consulting company in Georgia. She studied quantitative finance at BBA and MBA level. At her first job she started as an intern and ended up as the COO managing several departments including IT and strategic projects. After operating in male-dominated industries for years, it became Salome's mission to pay back the support she has been receiving throughout her life from her family and the community and help others find their path.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

As the vice dean of the IT faculty at GAU, I initiated and led projects, e.g. WE-TECH where we implemented online courses in Wordpress development and graphic design for women. We matched our program alumni with businesswomen in regions who needed our help, thus benefiting more women than just our program participants. WE-TECH is a finalist in the Grace Hopper Awards. This small-scaled project reminded me that I want to give opportunities to those in need and Tech is something that makes this possible.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

After founding my first startup Bizon our team faced multiple crises like COVID, the war in Ukraine and financial instability. We managed to stay strong because of the strength of our vision. That year Bizon was financed by USAID to participate in the WomenInTech acceleration program by USMAC. I pitched for my startup and became one of the three winners. In 2022 we were able to raise a huge investment to start our leasing company. Bizon became the winner of the Grace Hopper Awards in the tech startup category in 2023!

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

The first big project assigned to me at work whilst I was still a student was to manage the development of the 1st leasing core software system in Georgia. At that time, I realized the importance of having clear goals and clear communication. This is something I learned the hard way, after overcoming the fear of failure and stating all the problems and solutions to the right people. Nowadays, this software is implemented by all the major equipment leasing companies in Georgia, including my own leasing company which was founded in 2023.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

The power of community! The things two people can achieve by coming together, uniting, sharing thoughts and ideas. The way listening to others can help you bring solutions, products and the good to society. The joy of sharing knowledge and experience with those who are in need. The number of opportunities you see even after hundreds of failures. The Tech industry is something that makes you realize all this in ways I could never imagine.



Zaneta Giers

 Director of the Quality Assurance Office

 Nest Bank

Zaneta is a graduate of the University of Gdańsk and is certified in the field of Quality Management. She has been involved in the quality of IT solutions since 2004 and has successfully implemented a large number of changes. She looks with pride at the Quality Teams she has had the pleasure of building. Zaneta is sure that everything is possible with such wonderful people! After hours, Zaneta is a fan of music, concerts and festivals. As she says 'no music, no life'.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I didn't have any miraculous enlightenment. A good few years ago I joined a rather interesting project as a Business Tester, and then I decided to try myself as a Test Manager. It turned out to be a bull's-eye! This is how my long-term relationship with the IT industry began.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Developing a new employee path, that is strictly connected with learning new things, especially connected with services provided on Azure DevOps like Azure Boards, and Azure Test Plans. Also maintaining the same team (for a long time) in the era of a huge demand for IT specialists

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Simply working with people and managing them to achieve our goals as a team. I try to talk to people and listen carefully. I discuss any occurring issues with my team, and if needed with other teams. The most difficult task? Making people learn to think outside the box. One of my initiatives to help them do that is knowledge meetings. We, as a department, organize them every week. Their aim is to make people share their experiences and their knowledge in taking care of different tasks.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

Well, to be frank – the salaries. Before I wasn't aware that they were high. Also the wide scope of opportunities. People always think that IT is just ... servicing computers etc. But the range of activities is far far more wide. There's AI, programming, testing, quality, architecture, and a lot more.



Dominika Glazer

 Head of Product Management

 Virtus Lab



Dominika is a historian by education and passion, whilst professionally she is a manager. Working in the IT industry since 2016, she has managed projects, products, and teams. Currently, she is the Head of Product Department at VirtusLab. Here, Dominika coordinates the work of the product teams, develops a vision of products in the company portfolio, and grows her department. She finds great value in sharing her knowledge, which is why she is mentoring women in the industry - especially career switchers.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I choose the new technologies industry because I love to learn new things. I speak 5 languages and I felt it was time to try something totally different. IT is constantly evolving and every day you can learn new things, get new skills and develop yourself.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

My greatest professional achievement is for sure helping other women start work in IT, get promoted and make them believe they can do it all.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Immediately after I managed to shape my own department in the company, I had to close a few projects, find my people other assignments, and unfortunately let several people go.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

It does not matter what your education is - your skills, attitude and desire to learn will help you to achieve your goals and grow your career in IT.



Aneta Głowacka

 Head of Customer Success International

 Synerise

Aneta worked for 8 years in Synerise as Head of the Customer Team where she was responsible for the Middle Eastern, Southern European and Polish markets. In 2022 she was part of the initial team which established Synerise operations in the United States. Aneta has engaged in many knowledge sharing projects via video broadcasts, public presentations and expert discussions. She is particularly interested in AI solutions that are developed in Synerise.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

A lot of choices are made by pure accident rather than a thoughtful decision process. It only matters how one can encompass the chance we are given. I studied Sociology at AGH, where apart from standard courses we had a program with entrepreneurs from tech industry – Michał Sadowski, Paweł Sala, Jarosław Królewski to name a few. That opened the door to an internship in Brand24 and Synerise, and a long term stay in this industry.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I started at Synerise when the company was just the founder's dream and I was there when Synerise was recognised by the Financial Times as the Fastest Growing Company in Tech segment. I witnessed and contributed to winning customers that everyone in the world knows like IKEA. There is no one extraordinary achievement, it's the whole road I've traveled so far.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Starting work as the leader was both exhilarating and challenging. Balancing technical expertise with leadership skills required continuous learning and adapting to diverse team dynamics and industry changes. It also required me to balance my strong empathy with fierce decision-making.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

The most surprising but also encouraging thing was the fact that one can create a company, product or solution using just a brain and laptop. You don't have to have endless resources and many people to create. You have to have the right people, those who believe in the product and are adaptable and open to continuous learning because the pace of change in tech requires this.



Małgorzata Gniech

 Head of AI Business Development

 TD SYNEX



In love with technology for many years, Małgorzata is convinced that it has a huge impact on our lifestyle, work dynamics and social interactions. However, she approaches it with a balanced perspective, mindful of both its advantages and potential risks. Małgorzata loves working with other women to empower them even more in the world of technology.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

Developing businesses with the newest technology gives you the possibility to directly change people's lives and impact society. Technology influences every part of our lives and exists across all industries. With its dynamic nature it gives great opportunities for innovation and the chance to be at the forefront of technological advancements. It allows you to be a part of shaping the future.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

AI has revolutionized our world recently. There is a lot of misinformation and aspects that people are afraid of, due to a lack of understanding. Last year I started advocating for AI and sharing knowledge to my colleagues, business partners and clients. It's been quite a journey in a rapidly changing environment, but I built an engaged AI community within Europe which constantly grows and develops.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

It's been and still is challenging for me to develop my team individually and collectively as a group. I've always wanted to be a manager who gives a vision and business direction to all team members, but at the same time helps in developing everyone individually. It is hard work that requires understanding people's needs and ambitions. Long time ago I promised myself to be such a manager and I hope I deliver on that promise every day.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

Over the years there have been very few women applying for jobs in IT. It is still a surprising fact especially given that the IT industry needs more than just engineers. The IT industry lacks people with strong business profiles, a strong human focus and industry knowledge. A great deal of research has shown that the companies which grow the fastest and with highest employee satisfaction are the ones with high gender diversity. I truly hope we'll have more women across various roles and holding various responsibilities.



Michalina Godlewska

 Sales Director

 SUPERMEDIA

Michalina is a Sales Director with 10 years' experience in the telecommunications area. She handles a sales team with 6 accounts (from KAM to Junior) as well as still selling for Key Clients by herself. Michalina controls the budget with the CEO's support and prepares KPI's for the team, motivating and supporting them and participating in their every case. Previously being a sales specialist herself has helped Michalina to know all setbacks of this position and has given her solutions to achieve the board's and sales team's expectations.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

The new technologies industry chose me. I was working in the recruitment environment and my current employer asked me to join his sales team. I had no idea what fiber optic is or how it works, but I was curious enough and had the courage to take the risk.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I think that it's being over 10 years in one company and going through all the possible levels of the sales department with the acceptance and trust of the Board.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Understanding that others are not the same as I. Each of my employees is different, works differently, has their own professional experience and private life, which affects them. Understanding these differences, accepting them and using their strengths is the most difficult task for me as a manager in everyday working life.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

When I started working in IT, there were only two women out of ten in my sales department. The world of telecommunications was very masculine and communication was very businesslike. The transition from HR to IT was a huge change.



Gabriela Gorzycka

 Global Head of Endpoint Threat Management

 Eviden



Gabriela the Global Head of Endpoint Threat Management in Eviden and, in her role, responsible for overall delivery lifecycle of the services related to protecting endpoints and data. This involves working closely with partners, customers, portfolio teams and regions as well as cross-domain activity. Gabriela is actively involved in promoting cybersecurity and also advocating for more women in cyber; is a participant in the prestigious "Gold for Business Leaders" program by HEC Paris, and a mentor at the Women4Cyber organization.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I was always interested in trends and technology and wanted to take an active part in shaping our future. By working in IT, we actively support the development of our customers who come from all industries, e.g. pharmaceutical, aviation, manufacturing, automotive, financial and many others. Moreover, we are now able to do so in a sustainable and decarbonized way, which is very important in the fight against climate change.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I managed to build and develop a very successful global team, the excellence of which is widely recognized as providing best of breed cybersecurity services, anticipating both the needs of the customers and the biggest trends and developments in cybersecurity.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

The real crisis happens always when people are affected. Managing a global team in times of the pandemic and later on, during the political conflict between two closely-located countries, was a very difficult situation to handle, as there are no handbooks or training or that you can use. You need to be a real leader and use your common sense to support your teams and customers alike in these situations.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

I used to think that a successful IT company is all about technology, but in fact, it's the people who are the decisive factor whether it will become a market leader or not. Therefore, it's not only about technological knowledge but one needs to be a skilled leader with high emotional intelligence to be able to cope with the challenges of leading a company or its department in the modern world.



Urszula Graczykowska

 Head of Marketing for Channel-led Region

 Fujitsu

Urszula is a B2B Marketing Manager for the IT Infrastructure sector. She gained experience in Polska Press and Dell Technologies in Poland. Currently Ula is with Fujitsu responsible for marketing strategy across the Channel-led Region including CEE, South Africa, Middle East and Italy. She is specialised in channel marketing, social selling, partner alliances and marketing development funds management. Urszula is focused on building trust across teams and looking for synergy coming from closer cooperation between marketing and sales.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

As I was looking for a good place to kick-start my marketing career I was lucky to become a part of Dell Technologies Poland and got hooked on new tech and the way the right infrastructure platform and tech strategy takes companies from all sectors to the next level. It feels almost like a commodity now. If you want to stay in the game – you need to transform the way your organisation works. I am also always surprised how many interesting turns a tech career can take.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I am proud of all the campaigns, trainings, and events that I and my teams brought to life. But when I think of my greatest achievements I focus on how I grew during the last 6-7 years as a professional. I fought for my voice and learned how to set up boundaries. I am focusing right now on finding the right balance between work and personal life. I am also very proud of helping multiple people in their careers with my advice and guidance.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

From my perspective the most challenging situations are usually concerning people's behaviour and setting up the right boundaries to protect yourself and your team. Trust and feeling safe in the team is an underappreciated factor influencing the performance of any team. In the corporate world, usually every serious problem has a better or worse solution. When the pandemic started we learned that even the biggest event can be cancelled and that there is always another way. But cooperation is the key.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

I was surprised at how old-fashioned the industry and the business can be... By old-fashioned I mean: an outdated approach to project management, a low focus on internal communication, and of course: sexist comments and situations. Thankfully even I can see how much has changed within the last 5-6 years. But the problem is not dead by any means, just became more subtle.



Agnieszka Grad-Kowalska

 CEO

 Eyzee



A successful manager with over 20 years of experience in progressively senior roles within the consulting industry. Founder and CEO of Eyzee S.A.; a fast-growing IT consulting company known for its unique culture, which employs 90+ professionals in both business and IT. Apart from running Eyzee, Agnieszka specializes in complex implementations, particularly in the banking sector, with a key focus on cards and payments programs. Passionate about various sports, especially tennis and skiing.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I am passionate about IT for its limitless potential to innovate and make a global impact. The fast-paced nature excites me, as does the opportunity to shape the future and create positive change. Embracing cutting-edge advancements and collaborating with brilliant minds fuels my drive to lead Eyzee towards success and significance in this dynamic and transformative field.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

One of my greatest professional achievements is leading the company's successful expansion into international projects. Breaking geographical boundaries and engaging in diverse international projects not only signifies Eyzee's growth but also shows the team's dedication and innovation. This achievement reflects our ability to adapt, collaborate with exceptional talents worldwide, and to make a meaningful impact on a global scale.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

One of the most challenging situations was leading the company during the pandemic. When the lockdown was announced, Eyzee had around 70 employees, and we were unprepared for remote cooperation, initially doubting its feasibility. Thanks to my exceptional co-workers, we quickly adapted to online work, turning this difficulty into a success. Working remotely enabled us to extend our team beyond Warsaw, which expanded our talent pool significantly.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

The pace of technological advancement is what hit me the most in the IT industry. Staying current is vital as innovations constantly shape the landscape. I also find the inclusive and collaborative culture attractive; the valuing of diverse perspectives. At Eyzee we strive to create an inspiring work environment that fuels our drive for growth in this dynamic and ever-evolving field.





Paulina Grodzicka

 Product Department Director

 ERGO Technology & Services

Paulina has been building digital products for over 12 years in startups and corporations and is experienced in digital publishing, recruitment and the insurance industries. Paulina launched the first product management community in Warsaw - Product Tank meetup. She has an IT background, has a bachelor's degree in engineering and is a product generalist.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

It's the fastest evolving industry and one which creates multiple opportunities across all nations. It allows people to connect across borders and it's very inclusive. Every day is different and exciting. Another point is that people need a good work-life balance and this industry allows for working remotely, which gives them more time with families.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Coming to the point of assuming a director's position at ERGO and being able to improve the department conditions. I built up a department line management structure, which solved our rapid scaling situation (from 30 to 63 people in a year) and introduced new career opportunities for senior talents, creating more accountability and trust. I also started regular performance reviews of employees and created new overarching roles supporting the department and its people.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

The biggest challenge came from within. I had to overcome the need of pursuing my individual path and start focusing on the success of my people. Every manager should leave their ego and ambitions on the side, and work on what is best for their team. The biggest reward is to see them become better professionals.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

That users really don't know what they want. Steve Krug's book made me realise that when building software we need to make it very intuitive; don't make the user's have to think. Also, don't believe what you hear, only what you see - how users interact with your product, what the data analytics are showing. Not asking what feature they want on a website.



Wiktoria Gromowa-Cieślak

 IT Manager & Director

 It in Finance



Wiktoria is a senior leader with more than 10 years' experience in IT within the banking area. Having a mathematical background, she worked in automating mathematical and financial models, always being a hands-on lead and manager. Wiktoria is a devoted fan of technology and shares her passion wherever she is by leading technology streams within and outside companies, gathering experts to develop innovative solutions and actively supporting women in technology.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I think it's technology that chose me – being in the industry means that I can work with the newest tools, develop skills and sharpen my mindset. So, it was natural for me to follow the newest trends in technology, which led me to become a fan and share my perspective with others. We tend to take technology as a toolset for achieving business goals (even when using IT for IT), but it is so much more than this.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I care a lot about the path itself, taking achievements for granted. Regulatory projects, cost savings from introduced products, operations acceleration due to newer technology implementation etc. It is all of great value, but I value more the experience I gained during these situations, the support I gave or was given, harmonizing my work-life unbalance, getting awards and new challenges, non-work activities within the company – impossible to list them all.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

I believe that starting with a certain level of experience we can handle almost every project task – we know how to learn quicker, how to cooperate with others etc. With people, it is not that easy, we can't just apply established rules. When I was asked by my teammates to become their team lead, I learned a lot about best practices for managers, from which I understood that only by being authentic you can be a real leader and not just a manager.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

I didn't expect I would need so much creativity to work in IT. Each project creates an opportunity to use your experience for building better solutions with the help of a large amount of different tools. I also noticed the contrast of following new paths on the one hand, and use of excel on the other. Such extremes are widespread, so it might be beneficial to be somewhere in the middle to serve our clients better – being a bridge, which helps to get to the other side of the river of IT possibilities.



Katarzyna Gruszevicz

 IT Delivery Unit Manager - Order Management Success Solutions, IES Site Lead

 SAP

Katarzyna is an IT Manager with 17+ years of experience in IT Service Management including operations, projects, building and leading teams. Over 2 years at SAP Labs Poland, she steered development team performance in Order & Invoice Management solutions, promoting diversity, discovering potential, and aiding team members succeed as reliable, creative, and open-minded professionals. Katarzyna fosters collaboration and transparency through information sharing and achievements recognition.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

My IT career was consciously planned from the moment I decided to study IT. I was always keen on computers, deconstructing them and re-assembling or installing different software. I didn't mind spending nights coding, but I mostly enjoyed the interaction with colleagues during project work. I realized that digitalization is inevitable, and I wanted to be part of this fascinating journey. Such a fast-evolving industry makes you never feel bored, and you need to keep learning all the time.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

For a manager it's extremely rewarding to see the team's contribution to the company's success and witness how they grow, that their work is meaningful and appreciated, that they are being heard and their opinions count. Therefore, my biggest achievement was becoming an inspiration to my team members and gaining their full trust as reflected in the Net Promoter Score. It proved that we share the same values and that I'm doing the right thing. Also receiving this nomination is an absolute honor.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

The most challenging situation I had to manage was the cancellation of a project on which the team has been working for months. They were disappointed that their hard work would go to waste. I put all my efforts into emphasizing the lessons and valuable experiences they had gained, highlighting how the team had matured thanks to this, asking them to diligently document everything so that it could be reused. Eventually, it was one of our biggest lessons and in fact something to be proud of.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

When I started working in the IT industry as a student, there were only a few international companies on the Polish market, so I was super excited I could join one of them. What surprised me most was the number of processes and procedures I had to follow. What didn't surprise me though was the male/female ratio, as it was the same at University (I was one of only 3 female students in the final class). Now I'm happy I can support other women at the beginning of their IT career.



Katarzyna Gruszka

 Brand Hacker

 nomtek.com



Kasia is a Brand Hacker focused on network building around digital trends and innovation and has a keen interest in technology's potential to empower people while maintaining their agency. She is a speaker at Infinity Festival 2022; a prestigious event that attracts tech enthusiasts from Silicon Valley and the Hollywood industry. Prior to joining nomtek, she was a growth hacker for a startup. Her entrepreneurial spirit has been instrumental in growing the company from no clients to a client base spanning over 40 countries.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I am always hungry for new ideas and tech/science progress.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

How to attract corporate clients to a SaaS product with no client base. How to attract corporate clients to a SaaS product with no client base.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

The SaaS b2b start-up: I elevated the company from having no clients to a flourishing start-up with a client base spanning over 40 countries, including Fortune 100/500 companies and trusted institutions like the European Commission. Nomtek: I've built business relations with top players in innovation like Nvidia, Meta and Infinity Festival from scratch in order to provide professional growth for our innovation depts and strengthen our company's brand awareness in the United States and Europe.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

That so few companies make product decisions based on data plus how hard it is to be treated equally on the international arena not only as a woman but also as a woman from Poland.



Jasmin Guthmann

 Head of Corporate Communications

 Contentstack

Jasmin Guthmann is a marketing trailblazer on a mission to translate complex technology into compelling stories. She currently serves as the Head of Corporate Communications at Contentstack. With more than 10 years of experience, Jasmin and her team elevate the business and help usher in a new era of content management. She serves as the Vice President and Executive Board Member of the MACH Alliance, empowering brands to adopt best-of-breed enterprise technology ecosystems.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

The new technologies industry is a fascinating, male-dominated space that has huge potential and moves at a rapid pace. Throughout my career, I have always enjoyed working with smart people in a fast-paced environment, which makes the tech industry a perfect fit. Quite frankly, the industry needs more diversity, equity and inclusion, and someone needs to pave the way for other women to follow.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Seeing people thrive. If I look at the personal and professional growth that some of my team members have undergone, not just at my current company, but along my whole career, I'm incredibly proud to see what a long way many have come. We keep in touch, and the oldest connection goes back to my first manager position.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Delivering and defending Board/leadership decisions I don't understand or don't agree with to my team, especially if it impacts them directly. To be honest, I still struggle with that.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

The lack of women and diverse people, and the lack of awareness about it. It feels like a soccer team at times – a bunch of white men who play by their own rules, excluding everybody else, not even consciously aware that they're doing it.



Erika Valentina Gutierrez Cardenas

 Associate Delivery Director, Head of N-iX Colombia

 N-iX

Erika graduated as a Computer engineer and built her career in technology, starting at a very young age. She began working 7 years ago, developing applications for electronic automation projects, and later transitioned into fullstack and mobile development. Suddenly, Erika found herself in leadership roles and has developed as a woman in leadership since then. She's energetic, determined, loves to engage in long discussions, and definitely gets her stamina from reaching goals and being productive.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I've been involved with tech all my life through my dad, who worked on big projects within the electronic engineering field. He was very strict with me, but also a model for me to follow because I saw how he behaved in various situations; he had his own company. I witnessed him being entrepreneurial while also being able to grow in tech and generate a great deal of work for others. So, when the moment came for me to choose a career, I knew it was going to be tech-related engineering.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I've been thinking about achievements, and as I see it, I have never set my goals very far away. I've always put in milestones that I know I can reach, and I always see them as possible. So for me, my biggest achievement is being able to always start the next challenge in and achieve it without pauses, without hesitation—it's constant and with pace. In this context, achievement is a process of evolution, of the trajectory that I am building.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

When I started, I initially thought the challenge was going to be purely technical; making sure that this huge application never crashes and performs efficiently. However, these types of problems are easily mastered, then, you start discovering that the difficulties lie in being able to make a team work together very well, for people to understand themselves, to even be talking about the same topic.. and this challenge forms as a new one for every team.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

For sure, the impact of communication. I've always been communicative and conversational, and you think everyone is the same. However, when I started working within IT teams, I noticed this was not the usual pattern and started seeing communication issues, conflicts, avoidance, just because communication was not tuned to the team style and rhythm, and this made me kind of an ambassador. I believe this has had a huge influence on my leadership trajectory.



Aleksandra Hamryszak

 Managing Director, Board Member

 Helbling Technik Poland

With a proven track record of successfully advising clients on how to leverage IT nearshoring to reduce costs, improve efficiency, and enhance competitiveness, Aleksandra has established herself as a trusted advisor and thought leader in this field. Over the last 8 years she has been active in the international sales field with a main focus on providing services to the Swiss market. Currently serving as Managing Director of an IT nearshoring development center for a leading Swiss technological provider.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I chose the new technologies industry for its profound impact on businesses and daily life. Even without a technical background, it offers limitless personal growth opportunities; being at the forefront of innovation, collaborating with experts, and fostering creativity through continuous learning. Having the possibility to shape the future with technology – that's exciting.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

The fact that I achieved and earned the position of an expert in my field through hard work and perseverance at a relatively young age is something I take great pride in. Another thing that fills me with pride is my strong professional network, both in Poland and Switzerland.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

In general, taking the role of Managing Director and building a nearshoring development center from scratch was the most challenging professional situation I had to face in my career. Building up my knowledge base in many areas, simultaneously addressing various topics, handling the onboarding process, and establishing strong relationships with the new employer and colleagues.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

There were two things: firstly, the very low representation of women in higher positions, and secondly, how rapidly the landscape evolves.



Waheeda Hanipah

 Sub Chapter Lead - Delivery Management Chapter

 Roche Services Solutions



Waheeda has over 20 years of experience in IT Leadership roles overseeing full spectrum IT strategies and deliveries whilst enhancing productivity and efficiency. She is well versed in the areas of the E2E application lifecycle, strategic planning & process transformation. Waheeda strength is in connecting people's hearts and minds with the vision, building and bringing capabilities together. On a personal note, she loves exploring new places and food whilst creating memories with my 4 kids and husband.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I chose this industry because I am fascinated in how it brings impact to people and the huge potential to change the world for the better, and I want to be a part of that change. For instance, Artificial Intelligence is rapidly changing how we do things, be it in our daily lives or even in critical areas such as the healthcare industry. AI can be used as daily virtual assistants or to analyze patient data to identify potential risks, recommend treatments, and predict outcomes.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

It is definitely about creating a high performing team. I am proud of the culture that we have created in the teams that I have led so far, which is about collaboration, diversity and inclusiveness, learning, and being agile and flexible. I am also an advocate of 'it's OK not to be perfect'. What's important is to share our failures, learn from them and become better in the next round.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

It was when I had to let go of my team due to the organization restructuring. It was difficult as people's livelihood was impacted by this. Unfortunately, there's no best way to do this except being honest and compassionate. I made sure that I prepared myself emotionally, understood everyone's situation so that I could cater the dialogue to them and be transparent with what was happening. I made sure I was there to support them and help to connect them with my outside network for other opportunities.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

Strong technical capabilities are not enough to survive in this industry. You need to have strong soft skills such as communication and collaboration to be successful in this Industry. Another surprise was that the pace of change is so fast that it is difficult to keep up with the latest trend. This is a huge challenge and my advice is that although it is good to know what's happening in the industry, if you focus on the areas of your interest then it will excite you to know what's out there.



Honorata Hencel

 Managing Director, Poland & Ukraine

 Boeing



Honorata Hencel currently holds the role of Managing Director for Boeing in Poland and Ukraine. She joined Boeing in August 2015 as the Global Navigation Services manager. Hencel is an accomplished technology leader with 20 years experience leading large-scale multinational teams working with airline operators, avionics manufacturers and software vendors in the highly regulated aviation domain. She is the president of the Boeing Women Europe Chapter and co-founder of Aviation Hub Pomerania.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

The industry and the market are demanding the employment of new technologies in order to address customer needs, remain relevant and productive, and advance the aviation domain.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

The Managing Director role I currently hold is extremely demanding and complex yet offers incredible insights on many levels.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

1.5 years ago I transitioned from a role where I directly managed 20 leaders and indirectly 300 employees to a role with 4 direct reports and 176 people in an IT organization with different line managers. To manage such a complex matrix organization in IT was challenging but also uncovered opportunities for innovative solutions and important alliances.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

IT is considered to be a progressive domain but often it's tangled up by complex processes that limit the progress and advancement into more modern solutions.



Cristin Hernandez

 Business Development Executive

 Cristin Hernandez

Cristin Hernandez has a background in aviation, managerial experience, and a focus on finance and capital raising. Her journey in business development has led her through various industries; from Fintech to telecommunications. Embracing disruptive technologies and analyzing markets, she fosters innovation to drive sustainable growth. Her passion for creating meaningful experiences and solutions leaves a positive mark on the world.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I chose the technology industry because it is deeply compelling, as my passion lies in advancing underdeveloped communities. I believe education and technology can bridge the digital divide, empowering underserved regions. Bringing cutting-edge solutions to outdated territories fulfills me. Being at the forefront of innovation and making a meaningful impact is more than a career choice—it's a rewarding and meaningful path that intertwines my passion and purpose.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I achieved remarkable success scaling my business, managing 150+ clients, and freeing up time through effective outsourcing. This highlights my strong management and organizational skills, while embracing growth and learning from challenges boosts my confidence. I strive for excellence, embracing failure as a chance to learn. Countless opportunities await, and I'm enthusiastic about my journey, believing in the best to come.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Time management became central to my life; balancing professional duties and home life. As a manager, juggling teams, projects and meetings left little time for personal matters. I set boundaries, prioritized commitments, and used techniques like schedules and delegation. Open communication with my team and family helped find a balance; excelling at work while being present at home. Emphasizing time management improved productivity and brought fulfillment and harmony to both spheres.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

As a tech enthusiast, I'm captivated by dynamic advancements, especially Web 3's emergence reshaping the digital landscape. It offers abundant global opportunities. This connectivity makes the world feel smaller. It's incredible to witness nations erasing the traditional barriers of proximity. The tech world truly makes our neighbors no longer next door or city blocks away, but instead, they become accessible across continents.



Paulina Ignatowska-Zaremba

 Vice President for Relations with Hospitals

 K.I.D.S Foundation Children's Hospital Innovators Club

Paulina has over 15 years of work experience with 10 years dedicated to the field of innovation. Currently, she serves as Vice President at the K.I.D.S. Foundation; which works towards implementing innovations in children's hospitals. Paulina has a background in social psychology and service design. She likes to think of herself as a humanist in the world of technology. For years, she trained companies and startups, and co-organized the first Lean Startup Machine in Warsaw.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I chose the new technologies industry because of my passion for innovation and making a positive impact in the world. As a humanist, I strongly believe in creating solutions that prioritize the needs and experiences of people. By combining my background in social psychology and service design with technology, I can contribute to shaping a future that truly revolves around human well-being and addresses real-life challenges with empathy and understanding.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

My greatest professional achievement was building a team and establishing relationships that expanded from one partnering institution to the Foundation collaborating with all the high-specialized children's hospitals in Poland within a year. Currently, we continue to forge new partnerships with institutions and are expanding internationally by co-organizing an international conference on pediatric innovations this year in Poland.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

My most challenging situation as a manager at the K.I.D.S. Foundation supporting hospitals was adapting to a new industry. It demanded learning and understanding the principles governing an unfamiliar area. Understanding the needs and motivations of hospitals and managing volunteer teams required building effective non-financial motivational mechanisms to drive the team towards action and results.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

What surprised me the most when I started working in the IT industry was the disconnect between humanists and the research-focused approach, which aims to address genuine human needs. There seemed to be a lack of understanding of these needs, with the focus primarily on technological possibilities rather than their alignment with real human requirements.





Małgorzata Jacygrad

 IT Strategy Bureau Director

 BNP Paribas Bank Poland

Małgorzata is a senior manager with a consulting background and 15 years of experience mainly in the Financial Services industry in roles ranging from Project Manager to portfolio governance and monitoring functions. She is experienced in strategy definition and execution, and in leading business initiatives in the areas of IT systems and applications implementation, operational excellence, and customer experience & satisfaction. Małgorzata is skilled in strategic planning, organising and the efficient delivery of high quality results.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

Passion, curiosity, and the potential for positive change drove me to choose the new technologies industry. From envisioning the digital future to changing the financial services industry, I found empowerment and purpose. As a woman in IT, I challenge norms and strive for a more inclusive tomorrow.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

My greatest professional achievement lies in my adaptability and resilience. Navigating through the ever-changing landscapes of the many initiatives I've managed, I've tackled diverse challenges. Whether it's been shifting priorities, evolving technologies, or team dynamics, my ability to adapt has led to successful project outcomes and earned the trust of the stakeholders.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Navigating a team restructuring was my most challenging task as a manager. Balancing emotions and aligning diverse skill sets required tact and empathy. Open communication was vital to address any initial discomfort and ensure a smooth transition. By focusing on team-building and a collaborative environment, we successfully went through the change, strengthening mutual growth.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

Entering the IT industry, I anticipated a male-dominated environment, yet I was pleasantly surprised by the number of knowledgeable and capable women making their mark. Witnessing their contributions has been very inspiring, highlighting the growing diversity within the IT community and paving the way for future generations of female professionals.



Joanna Janik

 Head of Software Products and Services

 Wing Aviation

Joanna graduated in Computer Science from AGH in Krakow. Over the last 18+ years she has worked within large companies as well as startups. At Google Joanna worked on a wide range of products, both internal and external. At DeepMind she worked on Streams - an application helping clinicians bring timely care to patients. At Wing Joanna led a tech organization responsible for building one of the world's first autonomous drone delivery systems for last mile logistics.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I always loved to learn new things, and in the area of new technologies you're required to continuously update yourself. Things get created, updated, and re-invented all the time. What I've been working with in the last 10-15 years didn't even exist when I was at the university! It's also very rewarding to find solutions for problems not solved before. There's something really powerful in "connecting the dots", taking new approaches and making the world a better place.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I had an opportunity to contribute to DeepMind Health's Streams project, which focused on using technology to improve clinical outcomes by use of an integrated healthcare record for an early detection of life-threatening conditions and the alerting of medical personnel for targeted treatment. By altering clinical pathways and running strict comparative studies we were not only able to improve health and save lives, but also evidence the positive impact of the product in a real hospital setting.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

It's always challenging when I have to make tough decisions that impact others, not only professionally, but also in their private lives. I always take this responsibility very seriously. As great leaders we prioritize the company's benefit, as great managers we focus on growth and support for people. Sometimes it's about the delivery of tough feedback someone needs to hear, and sometimes it's about parting ways. I always look for the best outcome and provide all support needed for the individual affected.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

What surprised, and still surprises me to this day, is how much we don't know when we take on a new project or aim to solve a particular new problem. Applying technology to new areas requires both technical proficiency and an in-depth understanding of that domain, and often it also requires some degree of luck (of being there with the right people at the right time). I learned to stay humble and open-minded, keeping a fail-fast mindset - identifying and tackling the highest risk / biggest unknowns first.



Maria Janiszewska

 Sales Director

 ITDS

I'm a Sales Director at ITDS Polska, a sales Wonder Woman, lover of modern leadership and a mentor with experience in building international sales and recruitment teams. I'm passionate about expanding her knowledge of modern management and leadership, especially focused on the world of women. I have more than a decade of experience in IT and I'm involved in many mentoring projects. I'm also a big fan of golf, business psychology and yoga.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

For me, technology has always been the most interesting area of science. I loved computer science classes in elementary school. When choosing my career path, I didn't know what profession I wanted to pursue, I was only sure that it had to be an IT company.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I think that my greatest professional experiences will always be ahead of me. I don't like to consider what has already happened, I prefer to look into the future and think about what else I can change and do better. If I get stuck in my past and continue to focus on what has already happened, it will be harder to focus on what fantastic things can come. I think it's way too early to summarize my achievements and think about what was the best.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Project failures are very difficult. But you can survive them, learn something and move on wiser. The most painful experiences are people leaving your team, especially when you know that you are not able to give them what they need to continue to grow. Or when it's just that time. A mature manager is happy when his people achieve great success, even if it is no longer under his or her wing.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

Definitely how this job can be creative, analytical and based on soft skills at the same time. I was surprised how many different roles and skills are needed to deliver the project to the client. And of course, the fact that you work for an IT services company also allows you to explore the endless world of different clients. From tiny to global corporations, public and private institutions, all possible industries. Thanks to this, there is never the chance of boredom ;).





Anna Jankowiak

 CEO

 Grywit

Anna is a woman who changes the world through gamification ;) CEO of Grywit (brands: www.grywit.com , www.justmotive.com & www.aminnosys.com) Passionate about ecology & ESG, now mostly focused on helping companies meet ESG requirements www.esgwfirmie.pl Searching for partners to do that on a larger scale. She is a volcano of energy with many passions. When she takes a break from the business world, she turns into a singer, theater actress, traveler, and activist for children's and youth foundations and women's professional development.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

My mission is to support positive habits among people and with technology it is easier to scale this mission. Supporting positive habits is an essential in today's fast-paced world. Many individuals struggle to maintain habits due to various challenges, such as time constraints or lack of motivation. Technology has become an integral part of our lives, and it can be a powerful ally in promoting positive change.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

My greatest professional achievement lately is doing business in Africa, cause it offers opportunities for both profit and social impact. Initiatives like an eco-education project in Nigerian schools not only promote sustainability but also align with corporate social responsibility goals, fostering goodwill and community engagement. Such endeavors can enhance brand reputation, support education, and contribute to the development of eco-conscious future leaders in Africa.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

While technology can be a catalyst for change, it's essential to consider the potential challenges, such as privacy concerns, data security, and the risk of technology addiction. Your mission should prioritize ethical and responsible use of technology to ensure that it genuinely supports positive habits without causing harm. To succeed in our mission, it's crucial to adapt and evolve our approach based on feedback, research, and emerging technologies.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

While technical competences are valuable, they aren't always the most important factor in success. Soft skills like communication, teamwork, adaptability, and leadership often play a pivotal role in personal and professional growth in the IT Industry. They enable us to collaborate effectively, solve complex problems, and navigate challenges, ultimately enhancing their overall competence and success in various fields.





Krystyna Jarek

 Chief Innovation Officer Central Europe

 Deloitte

Since 2022 Krystyna has been responsible for innovation management across 18 countries in Central Europe for all business lines at Deloitte (Audit & Assurance, Tax & Legal, Financial Advisory, Consulting and Risk Advisory). In 2019 she set up her own company: Booster of Innovation - a strategic innovation design boutique that delivers service for companies like Orange Poland, ING Bank Śląski, Lotte Wedel and many others.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

Since the beginning of my career, I have been involved in designing and implementing innovations focused on making work smart and more efficient. Currently, my focus is on putting together various emerging technologies to deliver new values. But for me, human, environmental, and business needs always come first. That is the moment to ask what technology can be supportive. Presently, we employ technology to solve the biggest human problems that are beyond human creativity and intelligence. And this is exciting!

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

My most outstanding professional achievement was setting up my own company, making it profitable from the first month and gaining the most prominent companies as my regular clients. This required using my experience and delivering the highest quality, ensuring that my clients returned with new contracts. Today I work at Deloitte, and this experience makes me confident and helps me to run innovation teams in Central Europe and to collaborate globally at Deloitte when it comes to innovation.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Reskilling employees was the most challenging situation I experienced. It's easy to write about reskilling, but in reality, the process is not only about gaining new skills but also about people's mindset and readiness to start from scratch in a new field. And only a few people are ready for this journey. Innovation is an excellent area for reskilling. As a leader, I learnt that a declaration of going through the process is not enough. I still keep learning in this field!

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

I am always positively surprised by the teamwork involved in designing and developing innovation. "It's impossible" is often the first reaction tech teams have when they receive insights with product descriptions. After a few days, they return with the news: "Yes, it can be done better!" I'm surprised by this magic which is not so obvious when projects start. I'm also delighted to see how well diversity works and helps us create solutions which our clients love.



Karolina Jarocka

 CEO

 KA:MA Consulting



Karolina is a Project management expert, involved in the IT industry since 2010. In the course of her years of work, Karolina has worked with organizations of various scales, from dozens of people with local capital to international corporations. Currently, she uses her extensive experience in project management at the strategic level as a co-founder of KA:MA Consulting. She is also a co-founder of the Twoje Drzwi do IT, an author of the kjarocka.pl blog, and a lecturer at the Tischner European University.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

The new technologies industry presents unparalleled opportunities for innovation and progress. Its fast-paced nature, potential to solve complex problems, and ability to shape the future drew me in. I find immense fulfillment in contributing to advancements that positively impact lives and drive business development.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Following my needs, constant development, discovering and strengthening my superpowers – all this allowed me to enter managerial positions in international organizations in the masculinized IT industry. I was responsible for strategic clients, managing a 100 person program, and opening new branches in Poland for the companies I worked with. Today I have the freedom to develop my own business and projects on my own terms.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Working with people is always a challenge. I remember when I had to hire dozens of people in a very short time for a program that offered more disadvantages than advantages. Outdated technologies, poor infrastructure, clean rooms, non-standard working hours, and yet I had to build a positive working environment, strengthen the organizational culture, promote company values and make the employees happy and want to work with us. I did it :)

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

Before I joined the IT industry, I was the youngest person everywhere I worked, and then in IT it turned out that I was one of the oldest. It is a very young industry, dominated by young people who quickly absorb new technologies and dynamically adapt to changes. The longer I work in IT, the more I see that this industry will not let me stand in one place – here the learning process goes on all the time. This fascinates me a lot, because I feel that there is still a lot ahead of me.



Gabriela Jarzębska

 Head of Project Management Office

 Teacode Pierzchlewicz Drynkowski

Gabriela brings a unique blend of technical expertise and leadership skills to her role as Head of Project Management Office. Combining a BSc degree with software development experience enabled her to tackle complex IT challenges. Additionally, holding a MA in Management equips Gabriela with the strategic vision and effective communication necessary to lead successful teams and build great projects. Outside of work, you can find Gabriela unleashing her creativity through digital art or training at the gym.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

While working on my bachelor thesis I participated in a research project analysing brain activity. Our goal was to create a brain computer interface which would allow paralised patients to communicate with the world. This experience allowed me to see how technology can help solve real problems and I understood I want to work in an industry that gives me an opportunity to build usable products that have an impact on people's lives.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I'm proud of my input in transforming my company from a group of software developers to a product agency. I implemented a discovery phase as the foundation of each project, which enhanced development efficiency, client satisfaction, and project success rate. This was a significant milestone for my company to gain an advantage in the market.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

As a young woman leader in the male-dominated IT industry, I faced the challenge of being taken seriously in my managerial position. Especially when I started acting as a Project Manager; I had to gain the respect of my coworkers and I often had to prove my value to potential clients.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

After graduating I worked in a few non-IT jobs for a while and was always frustrated with how monotonous and boring my job was. Upon starting my first job in IT, I suddenly discovered that you can create great products, solve interesting problems and be truly excited about your everyday tasks. In my current position, I'm still thrilled to discover what each day brings to me, I love that it never gets boring in IT.



Olga Jassa

 EMEA Pricing Transformation Project Manager

 Zimmer Biomet

Olga is a Ukrainian woman with Polish roots, who moved to Poland in 2010 with no money but a big dream. She gained experience in Hospitality, Customer Care, and an E-sports start-up, before ending up as the Transformation PM in a medical device corporation. As a PM she is responsible for the deployment of a global Pricing Contract tool on the EMEA level.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

Because it's our future and something that we cannot change; it's the way forward. A fact. I decided to accept it and not deny it. With this attitude, I decided to learn more to understand this new industry. And I love it.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

My most significant achievement is in the management of change. My company invests in changes and prepares our people for these changes. I lead by example of my top management, and I do the same in my field. I use my technical knowledge to help businesses to understand the future possibilities of changes. I am careful to take steps in a way not to stress my business colleagues who have worked in the same environment for a very long time.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

To adapt my communication style to the audience I'm communicating with. My energy, focus on delivery and desire for advice sometimes were taken as an attack. I was not aware of that at the beginning. People started to share with me how they were feeling only later. I am so happy that they could openly speak up. It showed me another perspective. Of course, I did my best to adapt my communication skills to my new professional reality.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

Speed. Just because I used to work in a high-speed environment, I was not used to taking the time for fe. due diligence processes as are often designed within an IT environment. Explore all the options, analyze, etc. before moving into decision making and action. If technical people need more time to analyze, it's better to give them such a possibility and trust them and their process. Pressure is not a key to achieving a good approach because it simply shows the opposite result.



Agnieszka Jaworska

 Product Marketing Manager, Central Europe

 Meta



Agnieszka is an experienced digital, data driven marketing professional; driven by challenges and opportunities to apply analytical and strategic thinking to develop great, omni-channel campaigns that are customer focused and results driven. With 20 years' marketing experience, including both agency (Dentsu, Acxiom) and client side (Samsung) management positions, Agnieszka is now driving Product Marketing Management for Central European markets, with a focus on the business suite of performance solutions from Meta.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

The industry in which I work gives a lot of opportunities for development, but also a lot of question marks. My curiosity to be close to the new developments around the Metaverse or AI driven solutions pushed me towards this space, which I really enjoy. It is sometimes going into the wild, and pushing yourself outside of your comfort zone, and this is what drives my motivation and gives me a lot of joy.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I am sure it's these last 4 years at Meta, working with amazing colleagues across the globe, being part of the most diverse, amazing team I have ever worked with, being inspired and educated by so many professionals and friends. It gave me the biggest push towards self-development, and also provided me opportunities to share my experience through mentoring programs.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

I manage markets I work with, not people. There are, of course, a lot of cross functional teams working for the 30+ countries in our region, but this is not the typical people management role I hold. Instead I manage the different roles in a project, expectations, ways of working, different types of clients' challenges, and needs. I think the diverse and inclusive culture at my current workplace was a big, positive surprise for me when I joined Meta 4 years ago!

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

Years ago it was the number of women working in IT; we were the minority. In those days a lot of women were just too modest, too humble to show their expertise and were leaning too much on men. But after some years this has changed, and I see it now as an industry super diverse and full of smart women and men working hand in hand.



Anna Jaworska

 Executive HR Director

 Lingaro

Anna is the Executive HR Director at Lingaro, driving and executing the company's global talent management strategy. She is an advocate of values-driven leadership with a focus on fostering Lingaro's unique culture. Anna strongly believes that a company's success comes down to the passionate motivation of its people. She has an MSc in Psychology from SWPS University and completed postgraduate studies in management at Kozminski University. Anna was also a participant in Women in Leadership (WIL) Europe's Talent Pool Program 2020.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

It was clear to me that I needed to be in a dynamic environment where the only constant is change. I like to be surrounded by people who have an inner drive to innovate. I like to develop both myself and the people around me by exploring new fields that are often intimidating at first. In the new technologies industry – especially if you work in a fast-growing company – you can get all of the above.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I wouldn't mention a specific award or project here. Instead, I'd say it is the overall impact I've had on shaping Lingaro Group's culture, the next generation of our leaders, our D&I and our sustainability agenda especially with regard to gender equality. The way I see it, being strong is not about having an iron fist, a loud voice, or a competitive streak. Over time, I've learned that I can be authentic, show emotions, and stay true to myself while finding my own ways to make an impact.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

At the beginning of the Covid-19 crisis, we had to rapidly make decisions of a type we had never faced before. I was leading the business continuity and communication efforts. Business performance was a factor, but protecting human lives was our number one priority. In times of such uncertainty, when employees' sense of security is at risk, leaders must overcome the challenges of not only dealing with their emotions but also finding the strength to support others and make judgment calls.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

No big surprises, actually. Maybe the huge competition for talent! IT professionals get stereotyped a lot, but I think they are like most other professionals. Fundamentally, HR involves dealing with people. The key is understanding the person in front of you. HR should be the heart of any business. Of course, processes, competencies and technology all come into play. But really, it's all about people at the end of the day. And the people I've met in IT are a passionate and collaborative bunch!





Katarzyna Jeziarska

 Chief Marketing & Product Officer

 WeNet Group

Katarzyna is a leader and marketer with over 20 years of experience across different geographies and industries, including digital marketing solutions, fintech, OTC and FMCG. She is now the CMO and Board Member at WeNet, having been previously at Visa, GSK, Pepsico and Procter & Gamble. Katarzyna is passionate about building values-based brands using modern technology and supporting other women, including eg. mentoring women startappers at Women Entrepreneurs` Network or being a diversity leader at Visa.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I love the dynamism and the never ending opportunities that new technologies open up. Being at the forefront of innovation, using new solutions like AI for the benefit of companies, brands and also all the stakeholders gives me a lot of satisfaction – especially that at WeNet we work with SMBs, who need support in navigating the unknown.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

It's difficult to choose just one – but I think the most rewarding is seeing the teams, brands and companies that I had a chance to touch flourishing, even when I'm no longer around. I always believe it's the leader`s role to build something which will last longer than our tenure in the role.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

When choosing my roles I always look for exciting challenges, for example at WeNet I got the chance to build a modern marketing department from scratch and then to take the lead in developing our product offering in a very dynamic moment in terms of technological development. I always feel the way to respond to challenges is to act upon values and bring the team onboard!

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

When I moved from FMCG or OTC to new technologies, I was surprised about the pace of change in product and technological development, and had to learn how to embark on a non-stop learning journey – but I also found this truly exciting!



Annemarie De Jong

 Managing Director

 Jumptechn

Annemarie is a dynamic leader with expertise in driving renewable energy transitions. She began her career in Brussels but pivoted to start-ups and scale-ups, where real change happens. Fluent in multiple languages, she excels in commercial strategy, team management, and customer retention. Her knack for scaling businesses has won her global recognition. As a keynote speaker, former CCO of Solar Monkey and now managing Director of Jumptechn DE, she inspires others towards a sustainable future

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

My inspiration to enter the tech-world stems from a deep fascination with technology and its potential for positive change. Witnessing the transformative power of technology in various industries, I was determined to contribute and make a difference. With a focus on sustainable solutions, particularly in energy and mobility, I saw an opportunity to create a lasting impact.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Balancing motherhood with a thriving tech career is difficult. I'm proud of the position I've reached as Managing Director, but prouder of the many talented young women I've worked with, whom I have tried to help to do the same. It's never easy, but many of them have gotten further than they ever dared to dream.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

My role as Country Director at Unu during COVID presented a major challenge. With factories in China closed, we had to dramatically restructure our business. This involved scaling down operations and making the difficult decision to eventually close Benelux and let all staff go. It was a challenging but necessary move to ensure the company's survival during unprecedented times.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

What surprised me most was the rapid pace of innovation, the diversity, and the vibrancy of the people in the IT industry. The field is filled with incredibly smart individuals who are fun to work with and learn from. This dynamic blend of rapid change and diverse, intellectual collaboration makes the IT industry uniquely exciting and rewarding.





Katarzyna Józwik

 General Director

 Smartney

Katarzyna Józwik, PhD is GM at Smartney and the president of Fintech Commission in ZPF (Association of Financial Companies in Poland). She is an expert with over 20 years of experience in consumer finance and financial technologies acquired from cooperation with banks, insurers and non-banking institutions. Katarzyna is focused on agile management and building a culture of continuous testing of innovations. A Fintech enthusiast, Metaverse and AI ambassador, she is fascinated by corporate foresight and developing technologies.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I believe technology is a key driver of the progress we observe all around the world – digitalisation, metaverse, edge computing, cloud computing, quantum computers, AI – these are not buzzwords anymore, but real game changers. This leads to the evolution of how we think, behave, how we learn, design, make friends, buy products, and communicate etc.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

My greatest achievement till now is the setting up of a fintech startup which grew to be in the top 2 market players in the non-banking lending sector. Today Smartney employs over 140 people and is recognised as a symbol of customer service, processes quality and innovative solutions (i.e. online consolidation). A perfect example on how technology can support development of financial solutions.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

I believe that dealing with unprecedented events like covid, a neighboring war, and economic crises are the most difficult situations. There is no recipe on how to manage the company in the face of such events, so they always require strong and sensitive leadership. Apart from unpredictable events, one of the biggest advantages of the industry is constant change. Fintech is a dynamic environment where new technologies or regulatory changes can lead to a complete change of the business model overnight.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

The most surprising thing about the IT industry is the high level of competitiveness. Every aspect of technology can be delivered by many providers and in multiple contexts. Balancing in such an environment is a challenge, especially when it develops so fast in all its aspects! What binds finance with IT is the attitude that everything, with enough effort, can be done. That's why "DA SIĘ" is sort of the motto for my company.



Joanna Jurczak

 CEO

 BZ Group



Joanna is an IT specialist, a manager and a creator of remote professional services. She implements solutions for her business partners in the areas of IT, law, medicine, concierge and education and, recently, also vet tech. Joanna gained her experience in IT, insurance and law, and for 5 years worked on her ideas of services improving the quality of life. She studied at the Warsaw Management University Collegium Humanum, the Apsley Business School in London (MBA) and the Rzeszów University of Technology, amongst others.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

For as long as I remember, I have dreamt of working in front of a computer screen, which seemed safe to me, with numbers, algorithms and new technologies. I liked that the world was heading in the same direction and that new technologies were improving the quality of life, and I wanted to be a part of this. I am glad that life sorted it all out for me, and that I achieved even more because I left the safety of my screen, and I now create new services myself, making use of my knowledge and passions.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I believe that I can list the three most important things to me: the introduction of new business lines and the establishment of companies (BZ Solutions and Pet Mediq), building a team of people I trust and staying in business despite many professional and personal twists and turns.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

I believe that it's probably my feeling of constant responsibility for my employees and associates, and of cooperation with my business partners. Because I like to stay on top of things at all times, and I need to make sure that every detail has been taken care of.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

It was a long time ago... but I remember that there were few women in IT, and they were not always regarded favorably. It was hard to get the benefit of the doubt in this sector. The situation is much better now, fortunately, and there are many initiatives such as the Strong Women in IT reports, which help to showcase women and their accomplishments in the industry.



Olga Kacprzak



IT Team Lead



mBank



Olga is a former Project Manager with a successful track record in IT projects and programs. She is a strong believer in self-development and helping others grow, and her achievements include: PM in a project aimed at helping Polish teenagers gain PM and team skills; responsible for launching the first PMII PC Mentoring Program; graduate of the Mentors for Starters mentoring program. Now Olga focuses on being her best self every day as an IT manager.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I was inspired by Ania Jakubowski - my Mentor in the M4S Program. Thanks to her, I believed that I could achieve my goal of leading IT projects in a software house. I have always enjoyed learning, especially econometrics and mathematics. I am very ambitious and this was a great goal for my self-development. I believe that this industry is growing very fast and changing a lot and I do not like to get bored. I also see that there should be more women in IT, so I decided to be one of them.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Being the first person/company in Poland to establish process mining, which I did successfully. I have spoken about it at more than 5 conferences, including 2 very well-known foreign ones. Process mining is very advanced data analytics that helps optimize processes. I started in 2020 with 2 people, now I have a team of 10 people who are responsible for process optimization and are experts leading optimization projects across the organization.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

The decision to become a manager. I was eager to make a decision about a future that was fully compatible with me. It struck me that I actually always wanted three things: to help others, to have an impact, and to put the puzzle together. As a manager, I can have them all in one. I have had many managerial challenges, such as combining two teams into one and fulfilling the full potential of the team, which I did. However, I believe that the most challenging situations are still ahead of me.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

The longer I work in IT, the more I become convinced that the stereotypical thinking about IT people is rarely true (low-contact introverts). It turns out that these people are very self-conscious and consequently, can communicate very well, having learned to do so. Indeed, there are not as many introverts as it might seem. IT employees these days need to communicate well with business, understand business and read between the lines.



Agnieszka Kaczor

 HR Manager

 OVH Cloud

Agnieszka is an HR Manager with a proven track record in managing HR functions and building strong organizational relationships. Throughout her career, she has successfully driven organizational changes, streamlined HR operations, and maintained high ethical standards. Agnieszka is dedicated to ensuring employee well-being and has achieved significant milestones in recruitment. With a passion for psychology and the education system, she actively engages in independent consulting projects.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I chose the technology industry because this sector is constantly evolving and introducing new innovations. Being part of this industry allows me to work on cutting-edge projects and be at the forefront of technological advancements. The tech industry also offers ample opportunities for career growth and development. Professionals can continuously update their skills and knowledge through workshops, training programs, and certifications.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

My greatest professional achievement as an HR manager is contributing to the overall success of the organization, having a positive impact on employees in line with the company's strategic goals. This includes the effective management of the organization's human capital to drive growth, innovation and sustainable success.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

As a manager, I was put in charge of a team of talented engineers and technicians, but I noticed that there was a growing lack of coherence and collaboration within the team. Communication had fragmented and individual team members were working in silos, hindering productivity and innovation.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

When entering the IT industry, one of the biggest surprises for newcomers can be the rapid pace of technological advancement and the constant changes in this field. The industry requires continuous learning to stay up-to-date and keep pace with the latest technologies and trends. Continuous innovation: the industry is driven by innovation, and new technologies emerge frequently. This can lead to exciting opportunities to work on cutting-edge projects.



Natalia Kamecka

 Chief Marketing Officer

 Applover



Natalia is the Chief Marketing Officer of Applover; a full-stack digital agency. Since joining it, Applover has been recognized by Financial Times in the “FT 1000” ranking in 2023 and ranked in the Fast 50 category in 2020 and 2021 by Deloitte. Natalia is a marketer with over 10 years of experience in the e-commerce and IT industry; marketing, creating and implementing brand, PR and long-term social media strategies. She is proficient in interpreting and analyzing data to drive growth.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I started working in a PR agency during my studies, and most of my clients came from IT. Then I worked in the e-commerce industry, and that’s how my adventure in new technologies began. It wasn’t deliberate, but all of my work experiences were somehow connected to IT, and this pleased me greatly - bringing me more growth opportunities and broader perspectives. I met many inspiring people and was lucky enough to have outstanding leaders who taught me a lot.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

The leader is as strong as her team, and I believe that my current team is my greatest achievement. I have trust in my team, and I know they trust me, and that’s a necessary base for any relationship; a professional one too. Together we achieved a lot – from ranking Applover on the FT1000 list to creating our own podcast – Keep IT Healthy. All of that whilst staying true to ourselves and growing together. I’m also proud of having introduced a more inclusive language at all levels of communication.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

As a leader, you are accountable for the team's success, and as a result, you are also responsible for the decisions being made. Sometimes you have to decide between right and right. It's easy to choose between right and wrong, but it's hard to decide between right and right. Especially, when with limited resources you try to find a balance between what’s best for the company and the team’s development and well-being.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

The IT industry is believed to be more dynamic, modern, and open than others. I was surprised that it still is not when it comes to stereotypes, pay gaps, diversity, and inclusivity. These are still buzzwords that don’t reflect reality for most companies. Of course, this changes, but from my perspective of over ten years of experience, it takes much longer than we would like it to. So as women in IT, this change is still more on us, and we need to pay attention to it.



Monika Kania

 Growth director for Central & Eastern Europe, Baltic and Nordic countries

 Vodeno

Monika is a C-level executive with experience in fintech, banking, and technology who has been recognised by X-Tech Awards as the Top Female Executive in CEE. She has had the chance to work with top technology companies like Revolut and Vodeno during the course of a 15 plus year professional career in fintech. Monika co-founded also the strategic consulting company Finnovatika and contributed to the development of the Postgraduate Fintech programme at Akademia Leona Koźmińskiego.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

Technology is an integral part of modern society, with a huge impact on our lives, and it was very clear to me from the start that by participating in this rapidly growing environment, I have the opportunity to constantly develop myself, learn new skills, participate in things that truly impact people's lives, and have satisfaction from what I'm doing.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Looking back on the past few years of my professional career in technology, I am proud of numerous accomplishments, including the successful introduction of new products or markets through collaboration with top tech organisations as a Manager, Advisor and C-level executive, and my capacity to gain experiences. From a personal standpoint, my greatest professional achievement is where I am today: I work with top-tier organisations of my choosing and have the opportunity to take part in fascinating initiatives that develop cutting-edge technology and new business models with global impact.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Managers face challenges on a daily basis. Every day, you must confront and handle fresh issues. In my personal experience, the most difficult position as a manager was dismissing a team of people I was leading due to strategic changes of the organisation.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

Working in the technology business is an exciting and rewarding job, and because technology lives on innovation, you must be always learning, keeping up with the latest advances, and remaining ahead of the curve.



Maria Karandin

 VP & Head of Delivery Department

 N-iX

Maria graduated cum laude from the Moscow State University with Masters in Physics. She started her career in a tech startup. In 1998 Maria joined the Ericsson IT team. In 2000 Maria moved to Israel and joined another startup. She changed her career track to QA and in 2005 moved to Ukraine, joined GlobalLogic and grew from a Senior QA to AVP, Engineering. From 2017 till 2022 Maria worked at Customertimes (Delivery Head, Country Head, EMEA Head). Since April 2022 she is the VP Delivery at N-iX.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

As a little girl, I wanted to be a scientist. I was inspired by Marie Skłodowska-Curie's biography, which is why I chose physics as a major. However, it was complicated to be a scientist in post-USSR Russia when I graduated. There were two options: leave the country or switch to industry. As I had some experience in computer programming due to the specifics of my diploma I chose the second one and never doubted it. I love technologies and I love working with people who build technologies.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

My biggest achievement is building an efficient team of 150 engineers in a very short time. There were many stakeholders on the client's side and different technological directions. We hired the team which is still working great despite numerous changes on the client side. We built the first team of professional services experts at GlobalLogic, and it was exciting experience to collaborate with the kind of experts we haven't worked with before, with new standards and different compliances.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

The most challenging situation I can recall happened when a client got incorrect information about my team members' work priorities (I was a Project Manager at that time). The client was informed that the QA team had switched to another task and stopped testing a critical release. So we immediately got a contract termination notice. I had to step in and sort it out which I did.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

People in IT are amazing: most of them are super-smart, super-flexible and always ready to gain new knowledge and try new ideas. I enjoy working with great teams of IT professionals.



Joanna Kasprzak

 COO

 Apzumi



Joanna holds a Ph.D. in Bioinformatics and as a scientist she used to implement algorithms for biological data with the aim of building theoretical models of machines with crucial functions in cells. Her dream was to help find new therapies or drugs for cancer or HIV. After a few years of a scientific career Joanna switched to IT and now she's working as COO in a Digital Health Software House - Apzumi, where she shares her expertise in designing and implementing applications that support patients and physicians.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

As a bioinformatician, I wanted to combine my two biggest passions: programming and medical data analysis with a dream to find new therapies. As these processes take decades and require narrow focus, I decided to move from academia to the IT industry and build software. In IT I became a part of a community with similar interests and goals. Together we were able to build products and check how they affect users. I've finally found a way to use technology to help patients directly through my work.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

From a professional point of view, I am extremely proud that thanks to a great team I managed to translate successfully delivered products into building a successful organization. Apzumi has been recognized with various prestigious awards such as Deloitte's Technology Fast 50 2022 Central Europe and Clutch's 2023 Top 100 Fastest-Growing Companies. These awards show our growth as a team and position us as a top Digital Health Software House.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

I would say finding our way when the COVID-19 pandemic appeared. Together with our CEO we had to decide how to steer the company in this new reality. We decided to switch our identity to Digital Health Software House. We focused on challenging areas we now specialize in, such as medical regulations, EHRs, patient monitoring and telemedicine. This required a massive change in our thinking and realigning the company's values and mission. This decision appeared to be a game changer.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

Switching from academia to IT was a big change with a lot of surprises, but the biggest one was how teamwork is organized in IT and how much value it brings into delivering projects. I'm happy to work with diverse, passionate teams, with a strong desire to become better every day. Their huge dedication and the will to change the world into a better place inspires me. I am thankful for finding so many truly passionate specialists who turn hard and often very stressful and intense work into an adventure.



Justyna Kawa

 Business Controlling & Finance Director

 Archicom



Justyna is a graduate of Finance & Accounting. She has more than 10 years of experience in finance in different companies and more than 5 years in the real estate sector. Justyna's whole professional life is linked to processes optimizations, improvements, knowledge transfer between teams and different IT systems implementation. She considers herself a finance & real estate expert with a strong IT focus. Justyna believes that a constant mix of technical and meritorical competences is the best way for companies to grow smart.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

New technologies are changing the world of business and finance. The main objective is to be able to respond to different needs very quickly and precisely. It allows companies to gather data from many different systems and to analyse it searching for trends, analogies, correlations and to somehow try to forecast a future. Using technologies you can simply adapt it to your needs because you understand it better. I choose new technologies because their capabilities are limitless.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

My greatest achievement has been creating a team of different types of professionals that work together on a daily basis with new technologies. Within a couple of years, we were able to build different applications that are being successfully used in our parent group (for example: the Rent Roll tool, Risk Register, Milestones control tool, Fit out budget management, Construction budget management, Contracts Register, Tender Management etc). All of these systems were tailor made, designed from scratch, and adapted to internal needs.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

The most challenging situations for me are related to convincing people to work with change. When you implement any IT solution you need to be sure that you create something that people understand, will be able to use and which gives them benefits. However, when there are a lot of changes and IT implementations at the same time, people can feel discouraged and simply tired of the changes. I felt this very strongly when I was working on a merger of companies and we tried to arrange common solutions quickly.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

When I started to work in the IT sector I was really surprised how important communication is and that in order to successfully implement technology you need to be mainly focused on people; on those who create the technology and on those who will be using it. Whenever there is any communication problem, many months or even years of work may be lost.



Rehmat Kharal

 Global VP GTM Enablement

 Harness



Rehmat Kharal is the Global Vice President of GTM Enablement at a startup. Prior she was Global Vice President of Enablement at BigPanda where she led Enterprise, Commercial, Customer, Partner and SDR enablement. Rehmat believes community success means leading by example. She has led the Women In Tech initiative at BigPanda and was a core team member of Women in Tech at Cisco and Rubrik. Rehmat has won several awards for Sales and Enablement, including the SV Women of Influence 2021.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I have 3 daughters and there is a lack of women in STEM in general and definitely lack of female leaders in the technology space. It was time to make a change.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Taking a stand for my team. Showing the monetary value that my team brings to the company. This is very often very difficult to do when your team does not directly relate to revenue.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Climbing the corporate ranks in 6.5 years. I went from being an individual contributor to a Global VP in record time, and that was after I took a 13 year break to raise my daughters.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

Women are still not treated equally in the workplace – from title, to promotions to pay! I'm a big advocate for making a change when it comes to these discrepancies.





Zofia Kierner

 Founder & CEO, Innovator in Residence

 Girls Future Ready Foundation, 5Oone, UC Berkeley

Zofia Kierner is an award-winning social entrepreneur and Forbes 25 under 25 laureate. She founded the Girls Future Ready Foundation, an educational organization that spotlights the power of thousands of young women. After impacting 80,000 girls and generating over \$25M worth of impact, she founded 5Oone, a boutique social impact agency to support brands with the creation and implementation of their impact efforts. She is also an Innovator in Residence at the University of California, Berkeley.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

Entering the new technologies industry was a conscious choice, stemming from my belief that innovation and data science are catalysts for change. In the social impact arena, data-driven insights enable us to create more targeted and effective solutions. By delving into technology and data, 5Oone, my social impact agency, is equipped to bridge the gap between statistics and real-world change, leveraging modern tools to magnify social impact.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Without a doubt, my proudest professional achievement is witnessing the transformation of over 80,000 girls through Girls Future Ready, empowering them to step confidently into their roles as future leaders. It's more than just numbers. It's about the stories of resilience, ambition, and hope that I've had the privilege to be a part of. The ripple effect of this work – from the individual lives of girls to the broader community – is immeasurable and will, I believe, echo through generations.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

During the COVID pandemic, managing GFR's in-person programs became challenging due to school remote learning. Yet, a survey of 4,000 CEE and US students revealed an opportunity: blending English-speaking students with Polish classrooms for a unique cross-cultural experience. Leveraging this, we launched the #togetherforteachers initiative, partnering 350 US students with Polish institutions. This not only boosted online English lessons but enriched the education of over 10,000 children.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

Upon entering the IT industry, what surprised me most was the vast potential of technology to amplify social impact. Given my background in advocacy and social change, especially with the Girls Future Ready, I initially viewed IT as just a tool. However, its transformative capacity to bridge educational and gender gaps, and to craft meaningful connections, like we did with #togetherforteachers, revealed a synergy between tech and my lifelong mission of driving positive societal change.



Jessica Kinman

 Senior Manager for Digital Manufacturing

 PwC

Jessica Kinman has a remarkable 20-year career in Manufacturing and IT. She spearheaded global cloud tech, engineering, and manufacturing strategies as a leader for PwC, Boomi, Amazon, and Dassault Systèmes. At Boeing, she led the Enterprise transformation team, supporting 100,000 users. Jessica's expertise extends to prestigious board and advisory roles in organizations like Women in Manufacturing and Creative Destruction Lab. She is also an officer in the US military.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

Starting my own career from the ground up in Manufacturing, I quickly recognized the significance of technology for future industries. Leveraging my MFG and Engineering background, I became an invaluable asset in envisioning the future by crafting comprehensive strategies that encompassed the entire business landscape. My expertise enabled me to assist companies in bringing their teams together, assembling their architectures and implementing practical solutions to turn visions into reality.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

As a leader in Boeing's Digital Transformation project, I documented the Manufacturing use cases, uniting stakeholders from different organizations to establish shared processes and future objectives. My greatest accomplishment was delivering the RFP for the next generation of software products, set to revolutionize the future of Boeing.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

In my view, the crucial role of a manager is to eliminate obstacles for the team and inspire them to reach their full potential. Each individual is unique, requiring different forms of motivation. When I took over a struggling team, it took time to build trust with them, and to understand what motivated each person, ultimately boosting morale and productivity for the entire team. There are and always will be challenges with building a team, but the reward in seeing them succeed is more than worth it.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

Entering the IT Industry, I was startled by the gap between the IT and Business teams. Seamless integration is vital for the success of any technology project. It is essential for companies to involve the end customer from the beginning, defining and mapping out the business process to minimize future disruptions caused when building the solution. This also helps to improve the culture of acceptance for new technologies.



Adrianna Klimczak

 Co-founder & COO

 IT Girls Foundation

She graduated in Computer Science with a specialization in Data Science at the Warsaw University of Technology. For over 5 years she has been actively working as a Data Scientist in one of the top analytical companies. In 2021 she co-founded the IT Girls Foundation. They encourage children and teenagers to choose technological careers, aiming to increase the number of women in STEM. Since then she has spoken at TEDx and top IT conferences, and in 2023 received the title of Equal Business Leader.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I chose the new technologies industry because of my father's influence, who studied computer science, coupled with my deep fascination for math and physics. Since middle school I have been winning physics and math competitions, so computer science and then data science was a natural path for me. It opened up a world of possibilities, allowing me to explore my passions while breaking barriers. Embracing IT was a natural choice, and I founded IT Girls to inspire other girls to embark upon this empowering journey.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

My greatest professional achievement was co-founding IT Girls, empowering young women and kids to pursue tech. Building a team of 100+ volunteers and creating an organization from scratch, seeing it grow into a powerful force has been incredibly rewarding. Together, we're reshaping the future of IT. Also, receiving the Equal Business Leader award from the Women's Congress was an incredible honor and validation of our efforts to promote diversity and inclusion in the tech industry.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Leading a team of volunteers. Managing volunteers can be complex because their commitment and priorities might vary due to other responsibilities. To address this, we focused on building a strong sense of purpose, ensuring that each volunteer understood the impact of their contributions. Regular communication, flexibility, and recognizing their efforts are vital. By fostering a supportive and inclusive environment, we are creating a passionate team that makes a significant impact.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

That it was so vastly different from studying (easier in terms of difficulty and much more about people). Also, the fast-paced nature of the industry constantly demands adaptation and learning. While computer science studies provided a solid foundation, I quickly realized that IT is not just about coding and technology. It's equally about collaborating with people, understanding their needs, and finding innovative solutions together.



Wioletta Klimczak

 Co-founder & COO

 IT Girls Foundation

Wioletta graduated from Computer Science at the Warsaw University of Technology. She has over 8 years of experience in the IT industry as a programmer and data analyst. In 2021, Wioletta co-founded the IT Girls foundation, whose goal is to support kids and teens in developing their STEM interests and increase the number of women in IT. She is a TEDx speaker and has performed at multiple IT conferences. In 2023 Wioletta received the title of Equal Business Leader from the Women's Congress.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

While I always had a technical mind, I also had a lot of ideas about what I would like to do in life. The choice of studies and a further career path in IT were partly dictated by my interest in science subjects and partly due to the fact that it was quite clear that in IT there would be a shortage of people and that it was a very future-oriented profession. It proved to be true; IT allowed me to become independent relatively quickly and pursue my passions.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

The establishment of the foundation and its continuous development. Today, after almost two years, I can say that every day I am extremely proud of where we are, what we do and how we do it. If I had to mention three things that I consider my success so far: the campaign with Intel "Updating Fairy Tales", the speech at TEDxSGH and my Equal Business Leader award, which is a very nice confirmation that we are going in the right direction and that what we do is important to many children and women.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

There are numerous such situations when running a Foundation. Behind what the media and social media portray, there is a vast array of challenges to overcome. Our team of volunteers expanded rapidly, which proved to be the biggest challenge. Building a solid foundation was crucial to ensure that every individual joining us could fulfill their dreams and utilize their talents. Balancing the diverse needs and aspirations of the team required creative solutions and constant adaptability.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

Immediately after graduating, I remember that I experienced a dissonance between what I had learnt at university and what I used at work. At first, I didn't fully understand why I was learning all this since I don't use it at work, but after a year I understood the perspective my studies had given me and that learning new things was much faster thanks to the solid foundations I had after graduation. The thing that still surprises me, or rather worries me, is the slowly growing number of women in IT.





Marta Klimowicz

 Chief Growth Officer

 Monterail

Marta Klimowicz, Ph.D., is an experienced Chief Growth Officer at Monterail. With 15+ years in the IT industry, she spearheads demand generation, explores new markets, and drives sustainable company growth. Former notable achievements include launching Vinted in Poland and serving as an advisor to Dare IT, an impact business solving the tech industry's diversity & talent gaps. Marta's written works on the social aspects of the internet are featured in magazines, academic journals, and her blog.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I was drawn to the new technologies industry because it presents opportunities to shape the future, innovate, and positively impact society. My passion for exploring the intersection of technology and human behavior drives me to contribute to the industry's growth and leverage its potential for social change.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I successfully built Monterail's Growth team from scratch, expanding it from a single-person marketing function to a team of ten with strong leadership. This involved creating a vision, recruiting and training team members, and establishing a clear career path. The team's longevity and our revenue growth in 2022 confirmed the effectiveness of the implemented vision. Despite working remotely, I fostered a culture of rapport and mutual trust within the team.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

One of the most demanding professional situations I encountered as a manager was spearheading a significant team restructuring. This involved making difficult decisions, realigning teams, and ensuring seamless transitions while upholding employee morale and productivity.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

The rapid pace of technological advancements and transformative innovations across industries amazed me. The collaborative and dynamic nature of the field, where diverse professionals unite to solve complex problems, was equally impressive. The continuous learning and adaptability demanded by the IT industry both challenged and excited me.





Klaudia Kloc

 Co-Founder

 Vidoc Security Lab

Klaudia is the co-founder of Vidoc Security Lab, driving innovation in the cybersecurity landscape. Her dedication to security research led to the creation of Vidoc, a platform for security professionals, gaining global recognition by discovering hundreds of vulnerabilities through bug bounty programs with prominent tech giants. Beyond spearheading the startup, Klaudia actively engages with NGOs and the tech community, sharing knowledge and empowering human rights activists across Central and Eastern Europe.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I enjoy solving problems creatively and approaching challenges in unconventional ways. As an application security engineer, I discovered my passion for exploring innovative solutions to find vulnerabilities in software and strengthen digital security.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Founding Vidoc Security Lab, releasing our platform – Vidoc, and the engagement of our users. Building a business I'm passionate about.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

I joined a startup that witnessed remarkable growth, with the company expanding from 100 to 1000 employees within just one year. When I joined, my manager and I were the sole members of the security team. We had the exciting opportunity to establish the security department from scratch and implement new processes company-wide. While managing the security of a quickly growing company, I also had to simultaneously build and develop an effective AppSec team.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

What surprised me the most about the IT industry is its remarkable diversity in terms of career paths. It's not limited to just being a "programmer" or "IT helpdesk." There are countless other roles and specializations to choose from, providing a wide array of opportunities for individuals with various skills and interests.



Małgorzata Kmiecziak

 Managing Director CEE

 Equativ



Małgorzata is a graduate of the Faculty of Management at the Poznań University of Economics and Business. Currently associated with Equativ (formerly Smart), where she is responsible for planning, developing and implementing the sales strategy in the CEE region and managing the Warsaw branch of the company. She developed extensive knowledge in the field of online advertising and ad technology by working with key media houses, advertising agencies and the biggest brands.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I joined the advertising and tech industry when I accepted a job at Google in 2008. It was growing rapidly and I knew that moving away from the traditional sector will allow me to grow in an innovative environment, broaden my horizons and satisfy my general curiosity. Online advertising and ad technology are changing fast and they require constant learning and adaptability skills.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

It's hard to name one in particular, however the significant growth of Equativ's net revenues in CEE during the past 5 years and building the brand's recognition on the market is one of them. This also comes with people management and the employees' work satisfaction. In 2023, for the 4th year in a row, the Polish branch was accredited with HappyIndex @ Work.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

The biggest challenge is linked to the biggest responsibility of a leader – the team. We can talk about building the strategy, achieving business results, managing crises, etc., but no success will be achieved without motivated and engaged people in your team/s. So for me, the biggest challenge and focus was and still is to hire the right people, use their right skills, help them grow and keep them engaged.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

Flexibility and the startup mentality. Very often the companies I worked for kept their agility despite the organizational growth. The tech industry changes quickly and without such an approach it would be difficult to innovate and stay at the top.





Olena Kolikhova

 Innovation Manager

 EY

Olena is a tech enthusiast, passionate about innovation and entrepreneurship. She supports digital transformation in EY, where she acts as a technology leader. For over 7 years Olena worked in Microsoft as Head of Startups in Poland, where she advised tech companies in areas related to new technology and business development, as well as cooperated with C-Level executives of Polish and international corporations. She actively participates in numerous mentorship initiatives for startups and women in technology.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I chose the technology industry for myself as it opens doors to endless possibilities, diverse roles and exciting challenges. Being part of this industry allows you to shape the future, drive positive change, and contribute to groundbreaking advancements that transform the way we live and work. It fuels continuous learning and constant self-development, as innovation is constant. Moreover, you will meet hundreds of incredibly talented and creative people, who will inspire you to achieve more.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

During my career I've been involved in cooperation with a couple of hundred startups. My greatest professional achievement lies in the joy and fulfillment I find in helping them grow their business and achieve their goals. I take pride in sharing my knowledge, experience, and valuable contacts with those companies. Witnessing their progress and success, knowing that I played a role in their journey, is immensely rewarding and drives my passion for supporting the entrepreneurial community.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

The most challenging professional situation I faced was managing a highly ambitious project with an aggressive deadline while dealing with unforeseen technical issues. The team was overwhelmed and internal restrictions were hindering progress. Overcoming this challenging situation required strong leadership, resilience, and the ability to foster a cohesive team. Implementing a clear roadmap, providing support, acknowledging individual efforts were crucial to delivering the project successfully.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

What surprised me the most was the incredible sense of inclusiveness and the unlimited possibilities it offered. I found a diverse and welcoming community where people from various backgrounds and experiences came together to collaborate and innovate. The industry's inclusive culture fosters a creative environment that celebrates different perspectives and ideas, so there is no limit to what can be achieved and it's an exciting and dynamic field to be a part of.





Milena Komierzyńska

 IT Tribe Leader

 BNP Paribas Poland

Milena is a strong leader in the system maintenance & development areas. She is a responsible, reliable and goal oriented team player, and an IT partner helping businesses to implement banking strategy via agile product development. Milena is an Agile lover, transforming organizations for an agile mindset. She is interested in everything enabling smoother communication and achieving better results.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I wouldn't say that I chose the technology industry. I chose a place where I could develop myself and have a big impact on reality.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

For me, the hardest decisions are always those which can have a negative impact on the development of my employees. I always take into consideration the long term perspective of team development when I change the scope of responsibilities.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

It changes as time passes. Many projects or initiatives which I took part in from the beginning were hard to imagine implemented, but in the end they happened due to an ability to make people engaged, focused and flexible, adapting to the customer needs.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

It's not so different from other business areas when dealing with major challenges. The biggest focus is on goal delivery & people management, making sure that you can create the team which makes visions come true.





Annariina Komljenovic



Country Director AWS Germany, Board Member



Devoteam, RightsTech Women

As a mother of three teenage daughters, it is important for Annariina to be a successful female role model for them in a male dominated industry. In her roles as SVP at Eurex Bonds and leading business development at Amazon Web Services, she works with strategists, technology leaders, business leaders, and executive stakeholders in enterprise and global multinational companies, to drive alignment around accelerating cloud adoption.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I want to be a role model for young girls to inspire them to pursue careers in STEM and tech. There's still a gender gap in the tech industry and many efforts must be made to foster diversity, inclusivity and equal opportunities. I see the technology industry as a platform to make such a significant impact on our society, where products and services can be developed that can improve people's lives.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

At AWS, getting promoted is a combination of performance, skills and leadership. A female team member; a data scientist, had worked very hard, already demonstrating her capabilities to operate for a longer period of time at the next level. I put her forward for promotion and a pay rise, fought for her case, backed it up with data, customer examples and quotes. She was then able to move to an international business development role, which wouldn't have been possible without the promotion.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

I joined Amazon Web Services at the beginning of Covid-19 lockdown. My professional services team contained top IT talent and was dispersed all over Germany. It was important for me to make sure that everyone was feeling safe, included and stayed healthy. The team was self-driven and working from home, so the days stretched longer than they would have had we been working from the office. Managing that work-life balance was crucial to avoid the team burning out.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

Women are too afraid to apply for tech roles if they don't fulfill all the criteria in the job description. However, there is the possibility of having a successful career in tech, even without a technical education, as long as one is curious, willing to learn and put in the work. Anyone can become an expert in any topic, mentors will help you get there faster, and building a network, which one can leverage, will help enormously.





Ligia Kornowska

 Leader, Co-founder

 AI in Health Coalition, Data Lake

Ligia is a Medical Doctor and Managing Director of the Polish Hospital Federation, the largest hospital organization in Poland. She is the Leader of „AI Coalition in Healthcare” for Poland. Ligia is also the Co-founder and Chair of the Board in Data Lake and Donate your Data Foundation. Listed among the ‘100 most influential people in Polish healthcare’ for the last 4 years, she is a laureate of the ‘25 under 25’ and ‘30 under 30’ Forbes lists. Ligia has held managerial positions in leading Polish medical startups and is a speaker and moderator at international conferences.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I'm strongly focused on improving the healthcare sector in Poland. Development of new diagnosis and treatment paths for patients is strongly connected to the new technologies industry – using such methods like AI or AR can revolutionize the way we take care of patients.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Creating a medical data donation scheme – creating the opportunity to have access to medical data for AI algorithms while securing patients' right to privacy.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

In the context of new technology and IT – As a medical doctor I had to learn how to communicate with the IT team since medical language and IT language are totally different, even if both sides are communicating in Polish or English.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

The different languages of the IT and medical departments.



Polina Koroleva Agrawal

 Co-Founder

 Learn Migo



Tsinghua University, master of finance; ByteDance, game localisation; Get Greenie, founder; LearnMigo, co-founder. Polina, who is turning 29 this year, left Russia when she was 18 years old, living in Beijing for 8 years and for the last 3 in Delhi. She speaks 4 languages, including Russian, English, Chinese and a bit of Hindi.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I have always wanted to build a scalable product that can be beneficial to many people. I feel that through technology I can change lives in the best way. We are working on a free AI teacher which can teach children and answer their doubts. It is a really empowering initiative as we will be able to reach children who do not have a lot of money to spend on education, giving them equal opportunities for the future.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I have built a company with a hardware product in a new country (started one month after I arrived) without knowing anybody or even a bit of the local language.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

We had an influencer marketing campaign and some of the influencers did not perform according to our specific agreement, so we had to give them less money. It was challenging, because I had to be really nice and sweet, yet firm to make sure everyone accepted the lower payment without argument. I managed it well and paid everyone according to their contribution.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

How fast things are moving.



Izabela Korzeniowska

 CFO

 code quest



Beginning her career in marketing at an FMCG company, Izabela sharpened her skills over the years. But technology thrilled her, so she joined the IT sector. Leveraging her management expertise, Izabela found her place in a challenging and high-risk environment, fueling her passion for constant learning.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I chose the new technologies industry for the thrill of innovation and growth. Embracing challenges excites me, and being part of shaping the future is inspiring. It's an ever-evolving field with endless opportunities to make a meaningful impact.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I take immense pride in my greatest professional achievement of being a part of establishing and nurturing a company from the ground up, expanding it to employ 50 individuals. What sets us apart is not just the numbers, but our dedication to cultivating a non-toxic work environment. It brings me great joy to offer stable employment opportunities while fostering a positive workplace culture that benefits both our employees and our overall success.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

The most challenging aspect of my current managerial role is navigating complex interpersonal dynamics. Understanding and coping with different behaviors in a friendly way is always a struggle. Still, I prioritise empathy and effective communication to create a harmonious work environment.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

In the fast-paced IT industry, I was astonished by the rapidity of change. New technologies emerged, evolved, and became obsolete at a remarkable speed. However, I initially struggled to understand how these developments were interconnected with significant shifts in the job market, job opportunities, perspectives, and the aspirations of potential candidates.



Kamila Koszewicz-Grzeszczak

 Vice President, Global Compliance & EMEA Legal

 GlobalLogic, Hitachi Group Company

Kamila is a Legal Executive at GlobalLogic, a Hitachi Group Company specializing in digital product engineering, hiring about 30,000 people around the globe. In the 5 years with the company, Kamila has built 3 legal functions and teams from scratch - 2 global (Privacy and Compliance) and one regional (Legal EMEA, supporting 10 countries). At the age of 34, she was promoted to a corporate Vice President role, being the youngest person with such a seniority in the whole GlobalLogic group.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

In my law firm days I had the chance to work with IT companies and I always loved how dynamic, open minded and creative the people working in that industry were. I admired how the new technologies industry was changing the world, affecting our everyday lives. When I decided to change my career to an in-house role, it was a natural choice for me to look for positions in that industry.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Building legal function in the region from scratch and having my efforts recognised by global executives with a corporate Vice-Presidential promotion at an exceptionally young age. I was hired by my company in 2018 as the first lawyer in the EU, and in just a few years I managed to build an amazing team, processes, relationships with the management, internal stakeholders and external advisors. Our global C-suite recognised my contributions promoting me to a seniority level which only around 0,5% of our staff ever reaches.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

In 2022 I was heavily involved in the business continuity efforts related to the war in Ukraine, where our company employed around 7500 people. As the Head of Legal Europe I was supporting relocation efforts as well as transition of our processes from country-specific to EMEA-wide, so our staff in Ukraine could get engaged in our EU operations. We were literally dealing with people's lives so the dynamic, pressure and timelines were unprecedented.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

People in this industry express their opinions in a very direct way, showing a different approach to hierarchy and seniority compared to staff in other industries. I believe this unleashes energy and innovation and makes collaboration easier.



Sylwia Kotowska

 Global Computer Software Assurance Section Lead EMEA APAC

 Roche



Sylwia is a trusted leader, mentor and coach mostly working with talented women for already 20 years in IT. She has built effective teams and strongly believes in autonomy drivers. Sylwia is successful in supporting people's development and skilled in Business Process Improvement and Optimization as well as Vendor Management. She has extensive experience in program and project management, quality assurance, and software validation.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I was studying mathematics, with my specialty in Applied mathematics. This area is highly connected with IT Technology. In order to be effective not only from a process perspective but also to collaborate with people better you need to be familiar with IT tool sets but also have emotional intelligence. This was my trigger and opened a door for me to the IT sector. It has been my passion for many years and I am not at all bored.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Leading high-scale and very diverse international teams based in many locations with a high level of team engagement which delivers the highest performance achievements. Building an inclusive culture based on an individualised approach and leadership style (one of my strong Gallup talents). Being a leader not only a manager. Currently I am responsible for 15 internals and almost 100 externals, 8 nations, and 6 locations. Getting high results in employee satisfaction surveys and feedbacks.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Forming and normalising a new team after taking a managerial position. I experienced something that is named in group/team processes as an attack on a leader by a team member who had applied for the same managerial position as me. I had to make the hard decision to dismiss him after many attempts to solve the situation. The most difficult thing here was that this person impacted the whole team. I had to quickly rebuild the team spirit and trust in team and help find people a sweet-spot of their daily work .

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

The low representation of women in senior positions with passion and people orientation.



Katarzyna Kowaluk-Toszek

 CEO

 Absolut Systems



Katarzyna is a CEO of Absolut Systems - an innovation and digital transformation consulting firm. She empowers through transformative actions, bridging gaps and propelling growth. As a visionary problem solver, strategist, and generalist, she pioneers the fusion of digital technology and smart & sustainable solutions. Passionate about innovations, business, and designing human experiences.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I have always been passionate about the potential of innovation and its impact on society. I saw technology as a means to solve real-world problems and improve people's lives and work. The fast-paced nature of the technology sector fascinates me. I enjoyed the constant learning and the ever-evolving challenges that come with working in this industry. I wanted to actively engage and empower not only women but also neurodiverse individuals to join and thrive in the IT industry.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Creating a company which people recommend to their friends or spouses as a workplace, don't want to leave, and, even if our paths diverge, where people stay connected or even wish to return. I believe that a company is about people, just like the solutions we create are not for companies but for individuals who use the solutions.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

The most challenging has been managing creative teams whose work might not fully align with the strategy or concept, or which requires further changes, all whilst preserving creativity, motivation, avoiding micromanagement, and achieving the "wow" factor. Balancing these aspects demands effective leadership, fostering open communication, and encouraging a culture that values innovation.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

The strong sense of community and collaboration among IT professionals and IT companies is often a pleasant surprise. In the fast-paced and dynamic tech industry, witnessing individuals and organizations come together to share knowledge, support each other, and drive innovation is truly inspiring. This collaborative spirit fosters a culture of continuous learning and growth, making the IT world a welcoming and exciting place to be.



Barbara Koźbiak

 Board Member & COO

 Scramjet



Barbara has been in the IT industry for 12 years. She started as a project manager, then worked as an IT manager and eventually became a co-founder of Scramjet as a Board Member and the COO. Barbara organized the operation of the company for R&D projects with a team working remotely. Within 2 years of starting, Barbara led the company through two investment rounds and successfully completed two R&D projects.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

New technologies are very exciting and have a real impact on changing the world around us. Being a part of these changes drives me to act.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Scramjet Cloud Platform has been named the winner of the 2023 CloudX Award for streaming and cloud computing, recognizing and honoring the best cloud technologies, products and services. The official presentation of the awards was take place on August 14, 2023 in San Francisco.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

The most formidable challenge was overseeing an investment process that mandated a change in Scramjet's leadership, replacing a founder who had been with the organization since its inception. The real test was navigating the profound emotional ties and loyalties of the founding team. Balancing respect for the past while ushering in a new era demanded careful communication, empathy, and strategic decision-making to ensure a seamless transition and keeping the team optimistic and highly efficient.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

I was surprised by the relative amounts of time taken by the solution planning stage and its implementation. In the IT industry, and especially in R&D projects, the planning and concept development time is comparable to its execution. Only well-thought-out technology projects with a vision of providing specific business needs can bring commercial success.





Klaudia Kozusznik

 Head of Growth

 A4BEE

Klaudia is a problem solver, a critical and creative thinker who is fueled by curiosity. As a catalyst, she nurtures the growth of ambitious startups, scaleups, and passionate teams, as well as her own personal development. She is a Head of Growth for A4BEE. Her proactive approach and determination enable her to turn ideas into reality, driving positive change and achieving meaningful results.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I was always a problem solver, a critical and creative thinker. I enjoyed challenges and loved learning. Passion for innovation led me to Innovatika, the venture builder which then sparked my interest in technology-oriented solutions. After that I joined A4BEE, where despite my initially limited experience in emerging technologies, I was captivated by their impact on the biotech industry. Those inspiring people not only drew me closer to the tech world but also kept me dedicated to it.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I believe that my greatest achievement is still on the horizon. However, I'm totally proud of these moments: supporting a tech start-ups growth and global expansion with an incredible team; engaging in discussion with executives, engineers, and scientists from leading life science companies and universities, and delivering impactful innovations, all while juggling the joy of being a working mom. Furthermore, mentoring women in STEAM and sharing my experiences has been rewarding.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Being a part of the management team of A4BEE, a fast-growing company, posed unique challenges as the organization expanded from 50 to 130 employees in just two years. It felt like building a plane while flying it. Balancing the adoption of new technologies, shaping the future, and ensuring the well-being and growth of a team became simultaneous priorities that required careful navigation. But as they say: challenges are the sparks that ignite innovation ;)

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

While I was aware of the benefits of collaboration in driving innovation, it was within the technology and life science ecosystem that I truly understood its crucial impact. There is a huge need for interdisciplinary teams comprising scientists, biotechnologists, engineers, developers, and business executives. It became clear that harnessing their collective expertise, connecting both people and data, is essential for achieving both incremental progress and groundbreaking innovation milestones.



Agnieszka Krawczyk

 Marketing Director

 Codete

Agnieszka has over 9 years of marketing experience, currently serving as the Marketing Director at Codete. Her responsibilities include team leading, developing effective marketing strategies, and overseeing online activities for the business. Agnieszka has a successful track record in launching and managing an e-commerce venture in the healthcare industry, as well as experience in the fashion industry, specifically in trend research and footwear design.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I chose the new technologies industry because of its rapid growth, constant innovation, and limitless potential. It's an exciting and dynamic field that offers endless opportunities for creativity, problem-solving, and staying at the forefront of technological advancements. I am passionate about leveraging new technologies to drive positive change, enhance user experiences, and create innovative solutions that shape the future.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

My greatest professional achievement includes successfully launching and managing my own e-commerce store, creating a collection of custom-designed blouses for girls in Krakow, and designing high-heeled shoes for the MM Oleksy brand. These accomplishments demonstrate my entrepreneurial spirit, design skills, and ability to deliver innovative products to the target audience.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

The most challenging situation after becoming a manager was restructuring a small one-person department into a 10-person team that supported all the company departments. I had to assess team strengths, hire new members, and adapt to industry trends. Effective communication and fostering collaboration resulted in an efficient and cohesive team that supported company growth.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

What surprised me the most when I started working in the IT industry was the level of flexibility both in terms of organizational structure and marketing activities. I was amazed by the endless possibilities for promotion and the need to constantly stay updated with the latest trends. It was a dynamic and ever-evolving industry that required adaptability and a willingness to embrace new technologies and strategies.





Malene Krohn

 VP Product Development

 SimCorp

In various leadership positions Malene has delivered strong results in building up and scaling organizations within software/product development (FinTech) by combining her passion in software development and knowledge of how to optimize quality and efficiency. She has recently been responsible for a large Agile transformation across 55+ teams moving from traditional waterfall approach into scaled agile set-up. Malene's strengths are that she "connects the dots" as a relational leader, and is an empathic bridge builder.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

The opportunities technology provides across industries and in society have always fascinated me. Working with these opportunities – both from a business optimization and from a human / tech interaction point of view – is what interests me deeply.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I have been responsible for a large Agile transformation across 55+ teams moving from a traditional waterfall approach into scaled agile set-up. Results delivered: significant improvements in quality, quarterly releases moving towards bi-weekly, preview drops and high employee engagement. I have scaled the sw-development department to +100 teams over 6 locations and, since 2007, I have built up a development site in Kyiv, Ukraine.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Letting go.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

The lack of understanding in the people and organizational dimension of IT/Tech – and the importance of it.





Katarzyna Królak-Wyszyńska

 CEO

 Innovatika

Katarzyna is a serial entrepreneur; an expert in discovering market opportunities and transforming them into successful businesses. Since 2010, she has been building businesses for corporations, business angels and Innovatika. She masters setting strategic directions and combining three dimensions: business, technology, and design. Over the last 30 years, Katarzyna has led projects for organizations such as Visa, Millennium, Bonduelle, Danone, MTV, Sony Music, Wedel, Veolia, Accor Hotels, and KLER etc.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

Technology is crucial for business growth and efficiency. It streamlines operations, enhances customer experience, expands reach, and fosters improved communication, to mention just a few advantages. From automation to data analysis, tech empowers informed decisions, innovation, and a competitive edge in today's dynamic market landscape.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I take pride in the escalating value of the businesses I am working with, achieved through a harmonious integration of focusing on customer success, impactful and sustainability initiatives, as well as tangible, quantifiable business outcomes.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

The presence of professionals and talented individuals seems like the key to success. But it is not. Providing favorable conditions and nurturing your team may lead you to believe you're tapping into their full potential. But this is not enough. The pivotal virtue of people that I've discovered is the power of mindset. This little thing makes a huge difference. You cannot train the mindset. Building a team consisting of individuals with the right mindset isn't a straightforward endeavor.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

A significant revelation dawned on me when I encountered individuals deeply passionate about their work, yet foregoing the critical step of validating their concepts and initial prototypes within the market. This underscored the importance of aligning enthusiasm with market realities for sustainable success.



Pamela Krzypkowska

 Deputy Director, Innovation and Technology

 Ministry of Digital Affairs

Pamela, the Deputy Director at the Ministry of Digital Affairs, spearheads Poland's responsible digitalization in the AI and emerging technology era. Formerly, she excelled as an AI Cloud Solution Architect at Microsoft, driving flagship projects for Enterprise clients in Poland. Her expertise encompasses MLOps, ML model development, and working with generative models. Additionally, she shares her knowledge as a lecturer at Koźmiński University and Warsaw University of Technology.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

There is nothing more exciting than being on the cutting edge of something new – and this is where I wanted to be, and where technology came into my life. I have always been thrilled by the idea of AI, both for what it can do to help society and on a metaphysical level; is it possible to create a real artificial mind? I view technology as a means with which we can do so much more for everyone – and this is one of the most important missions in my life.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

As an AI Architect at Microsoft, I had numerous opportunities to work on exceptional projects in the field, making it challenging to select one. However, I take immense pride in co-creating an MLOps strategy for a significant Polish FSI company. This endeavor greatly enhanced the team's efficiency in handling data while ensuring security, governance, and transparency. Additionally, project processes play a vital role as they act as the fuel propelling AI engines to operate at full capacity.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

This might appear small, but for all those people starting to manage others, beware of micromanagement. When you are an individual contributor, you know your tasks, and you know you have to do them. Learn to delegate wisely and trust your colleagues – they know what they do best. Also, learn to help people be better at their job instead of doing their job for them.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

I was surprised by the sheer size and power of technology. While I knew it had significant capabilities, I wasn't fully aware of its pervasive impact on all aspects of daily life. The realization that technology is omnipresent, often hidden from plain sight, reinforces the need for more equity and governance in its use. Ensuring equal access to technology for all and raising awareness among technology creators about the potential biases lurking in seemingly "neutral" data becomes imperative.





Agnieszka Kukałowicz

 CEO & Founder

 Qtravel.ai

Agnieszka is a flesh and blood IT specialist. Since 2000, she has been passionate about computer systems administration and building complex IT systems. She is a fan of Linux systems and a computer Science graduate from the Gdańsk University of Technology. In 2010, as a co-founder of Qtravel.pl, she implemented the first full-text travel search engine on the Polish market. Currently, as CEO of Qtravel.ai, she is creating a dedicated platform for the B2B travel market- a travel search as a service based on an AI algorithm.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I have always been interested in science; mathematics, physics and computer science. That's why I chose to study computer science. During my studies, I started working in one of the first Internet portals in Poland (during the dotcom bubble). At that time, I already knew that working in IT and creating new websites, building and administering complex IT infrastructure was something for me.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I think that my greatest achievement has been to anticipate technological trends such as the growing interest in artificial intelligence, including communication interfaces in natural language - which is what we do at Qtravel.ai. As early as 2015 I thought that the tourism industry needed dedicated AI tools and I spent several years building R&D teams, obtaining R&D grants from the EU, and as a result I can say that today we are one of the few IT companies in tourism that develops AI tools for travel.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Being the CEO of an IT company (startup) means facing challenges and difficult situations all the time. In recent years, the COVID-19 pandemic that collapsed the travel market was an extremely difficult experience for my company operating in the tourism industry. Running a business and developing IT services based on artificial intelligence in such uncertain conditions was very stressful for me.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

I started working in the IT industry a long time ago. The first thing that was noticeable at that time was the lack of women ;-). The second was that, specializing in IT infrastructure administration, I had to prove my skills and knowledge much more so than men.



Małgorzata Kusyk

 Founder

 AgilePMO Małgorzata Kusyk

Małgorzata is a project and programme management expert and Agile Coach with 20+ years of experience in managing global projects and programmes across multiple industries specialising in transformation. She is the founder of AgilePMO, a Kozminski Executive Business School Director, PMI Poland Chapter President 2014-2016, mentor, business trainer and worldwide speaker. Małgorzata is also the creator of innovative business solutions and training programmes; the founder of Transition Manager Academy and co-founder of the Agile Leadership Academy.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

By coincidence. I joined Ericsson to build the first mobile network in Poland in the late 90s. At the beginning I was a team member until the time I found my first project and fell in love with project management. Since then, I have been involved in tech projects working across multiple industries.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

The fact that we have built an agile team where everyone trusts each other, is open, courageous and takes responsibility for a common goal. I'm also proud of doing what I love and creating a business on my own terms, in line with my values. Also that I am consistent and authentic in everything I do, which gives me inner strength and peace of mind.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

One of the recruitments for an important role, which negatively affected our liquidity. What would I have done differently? First, I would not have put all the responsibility on the recruiter, and would have checked certain competencies during the interview – such as the learning agility that is key to the specifics of our business, or an openness to experience. Second, I would have made a quicker decision for us to part ways.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

The fact that great young women struggle to have equal opportunities. This surprised me when I started, and even more so now that not much has changed.



Ewa Lacombe

 Vice President of Sales, Strategic Client Director

 RITS Robotics, RITS Professional Services

Ewa graduated from the Warsaw University of Technology with an MSc in electronics and at the University of Economics and Humanities in Warsaw with an MA in clinical psychology. She also graduated in MBA studies in the field of International Finance and International Marketing at the Skarbek University of Management and International Finance. Ewa has held and holds the position of a member of the Management Board in several large IT companies. Her passions are new technologies, robotics and automation.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

The constant development of new technologies and my passion for learning about technological innovations, together with a great deal of support from my (male dominated) work environment, allowed me to develop in this area. At the beginning of my professional career, when I was working as a designer of electronic medical equipment, it was never a problem for me to ask questions all the time and my friendly colleagues answered with a lot of patience.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

1. Participation in building software for large commercial clients and government agencies.
2. Constant development
3. Working in the IT environment despite a lack of an IT education

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

1. A lot of learning to keep up with rapid technological development, so that I know about new IT solutions and am able to talk to my employees on the same or similar level, as they often had better knowledge than me.
2. Environmental challenges (competition from young people)
3. Building a stable and motivated team, with a high fluctuation of IT employees

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

My surprise is that even in the absence of an education in IT, a career here is possible, especially when one has a friendly and helpful environment, and I had one ... a male environment which was willing to help me so that I could enter this fascinating world and be able to talk as an equal.



Monika Laskowska-Kac

 Head of Product (Growth)

 AirHelp



For the last 15 years, Monika has been working for the biggest Polish companies in their respective areas such as pracuj.pl and wakacje.pl. Currently she is the Head of Product (Growth) at AirHelp; the world's largest Air Passenger Rights Experts. Her focus is on building products and their strategies based on data and trends. Presently, Monika is managing an international team and responsible for building the Compensation product in Europe, Brazil and USA. She is also a University lecturer and mum of 2 :)

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

During my psychology studies, I started working in the HR field and began recruiting IT specialists. As I delved deeper into this field, my interest grew. I was assigned my first task: to recruit a person responsible for the usability of websites (this was 15 years ago when the term UX wasn't known yet), and this marked the beginning of a significant change for me. I decided to focus on Advertising Psychology rather than clinical psychology.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I think I'm most proud of being able to be the mom of two small kids and have a great, inspiring job. I have achieved a lot with KPIs and projects, but I believe being a good mom and a good leader is a big challenge. It's hard work sometimes, but also an incredibly rewarding experience in both personal and professional worlds.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

It wasn't just one situation. As leaders we need to be aware that we can either inspire people or bring them down. It's a big responsibility. I always choose the first option – I want to foster the growth and development of my team members and inspire them. I don't only focus on tasks and KPIs.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

I must be honest; what was a big surprise was that very often I was the only woman in the meeting, especially at the beginning of my career. Currently, it's a lot better in this area, but in those days, it was the norm. That's why I want to use my experience to help and empower other women who also could be struggling through their career.



Karolina Latos

 COO & CPO

 FreshMail & Vercom



For nearly a decade, Karolina has been a member of the FreshMail team, where she has held various positions. Since 2016, Karolina has been involved in HR and process building functions. Since January 2022, she has been serving as the COO. Additionally, as FreshMail is a part of the Vercom group, Karolina, in her role as CPO, also supports leaders and their teams in other group projects. For her, working with people is all about conversation and action. Karolina looks for solutions that allow teams to work more productively.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I have been committed to building a transparent, agile organizational culture for many years. The IT environment was one of the first to start consciously optimizing and implementing its processes, nurturing communication, and fostering a culture of feedback. In addition I have always been fascinated by advancements in technology and the impact they have on our daily lives. The fast-paced and dynamic nature of the tech industry excites me, and I enjoy being part of an innovative field that is constantly evolving

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

This is something that has changed significantly over the past few years. However, just five years ago, I often encountered organizations where product actions were completely separated from marketing and sales efforts. These teams hardly communicated with each other and lacked shared goals. The IT team didn't understand customer needs, resulting in products that weren't customer-focused and didn't meet their business needs. I'm very pleased to see that this is changing.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

In the past year, I have been leading the organization through one of the biggest changes in its history. Financial results and the team's motivation and happiness levels are indicative of a successful transformation process. I am immensely delighted that, together with the leaders, we managed to build an organization that boasts an excellent organizational culture and remarkable effectiveness. Currently, I am sharing these experiences with other projects within the group.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

Remember, change in this industry is a daily occurrence :) Of course, I don't mean chaos, as I'm a fan of productivity and well-functioning processes. However, looking at recent years, there were many decisions that had to be made in a very short time. What was certainly very helpful was data and the ability to utilize it. So, if something can be measured, let's measure it and see how this data affects our business. Then, operating in such a turbulent environment becomes a bit easier.



Ilona Leoniewska

 Chief Revenue Officer

 Escola

CRO at Escola S.A. Group, which develops mobile and web applications. Ilona is also a co-founder of Meetinga, a mobile application dedicated to events such as conferences or trade fairs. She was involved from the beginning in the development of wellms.io – the first headless LMS which could be a game changer in online education. She is a graduate of the Warsaw School of Economics and University of Warsaw. At the University of Economics and Human Sciences in Warsaw, she co-taught the Management in IT course.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I've chosen the new technologies industry because I wanted to be part of a fast-changing and innovative environment, where each project is different, and each client has different needs and goals. This is both the challenge and beauty of this industry. Personally I love playing computer games, but that wasn't the reason. I think ;)

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

My greatest personal achievement is that I developed within myself the ability to face any problem and not give up. Even if I never did something before, I'll try knowing the risk. I think that without such a skill it is hard to move forward. Such an ability helps you to manage the variety of problems that can happen in such a diverse environment as IT. The better you do that – the better for your career.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

The most challenging professional situation for me was to pass on my responsibilities and position when I went on maternity leave. It was tough for a very active, hard-working person like me to stop and face the moment where somebody else would be doing my job. In such a situation it was crucial to avoid conflicts and leave my team some space. Each hard situation with a client can be solved (sometimes with more, and sometimes with less stress), but this was for me the biggest challenge recently.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

I knew that the IT industry is very diverse and fast-changing, but I didn't expect that it would be so much fun and exciting starting every project. This variety will never let you get bored.



Katarzyna Leszczyńska-Bohdan

 Founder

 Kalebo



Katarzyna is an Executive & Business Coach, a psychologist in tech and communication, and a business strategist. She works with founders and leaders to help them achieve their goals regardless of changing business conditions or intense emotions. Over the last ten years, she has supported companies in boosting revenue, employees, and client loyalty through strategic support. Since 2015 she has been focusing on the IT industry. Katarzyna is the ITBM lecturer at AGH in Krakow and a motorcycle enthusiast after hours.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

Ever since my time in university, I've been captivated by self-development and possibilities created by technology. The IT industry demands continuous learning and development, so it was natural for me to try, even if I don't have a tech background. I had started from work on establishing marketing strategies for tech companies and switched to closer collaboration with businesses a bit later. Now I'm focusing on IT from a psychological angle.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

As an example, a coaching and transformation program for founders and leaders. I am delighted to see my clients achieve remarkable progress in their personal and professional lives while maintaining a harmonious balance. It is uplifting to see their dedication and hard work achieve their goals. I am excited to continue this journey and celebrate many more milestones with my clients.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

I organized a five-day online hackathon within 72 hours at the very beginning of the pandemic. I had to manage about 1,300 participants from 11 time zones. Surprisingly, this task was more straightforward than realizing the roles of manager and leader are not synonymous. The most significant challenge was learning how to balance the interests of various groups while still achieving business objectives. Understanding and incorporating those lessons was the toughest so far.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

It is often said that people in the IT industry do not like showing their emotions and consider them unnecessary. Well, I'm glad that's not true



Patrycja Leszek-Królikowska

 Business Unit Director, UX/UI & Customer Analysis Behaviour

 Ailleron

Patrycja is a director of the Business Unit and she leads the UXLab responsible for the UX/UI & Customer Analysis Behaviour for clients from the financial sector. As a certified moderator of Design Sprint, Patrycja is an enthusiast of Design Thinking. She has over 14 years of experience in the IT industry in providing solutions for various financial institutions and banks around the world. To successfully merge business and creative thinking, she tries to clear her mind by taking part in ultra mountain trail runs.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I have always been interested in and focused on complex and tough things. Whenever someone said that something was impossible, I wanted to achieve it. I studied at the Warsaw School of Economics and the idea of working in the IT industry seemed to be crazy. Yet here I am. Everything started with a summer internship in a well-known IT Company in Krakow where I wanted to spend a beautiful and productive holiday. In the end I stayed for longer; over 14 years.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Regarding my greatest professional achievements, the first one is related to collaboration with clients from the banking, fintech, and leasing industries. I was able to convince and engage them to use modern design thinking approaches for software development. The second achievement is my great team which was more than doubled during the pandemic and whose designs are appreciated in many countries and prestigious contests. The third achievement has been gaining customers and their's trust around the world.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

I became a manager during the pandemic. The biggest challenge was to build a mature team that is well-integrated and in which all the teammates trust each other in every matter. I am very happy that I was able to achieve it during such a difficult period of time. My team consists of wonderful, creative, passionate, and fully engaged people. I am proud to have such a great team.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

The possibility to create user experiences for the IT products surrounding me and therefore impact the present and the future.



Katarzyna Leściorz



Chapter Lead Engineer



ING Hubs Poland



Katarzyna is a facilitative leader, human relationships enthusiast, seeker of opportunities, and a woman of action. She's been working in the IT industry for 15 years, managing teams of operators, administrators, engineers, and developers. Katarzyna strongly believes in the human factor as a key success of each and every team. That is why she builds highly effective, ambitious and innovative units.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I always knew that I wanted to work for large, global companies which I admire and whose vision I identify with. I have chosen a combination of the IT and banking sectors, truly believing that these two branches are the most complementary services in a rapidly growing industry, giving me a huge chance to evolve and gain valuable experience.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

There's not one single thing I can mention. I am proud of each and every team I managed to build, who succeeded in any field or achieved the strategic goals they aimed for. I am proud of any potential I was able to trigger while supporting employees in their development. There is nothing more rewarding than seeing people spread their wings and grow, doing incredible things that inspire others around.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Starting my managerial position in a team of experienced, mature IT Administrators. The most challenging thing was to build authority and respect despite my lack of an IT background. Trust, commitment and faith in people's good will paid off.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

In all my years of professional experience I have never seen such dynamic progress anywhere else. Constant change is something that defines the IT industry. After all these years I would rather be worried if we were to slow down to achieve a comfy level of balance.





Monika Lichota-Cywińska

 [QA Deployment Alignment Lead] Senior Test Service Manager

 PwC Poland

As a Senior Manager in PwC Poland, she strives for innovation and technology development with sustainable quality embedded in SDLC process not only in testing activities. Her main responsibility is providing E2E testing activities for Global Business Operations Systems and building quality in related processes for the whole SDLC. Crucial to this role is building relationships and working together with our customers as well as supporting her team in their life & work integration whilst being strongly focused on their talents.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

My passion for technology and quality. I was genuinely interested in technology and its potential to create positive change in the world. I have had a natural curiosity about how things work, enjoy problem solving, and find the ever-evolving nature of technology exciting. Working in technology allows individuals to contribute to cutting-edge advancements, develop innovative solutions, and address global challenges.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Co-Founder of the WarsawQA project (2015) developed in partnership with Maciej: These are quality assurance related events happening in Warsaw that have left a mark on our testing community. They have proved a great way to engage in conversations and knowledge sharing on such topics of interest with fellow enthusiasts. We support mentoring, knowledge sharing in QA/Testing, leadership, productivity & wellbeing. We strongly support the student community.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Proving the usefulness of a public project which had been closed down due to a political decision. With a strategic & quality approach and a focus on data-driven arguments, it was possible to present a compelling case for reconsidering the project. This required determination, resilience, and a commitment to driving positive change.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

The realm of technology and IT may give the impression of embodying freedom, global progress, open-source tools, diversity & inclusion, where competencies, connections, and collaborations matter. However, beneath this exterior, hierarchical systems, lengthy approval procedures, and invisible barriers to advancement (such as glass ceilings) persist.



Agnieszka Łozowicka

 Head of Business Analysis

 Objectivity



Agnieszka is the Head of a Business Analysis Department. During her whole career she was focused on helping to find the best solutions for challenging problems. She took part in numerous projects where her main interest was to deliver value and build working relationships with clients. She believes that knowledge is most useful when shared. She is a mentor for professionals at different stages of their professional development and a conference speaker.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I choose the new technologies industry as it is a very energetic and demanding environment where the only constant thing is change. It keeps me alive and encourages me to learn new things, ways and perspectives daily. I also appreciate the fact that, in the new technology industry, the 'sky is the limit' when it comes to creating solutions. Because of that I am proud that I have the opportunity to develop new products and services that improve our lives, enhance productivity, and solve complex problems.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Showing that a passionate person without a technical background can enter the IT world. I am proud that starting from a junior position with little experience in business analysis and little knowledge in IT, I became Head of the Business Analysis Department and now manage more than 50 professionals. I believe that other outstanding achievements are still waiting for me.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

As a manager, I faced my most challenging situation when I found myself leading a team of individuals who were once my superiors. The transition from being managed to becoming their leader was an intimidating experience, but it also presented an opportunity for personal and professional growth.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

I was surprised by the people surrounding me. On one hand, highly skilled and open-minded technical experts. And on the other hand people without a technical background that had found a place in the IT world. All of them are passionate, creative, persistent and curious. I was also positively surprised by the courage to share failures and successes in order to learn from each other.



Karolina Łukaszewska

 Head of SEO

 TENSE Group Poland

Karolina is the Head of the SEO Department at TENSE Group Poland - a digital marketing agency, which is part of the international publishing company of Bauer Media Group. With 12-years of experience, Karolina is responsible for developing Digital activities both in Poland and worldwide. She is a graduate of the University of Economics and the University of Technology in Poznan. Currently, she manages the SEO, Content Marketing and Web development teams.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

Studying Computer Science and Econometrics prepared me to find a job in an industry that combines management and IT. As a fresh graduate, I took up a position as a Project Manager. I had to quickly assimilate new knowledge, deeply understand the company and its processes, as well as collaborate with every department. My development year after year progressed at a rapid pace and allowed me to re-focus on a new area - SEO (Search Engine Optimization).

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

The successes of our clients are our successes. For years, we have been among the finalists and winners of the Global Search Awards and European Search Awards for the campaigns we conduct for our clients. The SEO department, which I lead, helps companies grow every day. Being a manager for these specialists is my greatest motivator. Watching the Directors, Managers and Leaders who I collaborate with, I feel proud of how they develop and what they achieve as professionals in their field.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

The process of integrating and optimizing the work of a 200-person team. The reorganization aims to optimize work, eliminate wastage of resources, develop talents, improve the quality of service delivery and, above all, increase the value delivered to clients. The project carries risks and requires the implementation of technological, organizational, and competency-related changes simultaneously, and further structural work and updates must be carried out efficiently.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

Contrary to the stereotypes IT is not a male-only industry. It is not a female-only industry either. It's a place for specialists who, regardless of gender, value pioneering solutions, are not afraid to take risks, and enjoy a dynamic environment. We have access to the solutions and technology, and I'm delighted that we use them to build strong brands. You also need to be thick-skinned, as working in Google's environment requires changes to work standards, which is a very motivating challenge.



Małgorzata Łuszkiewicz

 Delivery Executive

 Capgemini



Małgorzata is an energetic & efficient Delivery Executive with more than 20 years of experience in various areas like IT, finance and consulting. Last year, her key focus was on trends in IT and the business space to better develop client needs. Professional experience gathered through all the years has helped Małgorzata to develop and gather skills which strengthen her effectiveness. What is her approach? The following quote describes it best: "Life begins at the end of your comfort zone" Neal Donald Walsch.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

Globally there is a need and openness to follow new directions, solutions and technologies which mirrors my professional desire to learn new things. This approach always helps to be on the top of a dynamic and changing environment.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

In my opinion everyone has their own scale as to what they consider a professional achievement. For me, successful, effective collaboration with my team and treating my clients as partners are the most important in the long-term. My goal as Delivery Executive is to create a space where we together can cooperate, learn from challenging cases and each other, have satisfaction and fun.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

There have been a few challenging cases, some of them connected to team management, some of them to delivery. I think in general all problems come from a lack of mutual understanding, or not listening carefully to what others are trying to say... so the lack of effective communication is often a kind of root cause but knowing this fact helps a lot to solve every difficult situation. And every challenge is always a valuable lesson for us and the organization.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

The friendly, open, honest and communicative environment surprised me in an incredibly positive way. That is why I love to work in the IT industry. Opportunity to be close to new technologies, learn and use them is another valuable aspect, which makes this area very attractive for everyone.



Sylwia Machnik-Kochan

 VP Sales EMEA

 HTC Corporation



Sylwia is an experienced manager with over 20 years of sales expertise in industries such as FMCG, pharmaceuticals and new technologies. She has been leading sales at HTC Corporation for more than 10 years, and currently holds the position of Vice President of Sales in EMEA. Sylwia has been assisting companies in comprehending and effectively utilizing VR and Metaverse technology, tailoring it to their individual business needs.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I'm a law school graduate, but I love working with people and knew my true calling was sales. When I came to tech, I immediately felt I'm home. Since then, I've been a part of a real business revolution happening every day. Being at the heart of change is so satisfying. This fast growing, diverse and dynamic environment gives me lots of opportunities and fills my need for constant personal and professional development. It's partly due to HTC VIVE that empowers women to go beyond the cliches.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I work in the emerging technology industry. We are innovators and always move forward, pushing boundaries. It's exciting but also very demanding. Introducing the first VIVE VR headsets, the first scalable VR solutions for business, as well as the first large-scale implementation of the Metaverse project, VIVERSE in the EMEA region could be easily considered as my greatest achievements. But the one I believe is the most important is having an amazing team and partner network, with which I have worked for years now.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

I'm VP of Sales in the EMEA region and I consider multicultural leadership and networking as one of the biggest challenges. Our employees and Clients, who are the heart of our company, come from very different regions and have diverse cultural backgrounds. You need to be very mindful of that. Also, since the pandemic, lots of companies have faced constant crises, experiencing new and overwhelming challenges. Some of which can be solved thanks to advanced technologies like VR, for example.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

Work dynamics – fast pace, variety of actions, product life cycle, and the constant creation of completely new products – this is what surprised me most at the beginning. The chips I was selling in my first job are still on the market, the packaging has only slightly changed. At HTC VIVE, I started by selling phones, later on we also introduced VR headsets and finally offered one of the first, fully immersive, customized Metaverse solutions for companies; the VIVERSE complete ecosystem.





Alina Magowska

 Director, Experience Design & Insights (UX)

 Allegro Mall Group

For over a decade Alina has been leading and managing Design/UX research teams. Using research and data she brings together Technology, Business, and Design. It is all to ensure that every product or service gives users the best and most memorable experience. Alina has a background in cognitive psychology and earned an MBA that gives her valuable business acumen. She teaches how to use knowledge to facilitate business decision-making and decrease cognitive overload.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

To ingrain the human touch into technology, develop products and services in response to people's needs. The tech community's innovative, open, honest, and relaxed culture provides an ideal setting to explore possible ways of enriching human experiences through technology.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

It has been truly fulfilling to contribute to the growth of one of the pioneering e-commerce companies in CEE, attracting exceptional talent to join Allegro, and making a meaningful impact on how customers access everything they need through online shopping. Changing the shopping behavior of the majority of Poles and extending this influence to other countries, making pragmatic shopping effortless, transforming pleasurable shopping into an attractive and engaging experience – this sounds great!

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Challenging situations revolve around people – it's crucial for me to approach each individual uniquely, but as a director I must also consider the entire team and organization. Striking a balance between these two aspects, particularly during the scaling of new processes, is always demanding.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

As my work became closely intertwined with technology and we began collaborating, I came to realize that seemingly straightforward elements in a project can be challenging to implement. That's why the indispensable key lies in the close cooperation between design, tech and business.



Monika Małachowska

 Chief Project Officer

 Escola

Monika is a project manager with 8 years of experience in IT, previously having worked as a manager in the cultural industry. In addition, as a sports psychologist, she helps teams and individual players improve their sports achievements and overall satisfaction with functioning in sport and life. Privately, Monika has been training kendo (Japanese fencing, for almost 10 years.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

The IT industry gives me the opportunity to constantly learn and work on different topics, and I am a person who does not like to be bored. I really like working with people and creating teams and although it seems a long way from sport, running a project successfully uses almost the same tools as working with a team focused on sports success.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Managing a team in such a way that everyone can spread their wings. I have a management style in which I believe that the most important thing is to draw on your strengths and be open to others. I try to give my employees some framework in which they should move, but do not impose ready-made solutions, thanks to which they can show creativity, autonomy and sometimes also learn from their own mistakes.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Every day is a challenge in which you must try not to lose your vigilance and anticipate or prevent problems and crises. In my opinion, the moment we decide that everything is great and that we can let go as there is nothing to improve, this is the moment when we stop developing. This approach is very demanding, because we are lazy by nature, and this is a problem which we often neglect, having to treat various other types of company issues.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

On the one hand, the number of things I had to learn, on the other, that I can draw so much from my previous professional experience.



Katarzyna Matecka

 Head of Internal Products

 SunRoof



Katarzyna is an IT executive with over 14 years of experience in the tech industry. She is a Certified Scrum Product Owner and Agile Project Manager with a strong foundation in PRINCE2. Previously Head of Product at iTaxi (ride-hailing app) and Pergamin (e-signature), Katarzyna is currently Head of Internal Products at SunRoof; a solar energy company, and in charge of the development and implementation of internal technology solutions. She is a WTM Google Ambassador with a mission to share knowledge to encourage women to join the tech world.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I joined the tech world as a result of my passion for technology and my early experiences as a gamer. From a young age, I immersed myself in gaming, fascinated by the intricacies of technology and its limitless possibilities. Throughout my life I have witnessed the transformative power of technology and its ability to shape industries and improve lives. However, I also recognized the gender disparity within the tech industry and the underrepresentation of women. This motivated me to break barriers.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

What is both challenging, but also rewarding when achieved is to not only create products that are solving business or users problems but are also inclusive and accessible. I am proud of these products where I achieved this balance.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

The most challenging task was (and is) to efficiently transform the startup into a global company, ensuring that technology helps to grow, that users understand it, and that we are still within budget.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

Stereotypes. Not only about women in technology but about all of us here. Stereotypical thinking about tech people is harmful; it can be entirely misunderstood how great the work can be and that joining the tech world can and should be for passion, not just for money.



Ewa Marchewka

 Productization Director

 Nokia



Ewa Marchewka is currently working as a Productization Director (Second Line Manager) at Nokia. After gaining a university degree in Telecommunication at AGH UST (Poland), she started her journey in the world of testing. During the 18 years of her working life, Ewa has gained experience as a Tester, Test Manager, Test Architect, Project Manager, Release Delivery Manager and finally Director. She enjoys giving speeches and sharing her knowledge in testing conferences all around the world.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

Since a very early age I was interested in technical topics, mathematics and physics, and later on in computer science. So it was an easy step choosing telecommunications as the field I wanted to develop in.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Growing a team from 70 to almost 180 employees over the course of a few years.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Taking care of an employee with mental health issues. Making sure he/she has all the support he/she may need, as well as understanding that there are limits to what I can and should do to make him/her better.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

The amount of corporate jargon :) It was really difficult to understand co-workers during my first few weeks.



Katarzyna Marchocka

 Founder & CEO

 Geeks Like Us Foundation



Technology, strategy and curiosity drive Katarzyna's professional life. She has 20 years of experience in 4 different industries, with 10 years in IT. She is one of the Strong Women in IT, and in the top 100 women in IT according to independent reports by Come Creation Group and Vesbee, as well as an honorary member of the Software Development Association of Poland, a juror in the Forbes 25 Under 25 competition in Poland, a mentor at the Wroclaw University of Economics, and a frequent conference or podcast guest.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I didn't understand it but I wanted to. Intuition told me that the world would change in its company and curiosity led me to take up the challenge despite not having a degree from a technical university.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I have delivered 100% of my projects – without exception. But most of all, I have fulfilled both a parenting and a professional life. Balancing these roles gives me enormous satisfaction.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

The hardest part has been joining a 100% male management team and developing effective communication with them. This was not easy. So was combining a challenging working life with single parenthood. Time became the biggest currency and the hardest test of my planning and communication skills.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

The lack of female role models was stressful, but the men, with their openness and their patience towards the questions I asked, gave me the courage and power to act. Thanks to this support I got to where I am – I was lucky. That's why I decided to share it professionally and help others at the often difficult start of a new career path. Especially in an industry where nothing is permanent.



Julia Markiewicz

 COO

 Silent Eight

Julia Markiewicz is the co-founder and Chief Operating Officer of Silent Eight – a creator of artificial intelligence-powered solutions to combat money laundering and terrorist financing. Her style in management is the primary catalyst behind Silent Eight's heavy investment in research and development, and the simultaneous drive to grow the team and geographical footprint.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I chose the new technologies industry because I wanted to make a real impact on important issues like money laundering and human and animal trafficking. Technology offers incredible tools and possibilities, allowing me to fulfill my calling and create innovative solutions to combat these challenges. It's my way of contributing to a better world and making a meaningful difference in society.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

As a Co-founder and Chief Operating Officer at Silent Eight, my greatest professional achievement is driving the company's growth from inception to a globally recognized regtech firm. Creating innovative AI-based compliance models for leading financial institutions, empowering them to combat financial crime, has been immensely fulfilling and impactful in shaping the industry's landscape.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

The most challenging professional situation I faced after taking a managerial position was navigating a complex internal conflict within my team. Balancing individual perspectives, addressing misunderstandings, and fostering a cohesive work environment required open communication, active listening, and mediating discussions to find a resolution.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

When I started working in the IT industry, what surprised me the most was the incredible pace of technological advancements. New breakthroughs and innovations emerged rapidly, constantly reshaping the landscape. It made staying up-to-date a thrilling challenge, but also highlighted the immense potential for creating transformative solutions.



Karolina Marzantowicz

 CEO

 Modica PSA



Karolina is a serial innovator and tech enthusiast. She - co-founded 2 startups: A4BEE & Modica (Best Biotech Startup in Central Europe). after spending 15 years with IBM in global tech leadership roles . She is passionate about biotech and pharma, and holds 2 patents. She is also an expert in AI, Quantum, IoT. A visionary in identifying growth opportunities worldwide and empowering others for success.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

On my first job understood very quickly the potential of data digitization. I wanted to create impactful solutions and as my career progressed I felt the joy of solving complex challenges and bringing innovative ideas to life. It fueled my passion. I had found my true calling.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Running a startup, self funded and profitable since year one, now with 130 people – is my greatest achievement. On top of that, A4BEE is recognized as a values driven company, putting people & values first. Starting a new venture; the biotech research and product company Modica, which became the best Central Europe startup after one year of operation, is my second greatest achievement. These achievements give me a similar sense of professional fulfillment.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

I faced exciting but tough challenges while running a fast growing startup. Our team and revenue doubled year-to-year. Yet half of our employees were new each year, making stability a struggle. I introduced constant changes in how we were organized and operated. Navigating change while preserving core values tested my leadership. With adaptability and resilience, we succeeded, staying true to who we are. What I'm proud of the most of the fundamentals of processes and operations to help A4BEE grow with flexibility and without disruption.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

There are 2 things which surprised me at the beginning of my career: 1st - The need for continuous learning and adaptation in order to stay up-to-date with the latest trends.. Also, the flexibility when compared to other roles: I could work in flexible hours, focusing on outcomes not on the hours spent in an office. Having kids, I cannot imagine working without the possibility of doing it remotely.



Teresa Matoga

 Head of IT Governance and Asset management Bureau

 BNP PARIBAS Poland



Teresa is a graduate of the Cracow University of Economics and completed her MBA at Oxford Brookes University. She is a Leader and enthusiast of changes with almost 30 years of experience in banking in the fields of marketing, business, IT project teams and IT Governance. Teresa is currently responsible for building broadly understood IT Governance in the Area of New Technologies and Cybersecurity, through which she inspires and guides IT managers.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

IT as a choice was the result of curiosity and wanting to learn something new at the bank. Previously, I had worked on the business side and understood that IT is part of the organization that supports business in delivering value on time. I wanted to see what it was like from the other side.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

My greatest achievements are related to the teams I managed. And our greatest success was when we managed to get things done. During my time in IT, these were projects during and after mergers. When I was in business, I often participated in difficult negotiations with clients and success for me was always when we achieved "win/win" while maintaining a similar capitalization of the letter "w".

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

The first managerial position I took was related to people management and getting to know a new field of knowledge. At first it took a lot of effort on my part. However, I managed it and thanks to that it was easier for me to trust myself that in future roles I would manage despite the lack of 100 percent knowledge and experience. It gave me the courage to take on new challenges.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

I was surprised how my colleagues from IT initially approached me in the same way as people from business. They were very open and came to me with ideas on how to build solutions for clients. So I became convinced that ideas for customer value come not only from business but also from IT and other places of the organization. It was a strong basis for building an agile mindset in our organization. The second thing is that IT is like any other thing in life – it can be learned.





Katarzyna Mazur

 Vice President & Director of Software for the Bailiff Market

 Currenda

Katarzyna is a long-time Product Manager, and as Vice President she's responsible for the IT solutions strategy area and its coordination, budget and process oversight. Katarzyna leads key initiatives based on LegalTech aimed at the digitization of justice. She believes that data is the most essential resource today, and is the foundation for created technologies and humanity. Katarzyna is also a certified practitioner of agile software development (SCRUM, Agile, SAFe) and a student of IT project management.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

Because it is not the future, but already the present. Technology and the whole IT world in general is developing so rapidly that you have to be one step ahead of it, not just try to keep up with new technologies. This opens up new opportunities but also new horizons and helps you make strategic decisions on what direction to take your organization and your employees' careers.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Leading projects in the area of justice, which through digitalization increased the effectiveness of proceedings by court bailiffs (for example integration with the tax system: e-Urząd Skarbowy).

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Taking over and defining value in products that generated losses and were subject to technological debt, despite their young age. It was a complicated process, due to the need to redefine the product vision, address stakeholder needs, change the system architecture of the solution, but also convince the new development teams that the products would now work.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

I think the fact that seemingly simple applications in user use are actually occupied by very complicated, multi-step and time-consuming analysis and production processes.



Julia Medvid

 Senior API Partner Manager, CEE-CIS & Nordics

 Vonage



Julia is a highly accomplished IT professional with around 15 years of experience in Partnerships and Sales, with extensive expertise in executing omnichannel projects enhancing customer experiences. She excels in advising on strategies that add substantial value for partners within international ecosystems, managing partners across 30+ countries, including the CEE, CIS, and Nordics regions. She graduated from Kozminski University with a degree in Brand Management and Marketing Strategies.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

Choosing the new technologies industry offers excitement, constant innovation, and impactful contributions to society. It provides growth opportunities, challenges, and the chance to stay updated with cutting-edge trends, making it an attractive career choice for those passionate about innovation and personal development such as I am.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

In my current role as a Senior Partner Manager, orchestrating successful omnichannels for well known brands, with the projects having been delivered with local Partners to the global market (USA, LATAM), and having delivered exceptional customer experiences, have been my greatest achievements. My strategic vision and dedication led to significant business growth and solidified my position as a key player in driving digital transformation for businesses worldwide.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Navigating a team conflict with differing opinions and personalities was the most challenging situation; as the team consisted of sales, operational, and tech people. I fostered open communication, facilitated constructive discussions, and implemented team-building activities to build trust and cohesion. Addressing individual concerns and promoting a collaborative environment eventually led to a successful resolution and improved team dynamics.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

When I started working in the IT industry, I was most surprised by the incredible pace of technological advancements. The speed at which new innovations emerge and reshape the landscape was astonishing. It highlighted the constant need to adapt, learn, and stay up-to-date with the latest trends, making the industry an ever-evolving and dynamic environment.



Natalia Melniciuc

 IT Mediation Manager

 Orange

Natalia is an IT Manager leading Mediation Competence Center in Orange Moldova, which provides telecom software services for the Orange Group. During her 17+ years of experience in the IT sector, she has had the opportunity to work in different roles, both technical and managerial, in the international environment. Being human-driven and result-oriented, Natalia is passionate about creating strong teams, building long-term trustful relations with the clients and driving IT transformations.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I was curious about technology from the start. My love of math was considerably higher than that of any humanitarian sciences at school. Choosing the IT faculty in my times meant choosing something unpopular and not trendy, especially among the girls. However, I was inspired by the example of my mother who was amongst the first women at the start of the IT era in my country. Everyday I saw her passion for IT software, and her addiction to continuous self-development.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I am proud of my evolution, my ability to reinvent myself even being in the same role, and my insistent desire to develop strategically the team I am working with. Together with a dedicated team, I have been able to explore new opportunities, contribute to the extension of the vision, attract new roles and offer new experiences to our beloved clients. The greatest compliment for me has always been the feedback I have received from teammates that appreciate the culture of openness, knowledge sharing and collaboration.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

The most challenging situation was having to change my perspective from expert to manager, and understand that from now I am a person who connects great IT experts and helps them to co-create together. I had to accept multiple points of view, find my proper style which resulted as servant leadership and leading by context not by control. I had to learn that the form is as important as the content and know how to calibrate my message for different levels in order to be successful.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

I was surprised to see how male-oriented the industry was. It is improving now but I can still be the only woman in a room discussing an IT project. I have seen the bias related to a perception of women's ability in IT. In my early career, I found IT work so much fun that I was not reacting to such prejudices, I was just doing what I loved. It is great to see more girls choosing IT. Another surprise was to find out many people thought IT is boring, while it is full of creativity.



Jowita Michalska

 CEO

 Digital University



Jowita's mission is to arm Poles with essential digital competencies. She founded Digital University, an organization that cooperates with leading global universities to educate leaders in the field of new technologies. She is also the Digital EU Ambassador and the Polish ambassador of Singularity Group, a global impact organization.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I joined the new technologies industry driven by a thirst for knowledge in this growing field of business and life. My mission extended beyond personal growth, aspiring to empower others, especially women, with insights into new tech. This motivation led me to establish the Digital University (first a foundation, then also a for-profit organization), inviting global tech experts to Poland. Together, we learn from the best, fostering a culture of learning and innovation.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

My greatest professional achievement is establishing Digital University, which after almost a decade continues to thrive in such a demanding market. It has expanded, aiding tens of thousands of children, adults, and marginalized women in grasping technology and entering the field after years of existence. Equally significant is my role as both the founder and head of an educational organization, a single parent to a teenager, and an educator in the field of new tech for thousands of women.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

There hasn't been a single managerial situation that has been particularly difficult for me. Being a leader is a 24/7 job to support a team of individuals, understanding them collectively and individually, opening up to listening and comprehending issues, and above all, extracting their talents and fostering collaboration; motivating them to achieve incredible goals. And then, knowing how to rest and celebrate the successes!

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

Despite talking about it and making efforts over years, the IT world remains predominantly male-dominated. Simultaneously, it stands as one of the most powerful business domains, offering the greatest opportunities for growth and career advancement.



Malwina Michalska

 Lead Product Owner

 IPF Digital

Malwina is a Lead Product Owner at IPF Digital, a division of International Personal Finance plc, and manages multiple development teams to provide innovative digital financial solutions to customers across seven European markets, Mexico, and Australia. Throughout her career, Malwina has made gender equality her top priority. Today she serves as mentor to young women and actively participates in initiatives promoting workplace inclusivity in tech.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I chose the new technologies industry because of my passion for innovation and desire to be at the forefront of technological advancements. I am drawn to the dynamic nature of software development, recognizing the potential it holds for driving positive change. Additionally, I saw the new technologies industry as an opportunity to make a difference in promoting women in the workplace, as the only female product owner in my company I aim to build inclusive teams and promote other women.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

My overall journey in IPF, starting from the bottom and working my way up. I started my career as a call center agent, setting up the Polish division of IPF Digital from its initial stages. Through hard work I soon became a Manager for the Debt Recovery Center and Back Office, then to move on as Lead Product Owner in IT. I am most proud of experiences gained during this journey and relationships built.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

The most challenging situation for me was transitioning into a leadership role without prior experience. I faced leading a team who possessed a higher level of tech knowledge than I did, so I felt intimidated and doubted my ability to earn their respect and effectively lead. However, I soon realized that effective leadership goes beyond technical expertise. By being open and honest and transparent, I built credibility and established myself as a leader who values the expertise of others.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

Building software is a very dynamic process where priorities constantly change. Starting as a Product Owner in 2019 I was ready to conquer 2020 – but then Covid happened and priorities changed overnight. This taught me the importance of adaptability, authenticity, and continuous growth as a leader. It also reinforced the significance of fostering a supportive and inclusive work environment where everyone's skills and contributions are valued.



Laura Michaud

 Co-founder & CTO

 xpath.global



Laura Michaud is the CTO of xpath.global, a Global Mobility SaaS-enabled marketplace ecosystem. Her career in software development spans more than 17 years, working both locally and overseas with large companies. She co-founded an App Development agency, running a team that serves international markets. In 2018, she joined xpath.global as CTO and is focused on bringing the best technology to the Global Mobility industry.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I've always been passionate about solving problems and finding new, different, better solutions. The tech industry is always evolving and there are constant new challenges to tackle. Furthermore, I think that technology, and more specifically AI, will have a critical impact across almost all industries, and I am excited about working in an area that is constantly seeing progress and in which I can leave my mark.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

While I was working at my agency, a client with very extended consultancy experience came with a project. They had an idea with a lot of potential, but they didn't know how to translate it into a software product. Together with my team, we managed to create and launch an MVP and a product plan. It went so well that it helped the company grow by an order of magnitude.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

I had just joined a company, when we had to deliver a very complex project in a very short timeline and build a new team for it. It was a very challenging moment, as we had to gather the team, allow them some learning time, and start working fast. I had to take a 360 degree role, being a product owner, a team leader and a project manager at the same time. It really helped that we had a very clear way of communicating and setting expectations and needs.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

When I started I was the first woman developer in my team. The diversity rate was very low in tech, but what surprised me was that it was higher than other European or American markets. I think that things have started to change, but up to a point. We see more women work in tech, but not that many in upper management positions yet.





Kinga Mierczyńska

 Validation Team Manager

 Billennium

As an IT professional with a humanities background, Kinga blends her passion for social sciences with technology. Besides her tech role, Kinga organizes travel adventures, discovered baking during the pandemic, and finds peace in outdoor hikes. Books inspire and enrich her life.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I opted for the IT industry due to its transformative potential through technology. Nonetheless, I strongly emphasize preserving our humanity and independence amidst this digital revolution. While tech can enrich our lives, I advocate for setting boundaries to safeguard personal connections. I pledge to use advancements responsibly, cherishing our unique identity as humans. Striking this balance ensures we benefit from technology while staying true to ourselves.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

My top achievement is building a Global Team of 50+ validators, a niche profession specific to the IT side of life science. It involved careful planning, networking, and deep industry knowledge. Recruiting from diverse locations required navigating cultural differences, time zones, and regulations. Efficient communication and project management led to high-quality validation services, exceeding client expectations and earning trust. Leading this Team fuels my passion for excellence.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

After taking a managerial position, one of the most challenging professional situations I faced was leading my team through company significant changes, and as a manager, I had to navigate the uncertainties and address the concerns of my team members. To tackle this challenge, I adopted an open communication approach. Overcoming this challenge reinforced my belief in the importance of transparent leadership, adaptability, and fostering a positive team culture during times of change.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

When I began my journey in the IT industry, I was fascinated by the rapid advancements and constant evolution of technology. Along the way, I have had the unique opportunity to witness and actively participate in a major transformation – the shift from Computerized System Validation to Computerized System Assurance. It requires critical thinking and adaptability. Embracing new methodologies and technologies, we explore automation of processes and adopt risk-based approaches in software development.



Liliana Mihart

 Director, Digital Products

 Sustainalytics/Morningstar



As a senior IT leader, Liliana brings over a decade of experience in leading global teams at the intersection of technology and ESG. She is skilled in digital product management, large-scale transformation projects, cross-functional orchestration and change management. Throughout her career, Liliana has built a reputation for delivering excellence by harnessing the power of inclusive leadership. She is also a mentor for women in tech/leadership, executive coach and DEI ambassador.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I started out in the ESG industry and soon enough I was exploring how technology can help streamline business processes and improve data quality. I then took up the exciting challenge of building a data services unit and overseeing the company's data delivery to clients. As my role evolved into leadership, I spearheaded global digital transformation initiatives and scaled our teams, later taking over the company's Automated Data Acquisition Platform.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Being selected for the company's impact award, for building bridges and leading change; improving the delivery experience for over 500 clients; nurturing the leadership potential in those around me and empowering them through coaching and mentoring; launching my own coaching platform: www.habitofgrowth.com.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

There were so many! Yet it all starts with building a great team, able to acknowledge and lean into each other's unique talents, and create an inclusive culture where every person feels seen, heard and valued. If you've taken care of this as a leader, then no challenge is insurmountable.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

It's a fantastic world, where the only constant is change and learning never stops!





Lisa Milani

 Global Vice President

 Beamery

Lisa Milani is an accomplished Global Strategic Sales Leader with expertise in driving revenue growth. With extensive experience in sales strategy, executive relationship-building, and business development, she has excelled at Beamery, Oracle, and SAP. As a mentor, Lisa is passionate about motivating others to succeed. With an MBA in Information Management, she has a strong foundation to lead in the dynamic field of technology sales.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I chose the new technologies industry because it aligns with my passion for technology which I've held since childhood. With my education in technology and extensive experience in sales leadership, I am driven to excel and make a meaningful impact in this dynamic and innovative field.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

My greatest professional achievement is successfully navigating the challenges of being a single mom while putting myself and my two daughters through college. This allowed me to pursue my goal of becoming an impactful leader in the tech industry and set an example for my children.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

The most challenging professional situation I faced after taking a managerial position was aligning individuals with a shared mindset to work together and seamlessly towards a common goal. It required effective communication, fostering collaboration, and creating a cohesive team dynamic.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

What surprised me the most when I started working in the IT industry was the tight-knit nature of the community. I quickly realized that everyone seemed to know everyone else, creating a network of connections that fostered collaboration and knowledge sharing. It's a welcoming and interconnected industry that values relationships and information sharing.



Margaux Miller

 Global Director of Community

 Toptal

Margaux Miller is a global community-builder and a champion for women in tech. She founded the Manitoba Canada Women in Tech group, is an Advisory Board Member for the WomenTech Global Network, and is an advocate for digital literacy and accessibility. She is the Global Director of Community at Toptal, connecting a fully remote network of top tech talent around the world through virtual programming, events, pro bono work, and more.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

The tech industry is a dynamic and ever-evolving space that pushes boundaries and drives innovation. One of the main reasons I gravitated towards it is its power to create positive change. Technology has the potential to solve real-world problems, enhance lives, and bridge gaps. Moreover, the industry has an incredible community of diverse and talented individuals who constantly inspire and challenge each other. As someone who believes in the strength of communities, this has remained inspiring.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I am proud of the impact I've had on building and supporting communities of women in tech. Together with a supportive community, I was able to create the Manitoba Women in Tech group, and later to help grow and advise the WomenTech Global Network. Witnessing the positive impact of these efforts on the lives of countless women in tech has been truly rewarding. It's incredibly fulfilling to see talented women embrace their potential, overcome obstacles, and forge successful careers.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Taking on a managerial position in a global company and managing staff in six different countries presented a unique set of challenges. A major obstacle was navigating cultural differences and ensuring effective communication and collaboration across borders. Different cultural norms, communication styles, and work practices can lead to misunderstandings and inefficiencies. Addressing these challenges requires flexibility, open-mindedness, transparent communication, and virtual team building too!

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

There is a stereotype that tech professionals are solitary geniuses who spend their days buried in lines of code, disconnected from the world. When you step into the tech industry, you realize that's far from the truth. On the contrary, I found a diverse group of people who were not only exceptionally talented but incredibly collaborative and sociable. I also saw how building a strong community helps to bridge the gap between individuals and foster an environment of learning and mutual support.



Karolina Mitraszewska

 Chief Operating Officer

 Nest Bank

Karolina is a leader with 25 years of experience, a PhD in Economics, a lecturer, a mentor, a volunteer, the mum of two, and a wife. She graduated from Warsaw School of Economics, International Business at Copenhagen University, and Psychodietetics at the University of Social Sciences and Humanities. She completed the ICAN Leadership Program, CIA, PMI, and Six Sigma Black Belt certifications. Currently she leads IT, Cyber, Data, Digital Transformation, Operations, Logistics, and the PMO Division.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

In my professional career, I gained a unique insight into the mobile, finance & banking sectors (my career started in Polska Telefonia Cyfrowa in 1998). Digitalization, IoT, AI, breaking barriers and providing quality associated with implementing innovations became my passion. Working in technology allows me to do that. For many years I was responsible for auditing public companies and evaluating value created for stakeholders. Technology was always an important value driver & quality enabler.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

It's you who decides how strongly you motivate and inspire people. My greatest achievement is consciously shaping leaders. Many of my colleagues continue their careers in various industries in top positions. The fact that working with me has been meaningful to them, their words of appreciation, and their gratitude are my tremendous accomplishments. In moments of low energy, I reach for the expressions of gratitude they've shared. Undoubtedly, I owe them no less than they owe me.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Circumstances require continuous learning & development from both the leader and the team. What works today might not work tomorrow. Crucial to this is the exchange of experiences, the ability to analyze, challenge the status quo, listen, and the ability to unlearn.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

The pace at which the world is accelerating is significant; progress and changes are happening faster than ever. Technology has transformed the world, and us, to the extent that we can increasingly perceive and analyze phenomena occurring around us. As we overcome successive limitations and accelerate from the place that previously seemed a boundary, it becomes difficult to remain unaffected and uncurious about what the next limit could be.





Kinga Moska

 ERP Programme Manager Europe and Africa

 Inchcape

Kinga is a highly accomplished IT and business management professional with a diverse educational background and extensive experience. As a Senior IT Manager, she has excelled in leading teams, managing projects, and optimising business processes. Kinga's expertise in ERP and Business Intelligence systems has consistently delivered exceptional results. With strong communication skills and organisational abilities, she is a true role model for aspiring women in the IT industry.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I was driven by a passion for innovation and cutting-edge technology. I have always wanted to be a 'connector' between the business and technical IT worlds, seeing the huge potential of technology in revolutionising industries. Alongside this, my relentless pursuit of knowledge and ability to adapt quickly to the evolving technology landscape has led me to love creating forward-thinking solutions and enabling organisations to thrive in the digital age. I enjoy shaping the future of industries.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

My greatest achievement was successfully growing and managing a team from 8 to 25 people, while supervising in parallel over 25 project team members. It was a great learning experience to successfully scale operations. At the same time, I built and maintained strong relationships with strategic clients while coordinating the work of a diverse group. I am very proud of the growth of my team and the fact that they are now working at higher levels and roles.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

One of my notable achievements was my involvement in the RISE with SAP program, where my customer was among the first in Europe to participate. This groundbreaking initiative aimed to transform businesses by combining the power of SAP's innovative technologies and services. As a Service Delivery Manager, I played a crucial role in coordinating and leading the SAP team. My expertise and consulting guidance were instrumental in preparing for migration and ensuring a seamless transition to the new SAP.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

I was fortunate to work in international companies from the very beginning, and one aspect that POSITIVELY surprised me was the great diversity in the field. IT brings together professionals from different backgrounds, cultures and perspectives, fostering an environment of inclusion and innovation. This provides a variety of experiences and skill sets, recognising that different viewpoints contribute to more robust solutions. I enjoy seeing the diverse talent and collaborative spirit in the IT community.



Agata Mroczkowska

 Chief of Staff & Head of Commercial Strategy & PMI

 Booksy

Agata is an expert in growth and strategy in the SaaS & Marketplace space. Recently included in the Forbes 30 under 30 list, she is one of the founding members (first hires) at Booksy, supporting it from 0 - 25M users. SGH graduate and Ex-Rocket Internet. Over the last 10 years, Agata has lived in 5 countries and worked with 40+ nationalities, fueled by a passion for people and organizational behavior. She likes to connect different perspectives when creating strategies. Agata is a mentor, guest speaker and advisor to startups in expansion and scaling.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

It embraced me. As a 2-year SGH student, I was determined to gain my first business experience hands-on and the tech industry was the only one which appreciated pure enthusiasm, eagerness to learn, open mindedness and ambition; all of which I could offer. Today I view technology as the force that disrupts the old and moves the world forward. Our daily lives and opportunities have diverged greatly over the last decade, and in a major way we owe this to technology. The ability to impact the world this way is what fuels me.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

To become one of the fastest growing marketplaces in the world, Booksy had to transform itself several times in the last 8 years. This rapid growth also mirrored my journey - I lived in 4 different countries, built several teams, managed multi-million budgets, moved both up- and side-ways in roles... Each time the challenges posed demanded that I take my skills, mental game and maturity to the next level. To me, my greatest achievement is not a specific milestone but this journey of holistic growth alongside Booksy.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

In Jan 2020, I moved to Madrid to build Booksy in Spain. Composing a winning team is pivotal for me, so I focused on finding my key hires. Finally, a team of exceptional people full of passion for Booksy left stable jobs and joined me. A month in, COVID hit... I had to let all of them go. Despite my best efforts to soften the blow, seeing their financial strain and their hearts breaking was painful. Eventually, I brought each of them back. And our success in Spain shows they were truly my dream team.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

The realization that an opinion and input of someone completely new - to the company, industry or even to professional life - can be valued as much as that of a senior manager or a professional with years of experience. This is different to what we are traditionally taught, and different to the more traditional industries, where rather hierarchical structures, fixed processes, and less openness to shake up the status quo are commonplace. In tech, often the opposite is valued and you are virtually expected to do so.



Monika Mroczkowska

 Consulting Director, Delivery

 Netguru



Monika is an experienced IT professional with 8 years in the industry. As a Consulting Director at a leading digital consultancy, her forte lies in managing people and building strong, cohesive teams. Monika believes that a successful team is the backbone of any project, and she takes immense pride in nurturing talent, fostering collaboration, and driving collective success. Monika manages a diverse portfolio of projects across industries. One of the core pillars of her work is ensuring high-quality delivery.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I chose to work in the IT industry because I was fascinated by innovation and eager for new challenges. I saw great potential in this sector to shape the future, and I wanted to be a part of it, contributing my skills and learning along the way.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I'd say that my team's success is my success. The greatest achievements are the ones where my team excels and grows.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Facing a company's restructuring due to market changes, I had to adapt quickly to a new environment and take on a different role. Transitioning the team into this reality meant creating new roles and setting expectations while addressing tension and resistance to change. Some roles ceased to exist, and new teams were formed.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

What surprised me (in a positive way) was the very collaborative and supportive environment where professionals from various backgrounds come together to tackle challenges.





Agnieszka Myśliwczyk

 CEO & Co-Founder

 CandidFuture

Agnieszka is the mom of two daughters, a wife and a fulfilled woman. She is the Founder of an IT community: OSOBOWOŚCI IT. Her extensive network and influential personal brand in the IT industry exemplify her commitment to building valuable relationships. Agnieszka addresses IT recruitment needs and enhances brand presence as an attractive employer in Poland. As the CEO of CandidFuture, an IT recruitment agency, she specializes in top-level hiring. She is also a Co-Founder of CandidAcademy. She is shaping the future of IT Recruiters.!

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I made the calculated decision to join the tech industry in 2017. I knew the potential of the industry, and my intuition and heart felt so too. I had only one supporter - my husband. Many people advised me not to do it but I ignored them. A brilliant opportunity came up one day, and I didn't hesitate to join the sales team in an IT services company. Even though I was 36 at that point and was afraid of changing jobs, I did it! I strongly believed I would be successful!

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

The creation of a non-profit Polish initiative dedicated to women, who wanted to change their professional life and start working as programmers. The project ensured a safe environment in which new female programmers could believe in their own abilities. They are given the right to make mistakes, and they are allowed to ask questions and exchange ideas. The success is in the numbers: 14 out of 19 are working today in IT. All this happened in 2019-2020 and opened a great new door for me.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

The most stressful and challenging situation is firing people, even more so when forced to do so by the market and the condition of my business. It is important for me to take care of my employees' emotions, the reaction of the team, the correctness of communication, all the formal aspects, and to help and support them effectively. As this was something new and significant for me, I decided to ask for the help of an experienced professional.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

The small number of women in the industry. On the other hand though, lots of opportunities and benefits to be won. When I started asking male programmers and branch managers of tech companies (in 2019): - "Do you need more female programmers in your team?" The answer was always - "Yes". Women themselves are interested in the IT industry. What is missing is a sincere invitation - an opening from both sides. Also womens' courage and confidence.





Katarzyna Nowak-Rybka

 Head of Business Analysis

 Objectivity

Katarzyna is a goal-oriented team leader and delivery professional driving growth and development in various business areas. She has a solid background in cooperation between stakeholders at various organisational levels and is skilled in creating solutions based on clients' needs and challenges. Katarzyna has a Ph.D. in Computer Science and is a student of The Hass School of Business and TU Dresden. She is currently Head of Business Analysis at Objectivity.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I loved math and was curious about how things work, so when choosing my education path, I decided upon Wrocław University of Science and Technology Faculty of Electronics in the Field of Computer Science. Programming was not my thing, but I quickly discovered that you can solve problems by combining tech knowledge and soft skills and so found my role in the industry.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Developing and implementing a solid strategy for the department, including rapid growth, succession, talent management, competency model, and implementing critical changes in areas such as recruitment, onboarding and an organised leadership structure, whilst dealing with a shift to multiple locations. Successfully leading and expanding current capabilities and investing in new ones supporting a crucial part of the business. Building a personal brand and career without sacrificing my personal life

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

From a managerial position, the most challenging times were the pandemic and the company's quick growth. With the team I led, we needed to change our working methods, introduce and learn new tools, change processes and face challenges to keeping the company culture in a remote working environment. This time was also hard from a leader's point of view as the economic situation and layoffs in IT also impacted my unit.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

That would be the pace of changes and disruptions. As a student, I remember we had paper books, heavy PCs and SMS messages to communicate with fellow students. When I was a lecturer, my students had laptops and tablets. They were able to exchange information via the first social networks, they used paperless solutions and platforms full of information. It seems that it's getting part of the "new normal". What is a trend at the beginning of the year becomes an applied solution towards the end of it.



Magdalena Nowicka

 CIO

 BNP Paribas Bank Poland



Magdalena is a senior technology executive with vast experience in the financial services industry. For more than 20 years she has been connected with ING, where, as CEO, she built the technology company ING Tech Poland and developed it into a fully operational global IT center. Magdalena joined Nordea in 2017 as Head of IT Poland. Since 2021, she is the CIO and Vice President of the Management Board of BNP Paribas Polska where Magdalena is responsible for the New Technologies and Cybersecurity areas and runs the digital transformation of the bank.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

The Technology industry gives opportunities for continuous growth.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

It is always connected to people; how to find the best way to support and develop a highly skilled and motivated team.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Reskilling activities for employees, where we could see tangible examples of people who started a professional career in IT having a formal education in different sectors.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

Having observed so many dynamic changes, some things are constant: the need for good communication skills and dialogue.



Renata Okrajni

 COO

 PushPushGo



Renata is COO at PushPushGo, having been associated with the new technologies market for five years. She is interested in the event industry, in which she has experience as an event manager. Privately Renata is a mother of two and a fan of bicycle trips and long walks with her dog Luna.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

It was actually a coincidence; coming back from the UK and maternity leave I was looking for a new path for myself and applied for a Customer Support role at PushPushGo, but in the end they offered me an administrative role. I went for it and with each task and growth of the company, I learnt more and more about new technologies.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Becoming a COO, having started at the company in an administration role; taking care of paperwork and invoicing clients. Proving every step of the way that PushPushGo founders could trust me and that I could help them to achieve their goals. Since the company was sold to Vercom Group, there have been a lot of changes and extended cooperation with other companies in the group.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

I was promoted to Operations Manager and at that time PushPushGo was going to become a part of Vercom Group, so there were a lot of changes in the company and a lot of new areas of the business I was expected to take care of. It was also during the pandemic, so I had to make sure the team and the company were performing as well as possible in unknown times.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

Constant scaling, looking for new opportunities, a lot of changes and adjusting to the market, and optimizations of the process so we can focus on newer tasks. Very open-minded people, eager for success.





Teresa Olszewska

 CEO

 Gavdi Poland

Teresa is a specialist in IT solutions for human capital management. She has always been connected with HR, first in HR departments, then as a consultant and HR Product Manager at SAP Poland. Since 2006 she has been working as the CEO of Gavdi Poland. Gavdi is the largest team in Poland providing customers with IT solutions for human capital management based on SAP technology and their own IP products.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I like structures, processes, transparency and clear rules. I like to observe the relationship between cause and effect. All these elements can be found in information systems. You have objects, tables, relationships, and data. And the better you use them when designing processes and tools, the better results clients can archive. It is very exciting to see the results of projects in customer organizations. This is what makes working in the IT industry so rewarding.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Gavdi Poland. I am proud of the team, our spirit, our approach to working both with clients and internally. That we have fun doing what we do, that our work is based on trust, goal orientation, drive for continuous development and friendly support when needed. Every person in the team is important, because every person has a role to play in the day-to-day creation and development of Gavdi and in helping our clients transform their HR businesses.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Tough question. I don't want to share too much, because it was about working with the client. I can only say that at that time I began to doubt my competences and wondered if maybe I was no longer suitable for this job. This was a very important lesson about how to stay calm under pressure and make decisions that move the project forward staying focused on its objectives. In the end the client's project was completed, and – as you can see – I'm still working in the IT industry.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

First of all, it was a surprise to me that I got into the IT industry at all. My university education is in German philology, and although I was also good at science in high school, I didn't think that there would be a place for me in IT. Today, of course, this does not surprise me, because to be good in the IT industry, you need many other competences than just technical or analytical ones.





Marta Osiak

 President

 EIP Dynamics

Marta is a specialist in effective and efficient management. She looks at the development of the organization in a holistic way, integrating various business functions. She graduated from the Warsaw University of Technology. Marta started her career as a Dynamics NAV service consultant at EIP Dynamics. As the president of EIP Dynamics and RedTulip Software - a company belonging to the EIP Dynamics Group - she is responsible for all activities and the implementation of new projects

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I was inspired to work in the new technologies industry through workshops during my studies. In addition, I wanted to be close not to theory, but to a company as a live, working organism. The IT market is constantly changing, it is extremely dynamic and probably for all IT leaders the biggest challenge is to keep up with these changes. As a leader "I keep my finger on the pulse", I like it. I constantly observe the market. Technologically, the biggest challenges now for my organization are AI and low-code.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

When I joined the organization, it was a team of 5 people working for 1 client in the parent company's department, and which only provided a little accounting support and slightly more development support to this client. 7 years ago the organization had no division of competences nor a structure nor work tools. Today, I employ over 130 people in 3 technology companies forming the EIP Dynamics Group and I constantly follow the development of our largest clients by providing them with new solutions.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

The most difficult, but at the same time something that gave great satisfaction was creating the company's management structures from scratch, as well as organizing the processes, creating the first procedures and not losing sight of the HUMAN. I have created a company where people do not leave, they work with us for many years and we celebrate these anniversaries. And at the same time, I try to create a place for inspiration and further development.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

The biggest surprise in the IT sector was the small number of women, especially in managerial and operational positions. Also the strong and rapid development of Artificial intelligence (AI) and its entry into daily work and life.



Magdalena Ostoja-Chyżyńska

 Founder & CEO

 UX GIRL



UX GIRL design studio's Founder and CEO, Magdalena specialises in complex user interfaces for Finance, Enterprise, Science, and Data Visualisation. With 12 years of design experience, a Master's degree in Computer Science, and a background as a former Teaching Assistant in Human Computer Interaction, she also founded the Human Tech Art community and serves on the board of the WarsawJS foundation.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

As a child, my fascination with technology knew no bounds. I dabbled in web development and graphic design, losing track of time while engrossed in creative pursuits on the computer. Naturally, when the time came for my graduate and master studies, there was no doubt – Computer Science was my calling. During those years, I stumbled upon Human Computer Interaction, a discovery that further deepened my passion for the path I'm on today.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

My greatest professional achievement is building and leading a talented team of designers at UX GIRL. Creating a nurturing environment where creativity thrives, and where we meet our goals every day, fills me with great pride and satisfaction. Together, we collaborate to help our clients reach their goals, making UX GIRL a truly rewarding accomplishment in my career.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

During the challenging pandemic time, I observed a decline in the motivation and well-being of my team. Determined to fix it, I brainstormed various ideas and promptly implemented them while consistently checking in on the team's emotional state. Over time, their well-being did improve, but I learned a valuable lesson that sometimes these changes require patience and understanding. There isn't always a quick fix that can be hastily applied.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

What truly surprised me was the scarcity of women in tech teams. Back in high school, we began with girls being a third of our specialised IT class. As we progressed to university, the number of women dwindled further, and it was disheartening to find nearly none in the teams I worked with. However, I'm delighted to see a positive shift happening now. The environment is gradually becoming more balanced and inclusive, and this change is fostering a more creative and vibrant tech industry.



Joanna Ostrowska-Szajnfeld

 IT Strategy, Architecture & Governance Managing Director

 BNP Paribas Bank Poland

Joanna is a senior leader in technology, having ~20 years of professional experience in consulting, banking & insurance. She perceives herself as a strategic thinker with a getting-things-done approach and an appetite for innovation. Currently, at BNP Paribas Bank Polska, Joanna leads IT Strategy, Architecture and Governance Line, where she focuses on scaling technology to increase operational efficiency and boost customer experience. Joanna graduated from Warsaw University, and is an alumnus of AMP at IESE Business School.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I believe technology industry has a lot to offer, and for me the most appealing are:

- It is a super-fast changing environment, which ensures lifelong learning and building future-proof competences,
- It has a great & direct impact on business; being either its booster or main limitation.
- Moreover, it is very logical and easily understandable, not only for scientific minds.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I had the opportunity to lead numerous interesting and challenging initiatives and transformations. Business delivery gives satisfaction, but it does not last long. What really builds my pride & joy is to see how individual people grow and bloom, overcoming their fears, starting to believe in themselves, and generating their inner motivation and purpose. And my satisfaction is at its greatest when people whom I accompanied on their development paths are being recognized by the organization and the industry.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

I would like to share my personal challenge, as it might be comforting or motivating for others. Once I decided to take a more radical step in my career – I changed a Polish financial group for an international one (a cultural pivot) and switched from insurance to banking refocusing from operations to IT. When I landed in the new role I learnt that my new boss was about to leave organization and that my team was likely to disappear as the result of a just begun restructuring. That was a starting point to remember!

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

I realized that the technology community is far more open and diverse than I initially thought, encompassing people with different backgrounds (you don't need to be an engineer to work in IT) and talents (both scientific and artistic minds are welcomed). And of course software development is only one of the numerous interesting roles you can find here.





Małgorzata Pająk



Board Member



Polcode

After graduating from psychology, Małgorzata started as a recruiter in the pharmaceutical industry and gradually learned HR and payroll. She came to Polcode when the management decided that the company was big enough to have an HR department and she built it up. Małgorzata doubled the team and demonstrated her organisational and leadership skills, and as a result, was invited to join the board. In the meantime, she completed her postgraduate studies in Employment Law, HR Business Partnerships, and IT Project Management.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

When I started working at Polcode, I was more interested in HR than IT. I knew that every new trend in people management comes from the new technology industry. If it works, it's then transferred to other sectors. I was attracted by the opportunity to implement work management solutions which were considered cutting-edge by other industries. After all, who had heard of 100% remote working before the pandemic?

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I doubled the size of the Polcode team within a year. I did this in 2010, at a time when almost everyone was working in offices. Less than half of the people I hired worked remotely. For the rest, going to the office to work was the norm, so it became necessary to set up an additional workspace for Polcode. That's how I became involved in organising new offices in Kraków and Łódź. It's amazing how much a company can grow in 12 months.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

I am driven by learning and acquiring new competencies. It's quite a challenge for someone with such a passion to delegate their responsibilities, but that's exactly what I faced when I became a board member. I was well aware that the People Operations Professionals who were taking over were qualified and competent. Nevertheless, I'd rather work overtime than say goodbye to my daily tasks. In hindsight, I can only say thank you to the People Operations Team for their understanding and support.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

From my first weeks working with the developers, I was impressed by their openness to sharing knowledge and their willingness to solve problems together. When I was promoted, I found that a collaborative attitude characterises the entire IT industry. People managing different companies are willing to share experiences and support each other, there is no room for the fierce rivalry that can be experienced in other industries.



Ewa Patucha

 Delivery Manager

 GFT

Ewa started her professional journey in the field of IT as a member of the Project Management Office team. Over the years, she transitioned into various roles within Project and Portfolio Management and ultimately assumed the position of Delivery Manager. Ewa has participated in a diverse range of projects, ranging from small projects in the domain of AI to overseeing large-scale internal initiatives that brought about substantial organizational changes.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

When I transitioned from Market Research to IT twelve years ago, my motivation was not driven by a fascination with new technologies or a desire to conquer new frontiers. However, what I discovered and enjoyed was the prospect of working in an industry abundant with opportunities and which embraces change, where I could experience variety, and be unrestricted in my chosen pursuits. This, combined with the most creative and open-minded people I have ever met, convinced me that my path lay in the realm of IT.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

My greatest professional achievement was successfully leading a project with nearly 100 individuals involved, impacting more than 10k employees in 16 countries, with strict deadlines, and high-level management interest. Despite not having direct line-management authority over the team, I fostered a strong team spirit that allowed successful project delivery. One of the team members said afterwards "Ewa, you were our patient warrior – soft to the people but hard to the problems". I felt proud.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

One of the most challenging situations I faced as a manager was leading a complex project involving multiple teams with a history of poor collaboration. Motivating them to deliver their best and resolving long-standing inter-department issues proved difficult, especially as an outsider, requiring me to earn the trust of team members. The best recognition I received for my work was when I heard from the team at the end of the project: "It was great, let's do another project together!"

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

Contrary to the common stereotype of IT professionals working in isolation, I was pleasantly surprised to find that collaboration is at the core of the industry. IT projects often involve cross-functional teams, where individuals with diverse expertise come together to achieve common goals. Effective communication, teamwork, and coordination are critical for delivering successful IT solutions. Don't trust stereotypes, IT is not only about technology. It's about the TEAM as well.



Agnieszka Paradzińska

 Head of AWS Cloud Operations Business Unit

 Billennium

Agnieszka started her adventure in IT 9 years ago. Her beginnings involved supporting applications aimed at developers. For the next several years she was working as a service coordinator. Even then, she got to notice the needs related to the cloud technologies on the market. Last year, Agnieszka became the Head of AWS Cloud Operations Business Unit.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

The IT world has always been in my scope of interest. During the course of my university studies (Mathematics with a specialization in Computer Science) I was already considering my potential role in this area in the future. Currently, cloud technologies allow me to be close to a business that consciously focuses on the reliability and effectiveness of those IT solutions that can facilitate achieving its business goals.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

From the moment I started building cloud competences, I was striving to achieve a partnership with AWS. Today, looking back at those years, I am glad that I did not give up and together with the team we have achieved this important status.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

For me, business goals are always achieved thanks to the efforts of the entire team. I must admit, that the first time when I had to make a decision about employment reduction in my team and then execute it, was the hardest for me.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

The multitude of roles that are necessary to implement IT services. I think that many people are still not aware of how many different positions are needed to implement IT projects and services.



Joanna Parasiewicz

 Head of Communication & Marketing, CEE Region

 OVHcloud

Joanna has been involved in the IT industry from the beginning of her career. She conducted communication and marketing activities for brands such as Amadeus, Alcatel-Lucent, HP, Microsoft Dynamics and Symantec. Previously she was responsible for ICT promotion within EU Commission working groups. Privately, Joanna is an author and passionate about climbing and 19th century literature. A collector of life's truths, coffee flavours and unique moments which inspire people.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I've tied my career to the new technologies industry because IT is one of the few areas where we cannot say 'the job is done'. Every solution can be improved and, above all, be accessible to all. The beauty of IT is its versatility; through technology we can bridge gaps and offer innovations for health, knowledge or entertainment.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

My biggest professional achievement is one fantastic girl I was lucky enough to meet and get interested in new technologies. She discovered programming and soon found she could earn her own money and be independent. This wonderful girl has been deaf since birth and suffered from a huge complex because of it. This same girl turned out to be a brilliant mind and a fantastic programming talent.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Early in my career, I joined the oldest PR agency to learn PR. However my mentor decided to start his own business and I wanted to follow him. The owner of the agency offered me the opportunity to develop my own team and guaranteed me full independence and autonomy. It was tough because I was young and inexperienced, but I also knew that such an opportunity would not be repeated. I accepted the offer and after 5 years of a great adventure I left a spectacular team and a dozen TOP new tech clients.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

What surprised me the most about IT is that new technologies are leveling the playing field in every area, proving that: talent in IT has no gender; new technologies are removing boundaries and divisions based on where you are from; small companies are benefiting from a power previously reserved for giants (e.g. thanks to the cloud). For me – that's the magic of new technologies – they are universal.



Diana Perera

 IT Director & CTO

 Edenred Poland

Diana has been associated with the tech industry for over 10 years. She specializes in process optimization, implementing changes and project management in agile methodologies. In her current role, she is focused on digital transformation and convergence initiatives. Diana is passionate about data driven concepts and using new technologies in business development.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

There is no room for boredom in this industry. The IT sector constantly changes. It is no longer just creating websites or applications, but most of all designing and delivering complex business solutions. This requires constant mastering of new skills, as well as adaptation to changing conditions. This gives me great opportunities to expand my knowledge in many areas. The need for endless learning is compensated by the lack of routine and interesting projects.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

My greatest success is combining individuals into a collective. I could say I have a sharp eye for building teams. Regardless of the size of the project, team, budget or level of complexity – I always knew that I could count on team spirit, collaboration, commitment and mutual respect. This gives incredible comfort, but also exceptional satisfaction. There is also no greater joy for a manager than looking at the successes of people you work with and following the development of their careers.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

The biggest challenge in my managerial position was gaining trust and transforming from a manager into a real leader – it's a challenge that never ends. I try to bring employees closer together, improve the communication system, work on productivity and efficiently resolve various types of conflicts. Now I know that every manager should develop her/his own management style, taking into account her/his own competences, circumstances and the maturity of the team to act independently.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

There is a belief that in order to work in IT, you need to demonstrate a difficult and specific knowledge available only to a few people. It may be surprising that for successful work in the IT area, it is enough to think logically, know the basics of abstract mathematics, be focused on people and problem solving, and feel comfortable in changing conditions. These features combined with creativity and the desire for self-improvement can bring amazing effects.



Karolina Piotrowska

 Board Member

 Startup Academy

Karolina is a Board member, business developer, incubation manager and key project coordinator at Startup Academy. She possesses knowledge and experience in working with startups, both in coordinating support programs such as Huawei Startup Challenge, Startup Art and Startup Makopolska, as well as serving as a startup mentor. Whilst working with startups, she always emphasizes the verification of business assumptions that can determine the success or failure of a company in the market, as well as sales.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

The world of new technologies is a world of unlimited possibilities and a world where nothing is impossible. Working in this environment, a person learns something new every day and meets fascinating new people. There's no room for boredom.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Realizing projects for startups that matter. Projects in which we help startups that create new technologies which can change the world as we know it. One such project is definitely the Huawei Startup Challenge, where we recognize the most outstanding impact-driven startups. I count the successes in my work with startups as my greatest achievements, where I have helped them grow and connect with clients.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Excessive expectations from others and a lack of sufficient self-belief and confidence that I will be able to achieve something significant.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

I was most surprised by the fact that it is quite a close-knit community and everyone knows each other. For someone who was just starting out in the industry, it was fascinating on one hand, yet on the other hand, it presented a challenge to establish oneself in this world.



Dorota Piskorska

 Chief Corporate Development Officer

 ZF Polpharma



Dorota is an economics graduate from Warsaw University, and has completed programs at the London Business School and Ashridge Business School. She has 25 years of experience gained in strategic advisory (Kearney), executive search and HR consulting (Korn/Ferry, Neumann) and the pharmaceutical industry in CEE. Since 2016 Dorota has been working at Polpharma as Chief Corporate Development Officer managing the Strategic Project Office, IT & Digital, Innovation, M & A and Public Funding.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

The new technologies area is a fast paced, knowledge intensive and global industry. The potential to build value and make a difference in the business via the smart application of technology is enormous. For me the connection between technology and business and its potential was the most interesting factor that made me move to the technology industry.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

For me it is the way I built my career that led me to my current role. As CCDO I run strategic initiatives with many of them being driven by technology and innovation. Often I lead initiatives that are new to the organization and challenge the status quo. I am also very happy that I can create them while working with an open, dynamic and highly professional team.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

After so many years in managerial roles there have been many challenges. The one that is recent in my mind is sizable team reconstruction. One of the departments I am leading is the Strategic Project Office. It turned out that one of the new ventures required strong support, as a result almost the entire team of the office was transferred to this new venture. The challenge was that I had to rebuild the team while not compromising service levels. It took time and effort but at the end the task was completed.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

The biggest surprise to me was how difficult it is to build a common language between technology and business. At the beginning it looked like there were two hermetic silos. It is changing fast and the more technology saturates our business and private life, the easier communication is getting. I am still very much impressed by people that can discuss very complex technology matters in a way that everyone, even not being technology savvy, can easily understand and see the benefits for their business.



Magdalena Plewa

 Head of HR

 Jit Team

Magdalena is an HR expert and has been involved in the IT industry for over 10 years. She has vast experience in the active acquisition of IT professionals and, through flexible HR policies, retaining them in an organization. Since joining Jit Team, when the company had 40 employees, the number has grown to over 500 - its great value is the family atmosphere and individual approach to every person. Magdalena is currently managing a team of over 20 HR specialists, and building a positive candidate and employee experience.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

In the tech industry, I found the perfect fit for my interests. With a background in psychology and a love for art and creativity since childhood, I thrive in the role of HR expert in an IT company. In this dynamic field, I can implement innovative HR practices, leveraging technology to streamline processes and improve the employee experience. By cultivating a culture that encourages creativity and values diverse perspectives, I can help unleash the full potential of our talented people.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

My greatest professional achievement is building strong team structures that facilitate remarkable growth - taking a small company in Gdynia and scaling it to a thriving software house with over 500 employees. Amid this rapid expansion, I prioritized preserving the human face of IT and fostered a close-knit and supportive work culture. Today, being recognized in the Top 200 of Computerworld's ranking makes me enormously proud of our journey.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Initially, the biggest challenge was stepping into the role of manager at a relatively young age. The transition from being a co-worker to a leader required a significant change of mindset and a redefinition of my responsibilities. What made it more complex was the level of freedom I had in shaping the HR team, which was both exciting and overwhelming.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

What surprised me the most when I started working in the IT industry was the extraordinary pace of change. It was a world where experience counted in years mattered less than the actual skills and abilities of individuals. Moreover, I was amazed by the level of collaboration, agility, and innovation among diverse teams.





Anna Podkowińska-Tretyn

 Chief International Business Officer

 Everli

Anna is an active investor, mentor and fan of start-ups. She is the President of Everli Poland & Chief International Business Officer at Everli. She sits on the Supervisory Board of Mindgram, before that of Online Technologies and the Chairwoman of the Supervisory Board of IAB Polska. She was responsible for the digital transformation strategy and M&A at Burda. Earlier, Anna was at AGORA S.A. digital CRO and President of Trader.com PL. A graduate of IESE, The School of Economics at the University of Illinois. She has completed amongst others an Executive MBA and IESE AMP.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I realized how much I enjoy dynamic and not always predictable environments and new technologies are all about this. It was my personal main driver for change. After some time I also realized that being in the new tech industry you are where the world is really changing and all new trends are adopted at first, so you learn new things quickly.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

There are different ways I think about this: People – I have met and happily still keep relations with a lot of great people from very different companies and stages of my life, and I have the privilege to have seen them grow and often outgrow me. Small successes – I always try to focus on them to keep my motivation and happiness high. Independence – the privilege to choose where and with whom I work. It is very important to me to be able to decide by myself which project I will join, and with what type of team and leaders I will work.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

The longer you work the more challenging the situations you face and for sure many more will come in any professional career. So my solution is to get used to this. What is most important to me is how to solve each of these situations, always putting humans at the center, taking lessons and moving forward. Sometimes placing too much attention on the past is pointless and heavily distracts us from the now and the future,

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

The IT industry always was and is still unbalanced in terms of gender but I see a lot of positive changes in Poland and across Europe in this field, especially in recent years. More and more girls and women are joining at all levels and positions and many more role models are now visible.





Małgorzata Polińska-Fotek

 COO

 Chaos Gears

For the last 9 years Małgorzata has worked in different areas of IT (on-prem solutions, new-tech, software, cloud), gaining experience both on the technical and business sides. In her current position she is responsible for the delivery and operations areas. During the cloud migration Małgorzata focused on leading digital transformation by ensuring the transition took place on different levels of the organization and the maximization of the effects thanks to the adoption of new processes and ways of working.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

New technologies allow unlimited possibilities to influence and even change peoples' lives. Used smartly and with purpose can do a lot of good and solve significant problems. I always looked with curiosity at great ideas and new inventions, and decided that I want to be a part of it. I started to search for a place for me, and now I have the feeling that I'm doing the right thing.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I started without a technical background and over the years I've learned a lot in different areas of IT. My greatest achievement is the fact I never stopped learning or doubted. In my career I had the privilege to be a part of projects that delivered significant solutions to many people. I had the chance to learn from others and share my knowledge with them. I am most proud of building a team wanting to take responsibility and ownership, not afraid to take risks and open for knowledge sharing.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Understanding that it's not about the technology itself. The best solutions are always found by the people, for the people and in cooperation with other people. Great technology is always a result of passion, engagement, lots of mistakes and conclusions. If the team does not feel safe enough to try and succeed or FAIL, the potential will not be used in full. People are smart and always will find the optimal solution. My biggest challenge was how to create an environment that supports innovation.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

It may sound like a cliché, but when I started, a huge surprise for me was that there were only a few women in the technical teams. Very soon I noticed that the presence of a woman in a team brings more peace and harmony. This is the result of a different way of communication and collaboration, a different point of view and focus not only on the solution but also on the team. The second surprise was how fast knowledge becomes outdated and technology changes. You need to stay up to date to identify true opportunities.



Sandrine Pons

 RVP, Head of Solutions Sales & Innovation EMEA North, MidMarket Business Unit  SAP

With over 30 years of experience in pharma, retail, and tech, Sandrine managed diverse teams (sales, tech & dev, business dev, etc) before becoming, 18 years ago, a senior manager at SAP. As RVP, Head of Solutions Sales & Innovation, SAP EMEA North, she leads an award-winning team dedicated to driving customer success, innovation, and profitability. Her passion for innovation drives creative ideas, team leadership and adaptability, all of which has earned Sandrine several awards, including SAP's most prestigious employee award.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I didn't choose the new technologies industry at first, it became my passion a few years later. From the beginning I knew I wanted to get into management and leadership. So, for over 30 years I worked in various industries before I entered the tech world. Eventually, I embraced my creative identity and joined the industry to contribute to a more sustainable world where customers and companies can run better, with cutting-edge solutions, leaving a lasting positive impact.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I find immense joy in empowering others, witnessing their success and growth. Over the years, I've consciously promoted more women than men because I believe in proving that women can be exceptionally successful in this field. The tech industry may have been male dominated, but my commitment to diversity and inclusivity drives me to showcase that gender should never limit one's potential. Moreover, I take pride in my proactive approach, consistently going above and beyond expectations.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

One of the most complex situations I encountered as a manager was the need to address issues within my team related to underperformance and communication challenges. It required thoughtful restructuring to ensure everyone's success and well-being within the organization.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

Undoubtedly, what surprised me the most was the prevalence of biases and preconceptions. For example, being a French woman, I often feel the need and the pressure to justify my worth whenever I speak English in front of native or international large audiences due to my accent. Overcoming these challenges has been a constant reminder of the importance of fostering a more inclusive and understanding workplace culture.



Aleksandra Porębska-Nowak

 CEO & IT Director

 Fordata



Aleksandra is the co-founder, Board Member & IT Director at Fordata, the leading Virtual Data Room software provider in Europe. The VDR system allows secure document sharing with external parties, ensuring full control. Within the organization, she plays a pivotal role in business development and IT management, juggling between the excellence of executions and the up-to-date vision of tomorrow. Being a mother of two kids - 5 and 7, she has learnt to aim for big things but to enjoy simple delights.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

In 2009, I joined forces with university friends, all passionate about e-business. We saw the world moving towards the Internet and we were determined to be part of it. We were successful seeking funding and finally FORDATA was born. One of the milestones was a major order from Enea, a leading Polish energy company - recommendations from that project helped us to gain next clients. Our journey is marked by determination and recognition and a never-give-up attitude.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Amid the challenging startup landscape where, according to statistics, 80% fail within the first two years - FORDATA has stood strong since 2009, defying the odds. Competing with global players from Western Europe and the US, we, a team of around 30 people, are achieving remarkable outcomes. This fills me with immense pride! Also, I've heard from my co-workers that FORDATA is the best place they have ever worked in and that gives me a personal sense of accomplishment!

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

There is no ONE situation I can point to as the most challenging. Being the CEO of an IT company means I manage difficult problems every day - technical outages, fast-changing technology, employee turnover, people motivation, inflation and rising costs, global competition. Even more difficult was the time when I gave birth to my kids (now 5 and 7 years old) - I came back to work and was struggling to keep any work-life balance. My C-level women friends were then helping me to cope with the new reality.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

I was in my twenties when I started working in the IT industry and at that age the sky's the limit! It was rather our client who was surprised to see women running an IT business :) Luckily this has changed and today we can see more and more ladies joining IT forces.



Katarzyna Prokopowicz

 Board Member & Head of HR

 infoShare Academy



Katarzyna is a passionate HR professional, mentor and certified FRIS trainer, fascinated with analyzing generational differences, and with 23 years in the IT industry. The co-creator and currently a Board Member / Head of HR of the training company infoShare Academy. She specializes in comprehensive HR support for both novice and experienced programmers - Katarzyna loves talking with them and watching their careers, and is proud of each of their promotions :)

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

The beginning of my professional journey was marked by a fascination with HR topics as I was working for Wirtualna Polska (the biggest Polish horizontal portal), where the newest technological developments were at my fingertips. The latest project and hardware solutions, a huge knowledge base, inspiring and open people - all this fascinated me from the first days, so I eagerly started gathering information about the IT world. I believe that I have been successful at combining these two areas.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

- I have been in the IT industry for 23 years despite an education in the humanities and I'm quite comfortable with that :)
- I carried out the HR part of a merger between large companies from the tech & media industry
- I have spent the last few years building infoShare Academy; an IT training company which, as of today, has changed the professional lives of 5500 people
- The fact that in July 2023 I became a certified FRIS trainer

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

The greatest challenge has been the imperative of answering employee questions and making many decisions in a short time, often without having complete knowledge and data. I also consider team management to be a challenge. After all these years I understand how important it is to appreciate the diversity of characters and how essential an individual approach to each employee is. I now know that what is important to me may not be important to the employees, and that it is my role to encourage them to take action.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

The greatest surprise, which also turned out to be a major advantage, was the openness of people and the rapid development of technology. The need for continual learning, the openness to novelty, as well as being close to the creation of innovative solutions have been driving me to act and have brought me a great deal of satisfaction.



Eve Psalti

 Sr. Engineering Director

 Microsoft



Eve Psalti is 20+year tech and business leader, currently the Senior Director at Microsoft's Azure AI engineering organization responsible for scaling & commercializing artificial intelligence solutions. She was previously the Head of Strategic Platforms at Google Cloud where she worked with F500 companies helping them grow their businesses through digital transformation initiatives.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

Technology is rapidly evolving and shaping the way we work and live. Artificial intelligence is at the heart of this transformation automating and optimizing previously time-consuming and mundane operations, allowing us to be more productive and more creative. I love working with companies and individuals helping them to adopt these cutting-edge technologies.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I don't think I can identify one - I'm still learning, still evolving. I consider myself a lifelong learner; I'm curious and I love working with people to solve tough problems. I had a long career journey from Greece to the US, rising through the ranks, but it's all connected points rather than one particular highlight. Maybe my greatest achievement is yet to come...

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Managing an organization of 200+ people worldwide is challenging across many fronts: Logistically, you're working across all time zones so you're basically working round the clock. Finding a happy medium to accommodate these various teams is crucial so they don't burn out. On top of that you have people working remotely as well as locally so you need to keep a balance and an inclusive culture given the international and multi-generational profile of the teams.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

The surprising element about the IT industry is still how few women we see in top leadership positions. While organizations and companies hire women at the lower levels, when we look at the executive team, there might be one or two women usually in HR or Marketing positions. This has to change! - we are qualified, experienced and ready for the corner office. This shouldn't even be a discussion !





Katarzyna Puchalska

 Head of IT Solutions Division

 Benefit Systems

Katarzyna is a manager with broad experience in IT. She believes in the power of mentoring and is an inspiration who creates positive relationships and the space for developing successful teams. Katarzyna started her career 18 years ago as a Project Manager in one of the biggest wholesale companies worldwide. She continued as a Delivery Manager in the banking sector and then in a Consulting company. Today she is leading the internal IT solutions division responsible for CRM system lifecycles at Benefit Systems S.A.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

Since I was teenager I was fascinated in how technology can help our lives. I wondered how computers are built and how operating systems work. It was a natural step for me after matriculation to choose technical studies, learn more about technology and be a part of this industry.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

From the technology perspective it was the successful launching of an anti-fraud platform for the Polish banking sector. A solution that is helping to save millions of zlotys every year in the fight against fraudsters. From a personal perspective I consider it a great success that I'm also able to build strong long-time relationships with my current and ex- teammates.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

My first managerial position was after an internal promotion, so the most challenging aspect was building the trust of the team. I needed to convince them that I'm still the same person, that this promotion didn't change me as a human and they still can trust me even if my role and responsibility are different.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

What surprised me the most is how fast technology is changing and how much effort is needed to deliver final solutions to the market. Technology that excites us today will be replaced by new solutions that we don't yet know but we can be sure that thousands of people around the world are already working on them.



Shirsha Ray Chaudhuri

 Director, Research Engineering

 Thomson Reuters

Shirsha heads the ML Engineering team in Bangalore for Thomson Reuters Labs, where she is leading the development and deployment of well-architected solutions in AWS and other cloud platforms for ML solutions. The work drives efficiency and value for AI-driven features in Thomson Reuters products, platforms and business systems. Shirsha is interested in successful operationalizing and sustenance of AI solutions into live workloads and watching the difference it can make to the ecosystem.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

Problem-solving has been the only hobby, the only passion that has been with me since being a student until now. Technology is an enabler for better problem-solving. Advances in technology often result in better ways to doing things, resolve more challenges in workflows and ecosystems, and make a difference to society for the better.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I am often surprised by the power of persuasion, the power of words to communicate a common mission that we all need to work as a team as a common goal. It is an achievement to move a group of people in a certain direction and the impact is amazing! When this works I am really thrilled and would like to mark as a personal achievement all those moments when I was able to influence a team and achieve outcomes.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Influencing the ecosystem, influencing the platform that supports the solutions we drive, and ensuring that all pieces fit in as we build out, carries a great sense of responsibility which I bear in the desire to get things right! The outcomes are no doubt enjoyable, but the ride can sometimes be very tough in getting the pieces to fit together.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

The biggest surprise for me in the IT industry has been the discovery of how important the ability to influence one's peers is in a career journey! It is not enough to know how to work well, one must take the team along and only then are great outcomes possible.





Dorota Rymaszewska

 CEO

 hiPets

Dorota is the proud founder & CEO of the rising star of global pettech - hiPets - the best pet parent app ever! She is a sales expert turned sales and business trainer turned tech startup addict, having moved on from a career in music theatre and local TV. Dorota has also gained experience in global corporations (P&G, PZ Cussons) and consulting on 5 continents. She is the former Country Manager at Booksy Poland and the VP of Global Sales Development at Booksy.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I was bribed ;) After years in corporations and business consulting Michał from Inovo and Stefan from Booksy promised me Australia & New Zealand if I save Booksy Poland. Well I did. On that bumpy path I learned a lot and fell in love with tech startups - ended up as a founder myself. Never made it to Australia though ;)

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

hiPets. With that startup I've survived so many black swans that I am myself amazed just counting them. All of them made us work smarter, faster and yes - also eat mud and rocks - but hiPets is like no other system in the world. We actually changed the status quo. We made people's lives better. We even saved some. hiPest was awarded Best in Show Spotlight Awards at the Petcare Innovation Summits both in London and Boston and named an industry disruptor. Poland will see its new face in September. Stay tuned.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Let's see. Pandemic lockdown a month after C2C services marketplace launch (no visits = no traffic = no business). Or war in Ukraine just after collecting commitments from VCs for expansion in Hungary and Romania (yes, all of them withdrew term sheets). Or the total market shift in the pet industry caused by the pandemic puppies boom (making our monetization model impossible). Or perhaps Chat GPT made public just when we launched our USP killer feature (that could be replaced by AI in a year). Pick one ;)

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

That it's not rocket science (which frankly speaking is not that complicated at all). All you need to do is just to do it with the right people, for the right porpoise, for the right audience, and at the right time. Sounds super easy and super hard at the same time. Well, maybe it is a bit like rocket science ;) But what frankly surprises me the most is that there is still a giant gender gap - both in running tech businesses and funding them. Is it cultural? Anthropological? Societal? Hope initiatives like this will help.



Lakhitha Sabbella

 Team Leader

 Billennium



Lakhitha was born and raised in a small town in South India and likes to describe herself as a small-town girl with big dreams. One of those was to be a successful Leader and positively influence people through her actions. Lakhitha has been in the IT industry for over 10+ years and has worked across different domains/technologies/ and geographical locations. Currently, she is associated with 'Billennium' with the designation 'Team Leader'.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

My teenage self was absolutely fascinated with IT and decided to land in technology driven industries. After graduation, I bagged a job in an MNC and started my career. Since then I have not looked back - I absolutely love the work here and thrive to keep myself up to date with emerging technologies.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Many times people come back to me and say that I inspire them or that I have always been there for them when they needed me. It's an absolute pleasure to be told that people have been inspired by my actions.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

There have been a couple of them. As a manager we have to make decisions and at times, it's a question of 'right vs right'. It's extremely difficult to decide in such a scenario.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

The fact that we call each other by our first names. Goodbye to the times of referring to each other as Sir or Madam!





Anna Saczuk

 Vice CEO

 BPX

Anna is a 40 year-old mom, leading an IT company with approximately 300 global employees. She holds two Master's Degrees, has studied abroad, traveled the world extensively, and worked in various countries as an SAP consultant.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I chose the technology industry at the start and joined BPX after studies because I always enjoyed challenges. I had no idea what I was going to do, or what being in IT meant. It was more about proving to myself that I could do it.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

The most challenging situation I had to handle was finding the right balance and slowing down a bit after becoming a mother.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

My greatest professional achievement is when people approach me, saying that I am the best boss they've ever had, and that's not just during bonus time ;).

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

That the technical aspect of IT is not as difficult as building and maintaining relationships, which are crucial for success.





Katarzyna Said Nagy

 Head of Financial Crime Operations Europe

 Revolut

Katarzyna is the Head of FinCrime Ops at Revolut Bank Europe. She is a highly experienced professional driving the Bank's first line of defence against financial crime (FC). In her current role, she leads efforts to ensure Revolut remains at the forefront of FC prevention and is a driving partner in the industry-wide discussion on how financial services should tackle challenges in the area. Katarzyna's work has a key focus on customer safety and security, utilising cutting edge technology to maximise CX and assure effectiveness of ops.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

There are several reasons why fintechs are a good choice – primarily banking ones. Firstly, fintech innovations have transformed the banking sector; offering convenient and efficient financial services to individuals and businesses. With the advent of digital banking, people can access and manage their finances anytime and anywhere, eliminating the need for physical branch visits. Also, being part of fintech, we are able to have a great impact over increasing financial inclusion among the vulnerable.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I consider a core achievement to have built a strong first line of defence, skilled in financial crime prevention, at Europe Bank. This took me, working with my team, through strengthening internal control mechanisms and systems, to detecting and preventing FC with the aim of becoming a leader amongst the market players. On top of that, establishing effective collaboration with external stakeholders including law enforcement, regulators and industry.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Building a department from scratch as it involves many challenges, starting from defining its purpose and goals, to structure, recruitment and hiring. In particular, clarifying the specific role and purpose of the department within the organisation. Additionally, understanding how the department will achieve its goals and support the company's growth. It involves a thorough understanding of the company's needs, identifying gaps and opportunities, thus resulting in an effective contribution to the company's success.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

The speed of changes in the fintech industry is remarkable and often quite rapid. Fintech startups are known for their agility, innovative mindset, and ability to adapt quickly to changing market dynamics. In addition, customers' expectations in financial services have a really high bar. Customers look for a seamless digital experience, personalised services, and convenient access to financial products. Hence, my team and Revolut strives to always be a step ahead of clients' expectations.





Wioletta Sajnóg

 DataCenter Office Manager

 OVHcloud DataCenter Ożarów

Wioletta is a proactive, resourceful Operations Manager who not only has substantial administrative and HR experience at a senior level, but consistently strives to achieve the goal and maximize opportunities. She is an expert at continuously improving procedures and always looking for ways to make things more efficient. Wioletta is highly motivated, technologically adept and very knowledgeable in all aspects of management.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I started my IT adventure over 5 years ago. OVHcloud had just opened a new Data Center in Poland and they were looking for someone who can run the office, local HR and finance. This was a new position and I had to start everything from scratch. That's why it was so interesting for me; I could use my rich professional experience to help develop a new business and take care of the people on site.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

After many years of professional experience gained in many industries, I know that I can adapt in every situation and am not afraid to make bold decisions and take on new challenges.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

The challenging situations we meet make us more professional and develop our skills, which is why I always treat them as a lesson. One of the most challenging situations in a manager's life is definitely taking care of people and building a well-coordinated and committed team. This is my favorite area of interest because I love to cooperate with people and I always appreciate being a part of the team.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

How much I like the industry and the job. It is so interesting and there are so many changes, that technology is developing in front of my eyes and we can constantly create something new to help and serve people. I'm really impressed.



Neila Sanz Pilar

 Consultant in Digital Records Management

 Guadaltel

Neila Sanz is an expert in digital records management. Her day-to-day work is semantic data management through the implementation of eGovernment, particularly in the field of digital archiving. Previously, Neila was Chief Innovation Officer Manager, creating and leading innovative software. She has always been passionate about digital data, as well as leading and participating in a humane and creative capacity in developing technology to evolve and advance with society.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I started my career in the humanities, but at a stage of expanding knowledge, I took a master's degree in digital information systems and discovered the versatility and creativity of developing technology; improving people's quality of life. From that moment, I focused on the technology industry without losing my humanist perspective, progressively advancing in software development and digital data management to apply solutions to the real challenges of present and future societies.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Firstly, accompanying people in accessing and applying technology to facilitate their daily work. Secondly, to favour the inclusion of women in the technological world, regardless of their initial professional training. Finally, on a personal level, enjoy an exciting job and life surrounded by wonderful and talented people.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Throughout my career in managerial positions, the most challenging and interesting stages are those which encourage you to create adaptive or innovative strategies. Those events, whether internal or external, facilitate team synergies and position the company's leadership in the market.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

The mental agility required for the resolution of such different casuistics, where each project forms its own universe, as well as the constant innovation needed for the success of the projects. In fact, the exciting intergenerational and intercultural teamwork still surprises me.



Dr Smita Sathyamurthy

 Consultant Data Integrity & CSV Quality Compliance

 TCS



Dr Smita Sathyamurthy has spent over 16 years in the Clinical Research Industry working for World Leading Global Pharmaceutical, Consumer Health and biotechnology MNC's. She has handled multiple leading roles for TCS in Europe including onsite project transition for clients such as Boehringer Ingelheim and Bayer CSV. Smita has been in Warsaw, Poland for the last 19 Months. Some of her key skills are Stakeholder Management and the delivery of projects in Agile, Hybrid and waterfall frameworks.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

Everything that the world experienced during the Global Pandemic was an eye opener, showing that the world and every industry are moving into a new era, and that imbibing the change is the key to success. Every technology is unique; the conventions, pattern language and business outputs are all different and my learning agility gives me the ability to leverage and apply my skills to continuously emerging markets.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Being a medical doctor by profession transitioning into IT and honing new skills totally different from the ones I had learnt has been an achievement. Presenting at international forums (poster presentation at a conference in Vegas and a white paper published in Data Basics) allowed me to understand that deep down I had writing skills which emerged when the opportunity was presented. Moving to a new country leaving behind the comfort zone polished my adaptability skills.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Whilst being a manager of a vendor partner during a critical migration release, it was discovered that the developer lead had made an error with the code application. Communicating this to Client was one issue, understanding what had happened from the GxP perspective was another. The impact on quality and the tech teams was a challenging situation.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

It's dynamic nature and culture, and its ability to continuously make an individual work on learning new skills.





Rupal Shirpurkar

 Business Head (Cloud BU)

 Click2Cloud Inc

Rupal, a top 8 influential woman in Cloud Computing, is a true trailblazer in the tech industry and one of the top 12 Women in Cloud globally. As the Business Head (Cloud BU) at Click2Cloud, she leads global business strategies and partnerships with industry giants. Rupal's dedication extends beyond her professional achievements. With a deep passion for technology and a strong desire to challenge gender stereotypes, she founded the Women in Technology and Leadership (WITL) community.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I chose the new technologies industry because I am driven by a deep passion for technology and a desire to create positive change. From an early age, I was captivated by the possibilities that technology offered in transforming the world and improving people's lives. Witnessing the rapid advancements and the immense potential of new technologies, I knew that this was where I wanted to make my mark. The new technologies industry, particularly in cloud computing, AI, edge, etc.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

As a woman leader in tech, my greatest professional achievement is breaking gender stereotypes and inspiring women in the industry. I founded the Women in Technology and Leadership (WITL) community, empowering over a thousand women and fostering diversity in the tech field. I'm proud to lead a global business at Click2Cloud, partnering with industry giants worldwide. Additionally, my recognition as Top 8 Women Influencers in Cloud Computing and other awards further validate my contributions.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

One of the most challenging professional situations I faced was navigating a predominantly male-dominated team. Overcoming the biases and preconceived notions was crucial to establish credibility and gain respect. I focused on fostering an inclusive and supportive work environment, leveraging my expertise, communication skills, and leading by example to drive collaboration and team cohesion. It took some time to break barriers, earn trust, and deliver exceptional results.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

When I first entered the IT industry, what surprised me the most was the lack of representation and diversity. It was disheartening to witness the underrepresentation of women and other marginalized groups in leadership roles. This realization ignited my passion to break gender stereotypes, empower women, and promote diversity in the tech industry. I am determined to be a catalyst for change and create a more inclusive and equitable environment for future generations of women leaders in tech.





Małgorzata Sieniewicz

 CEO

 Bookscoutai

Małgorzata has an MBA, a degree in law and in literature. After years of working in media, culture and organising mass events, she entered the bookstore and e-commerce business, in which she was nominated for the title of Olsztynian of the Year for her work in promoting reading, and also received a scholarship from the Minister of Culture. She is currently working on the commercial use of artificial intelligence in the publishing industry. Małgorzata is co-organiser of Book Forum - an online conference on the book market.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

My aim is to streamline the publishing process through automation and the use of artificial intelligence, so that publishers' sense of what book to publish is supported by technology.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

A difficult moment was the lockdown during the Covid pandemic. The working atmosphere and direct contact with people were always important to me. Suddenly it became apparent that working remotely might be enough, and then some of the IT team decided to take up job offers in remote locations, even in other countries.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Both my partner, who is also a businesswoman, and I have a background in the humanities. I think our most important achievement together has been to build the company's brand and team operating in the new technology industry, implementing innovative solutions in a niche market.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

In the early days of IT and R&D projects, programmers and machine learning specialists spoke a different language. I had to learn it.



Joanna Sitkowska

 Senior Product Manager

 NASK

Currently, Joanna works as a Product Manager, and additionally cooperates with startups as a Strategic and technical Advisor. She is responsible for successfully launching new products and services on the market, product development strategies, technical backgrounding, running beta and pilot programs with early-stage products and samples, and business analysis. Joanna specializes in building products using artificial intelligence mechanisms and conversational interfaces in any application.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I was looking for opportunities to build useful solutions and products – from the concept phase to the implementation phase. It was also the fastest growing industry and a huge field for competence development.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Cooperation (conducting mentoring sessions) with many startups from the USA in the field of high-technology and with Johns Hopkins University.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Optimization of processes, elimination of redundant elements, creation of an effective product management process and convincing the management that sometimes it is worth making bold and non-standard decisions.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

Be familiar with design and architectural patterns. The programming language itself is secondary. ;-)



Magdalena Skorupa

 Global IT&D Director, Digital Workplace, (ISC)2 Poland Chapter President

 Reckitt

Magdalena is an experienced cybersecurity and IT expert with over 25 years of experience in the largest companies in the world. She graduated with honors in an Executive MBA at HULT International Business School in London, M.Sc. studies in finance and accounting at Warsaw University, postgraduate studies in mining and geo-engineering and in social psychology. Recently, elected for the 3rd term of (ISC)2 Poland Chapter President. Magdalena is the co-founder of the Cyber Women Community in Poland, a dynamic cyber organization.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

Originally, I graduated from finance and accounting and I wanted to be a future CFO, but after a few years, I realized that I am very creative and like very dynamic environments, and that being creative as a CFO does not guarantee a successful CFO career :-). Since I was always close to technology, I moved first to IT audit and then I made a permanent shift to IT security but only because I volunteered to take up those IT projects no one ever wanted.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I am speaking at a number of professional conferences, both as a key note and a panelist. Last year I was listed in a book of the 100 most inspiring women in cyber in Europe, published by Women4Cyber: "Hacking Gender Barriers: Europe's Top Cyber Women". Recently, I was elected for the 3rd term as (ISC)2 Poland Chapter President - the biggest worldwide non-profit cybersecurity org with a chapter in Poland. I am also a big supporter of women in technology, a mentor and supporter of diversity and inclusion.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

When I started working in an American corporation, I landed in the US and it turned out that I was the youngest, the only female and the only person from Eastern Europe in the whole team. To prove my value and be a true leader for my team (mostly US army veterans), I had to quickly upskill myself on a professional cyber level, as well as learn how to lead such a team and gain trust where I was the only foreigner on board and the only non-native speaker. All my efforts paid off.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

Remember that I started my career in the late 90s and at that time what surprised me the most, is that at a certain organisational level there were only a few women. That was my biggest surprise because I did not understand why it should be like that. What surprised me as well was the fact that technology is a very dynamic space and you will never stop studying, learning new things, and upgrading your knowledge. It never ends and being in cyber and IT you need to try to be at least one step ahead of the game.



Justyna Skorupska

 Song Account Lead

 Accenture



Justyna is an E-commerce market expert, focused on developing and implementing digital transformation strategies. She is a Member of the Advisory Board in the Chamber of Digital Economy. Justyna is a Manager with over 25 years of experience, acquired in many digital & IT international projects. She is also the author of the popular book "E-commerce. Strategia-Zarządzanie-Finanse", and a mentor & lecturer strongly involved in the education of the e-commerce market and the creation of its standards.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

When in 1993 whilst at high school, I saw the MS-DOS operating system and the first text editor TAG, I simply fell in love with the possibilities that computer science offered even back then. I was the first person in my group who submitted her diploma thesis written and printed on a computer rather than a typewriter. I am a person who is curious about new solutions and I am not afraid to try new things, and IT is an area where every day brings something new to try :-)

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I am extremely proud of the achievements of the Chamber of Digital Economy – an organization of which I was a co-founder and still an active member. This year it is celebrating its 10th anniversary. For 10 years, the e-Chamber has been supporting Polish e-retailers by providing training, consultancy services, and networking opportunities, as well as working with state administration to ensure a legal framework for the smooth operation of this fastest-growing branch of the economy.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

My first big project in 2005 was for Telco industry with 46 people directly involved across the whole organization, managing a department by myself. Those times I was one of just a few women within IT and honestly just a fresh project manager! Can you imagine how difficult it was? I found the best solution to organize and communicate with the team – I baked a cake and celebrated every small achievement:-)

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

That there is still such little diversity.



Sandra Skutecka-Rezler

 Chief Legal & Office Officer

 APPLOVER DIGITAL AGENCY



Sandra is a third-year law student who discovered her true calling in law through work. Every day, she strives to break stereotypes in the IT industry, and in addition to being a law student, she simultaneously holds the position of Chief Legal and Office Officer in a +100 people company. Through her career path, Sandra wants to prove to young women that all it takes is to believe in yourself and to work persistently, and the dreams of a successful career can come true much faster than anyone might think.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

My mom taught me that it's important for a woman to be self-reliant. Following an internship in a corporation, I realized that it wasn't the right place for me so I decided to start searching for my path. I had worked in hardware, where I had to fight the blonde girl stereotype. I then thought that maybe I could handle Software. Technology is all about constant development and changes, and I feel at home in such an environment. Since the future is in technology, maybe I will find my future there too.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Building my own department and a great team, guided mainly by my intuition, positive attitude, and hard work.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

I am a person who started from the lowest position in the company's hierarchy and a woman in the IT industry. When I began, there were only two other girls working in the company. The biggest challenge was earning respect and finding a way to communicate and collaborate with people who were my colleagues and those higher in rank. It's not easy to be your friends' or colleagues' boss. I believe this is one of the most difficult things I had to deal with in my career.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

I think it's the work atmosphere, the relaxed relationships, and the pace of changes. It was also surprising that proposed changes were not met with resistance.



Agata Slater

 Vice President, Blockchain Consultant

 Polish Blockchain Association, IBM

Agata's tech story is somewhat unorthodox. For years she pursued an academic career, having obtained degrees at various universities world-wide. Agata's focus was linguistics, which continues to be her passion. But she soon began to question whether academia is the right professional environment for her and craved a career where she could create more social impact, build new solutions and innovate to make the world better. So Agata made a decision to quit academia and delve into the world of business and tech.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

In 2015 someone showed me a paper on blockchain technology. I was immediately hooked. I see blockchain and decentralization as enablers of a fairer, more equitable economic and value exchange model, and an alternative to the "winner takes all" hyperscale platforms that we, internet users, are trapped in. I continue to be fascinated by the opportunities that blockchain, next to other technologies, such as AI and IoT can create for individuals and businesses in all aspects of our lives.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

It was the first edition of the Technology of Tomorrow conference held in May 2023 that we put together as the Polish Blockchain Association. The event focused on the combined business value of blockchain, AI and IoT technologies. Despite a small team, a new brand on the Polish tech conference scene, and low budget, we managed to attract fantastic speakers, a great number of attendees and delivered an overall very high quality event. It was an example of a real team effort, passion and zeal.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

It was the moment I came back from maternity leave and into a new job. Balancing the demands of a leadership role with family responsibilities was overwhelming, especially given the impostor syndrome I suffer from. Adapting to the team's dynamics, establishing myself as a leader, as well as establishing foundations for great business outcomes was emotionally taxing. Additionally, catching up with industry developments during leave and reestablishing professional networks were also tricky.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

Perhaps unsurprisingly, my biggest surprise was (again) how little diversity there is in the field of technology. Having pursued a degree in social sciences, at first I felt insecure and inadequate in such a predominantly male and STEM-educated ecosystem. However, I soon recognised the value that lies in a diverse set of skills, and since then have turned this "liability" into an asset. I now make sure that the teams I work with comprise of a diverse group of people, with a diverse set of skill-sets.



Anna Socha

 HR Director

 Capgemini

Anna is a CIPD qualified HR professional with over 15 years of experience in the technology, finance and logistics industries working across international markets. She is a valued member of senior management teams with a track record of building strong working partnerships across all levels of the organization. Ann is an avid reader, constantly seeking new books and articles that challenge her thinking and provide fresh insights. She also enjoys engaging in outdoor activities, such as hiking and exploring nature.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

For me it's the potential for constant learning and growth. Technology has revolutionized all aspects of our lives from communication and transportation to healthcare and entertainment. The industry is constantly evolving, with new technologies emerging and existing ones being enhanced or replaced. This dynamic environment provides a never-ending opportunity to stay at the forefront of innovation, adapt to changes, and keep expanding my skillset.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I think it is seeing the potential in other people and helping them to grow. For me, challenging people to do more, to test themselves in a 'safe environment' and to help them find their next career move are key acts of leadership. It is extremely rewarding to see people realize their potential, especially when you know you helped them to make it happen. I owe my success to many people who saw potential in me and helped me grow; I think it is only fair to give back.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Making this transition in myself was I think one of the most difficult challenges. Recognizing that I had to leverage different skills and strengths, become more visible under greater scrutiny, had to decide between right and right, and manage former colleagues. Each of these posed different challenges which I had to overcome to be successful in my new role.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

The importance of collaboration and teamwork. It is often assumed that IT work primarily involves individuals working independently, but in reality, successful IT projects, like many others, require close collaboration with diverse teams and stakeholders and effective communication.



Izabela Sosnicka-Lipa

 Global Head Security, Testing and Validation Chapter

 Roche

Izabela Sosnicka-Lipa is leading the Security, Testing and Validation Global Chapter at Roche, as well as the Informatics Site Head in Malaysia. She is responsible for continuously evolving future-proof capabilities required to enable DevSecOps, product security, and modern software quality assurance & automation. She joined Roche in 2017, bringing over 15 years of experience in IT and management which she had gained in Poland and the EMEA region in companies such as Microsoft, Citibank, and Orange.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

To be honest, I was more inclined towards sports. I was passionate about handball and believed my calling was to be an athlete. However, an eyesight issue prevented me from pursuing a sports career. Ironically, this led me to consider the IT industry seriously. I was always interested in technological advancements and innovative solutions, surrounded by gadgets at home. I began with video games, and as I was curious about what was inside the Atari box, and then started to delve deep into the world of IT.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

The ongoing journey of growth and learning. Every day, I strive to expand my knowledge and enhance my skills. However, the most rewarding part is witnessing the progress and development of others – "giving the wings to others". Knowing that I can positively contribute to learning experiences is what I consider to be my greatest accomplishment. It motivates me to keep pushing forward, learning more, and helping others as best as possible.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

One of the most challenging moments of my career was taking a new position and moving to Malaysia 2 days before the first Covid lockdown. The sudden isolation, remote work, and adapting to a new environment demanded resilience and adaptability. Despite the difficulties, it became a transformative experience, getting valuable life lessons and strengthening my ability to embrace change.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

In the IT industry, you might be surprised by the lack of the stereotypical "geek in glasses and sweaters" image. Instead, you'll find an incredibly diverse, talented, and passionate community. Experts can understand that it's not just about technology; it's about comprehending the business itself. The IT professionals bring a wide range of skills and backgrounds, making collaboration and problem-solving even more dynamic and innovative. And it's constant life learning!



Ula Stankiewicz-Rusek

 HR BP & Marketing Manager, Strategic Partner

 Bright Inventions

Ula is an infinite learner, continuous feedback propagator, people leader and marketing enthusiast. As a HR Business Partner and Marketing Manager she has been collaborating closely with the management team, developing long-term strategies to retain talents, managing the recruitment and marketing team, and running dedicated recruitment marketing projects. Ula has created a culture in which everyone can learn and support each other, where people can share their views openly and honestly.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

The new technologies industry is at the forefront of innovation. It's a fast-paced sector with new opportunities emerging regularly, offering great potential for learning. Working in the tech industry allows you to solve real-world problems and make a positive impact on society. Even though I am not a software engineer myself, by creating and developing IT teams I also get the chance to contribute to meaningful projects.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Building my current team. :) When I joined the company there were 8 people on board. For almost 5 years I was the only HR and marketing person in the whole organisation and I built the whole recruitment and marketing strategy from scratch. I took part in hiring each and every person that became a member of my team. The greatest professional achievement for me are the people that I have in my team; great professionals and great human beings.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Letting go of people that I hired myself. It was emotionally difficult. Delivering the news of termination to an employee and my own team member required careful communication and had to be handled with sensitivity and respect. It was challenging, but I know that providing support to affected employees and ensuring a fair and transparent process can let us keep a good relationship afterwards. Sometimes changing the organisation is the best move people can take or get to thrive professionally.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

The speed at which technology evolves. Some concepts that were considered cutting-edge just a few years ago are now commonplace, and new breakthroughs continuously reshape the industry. Another thing that surprised me was the huge diversity among people that work in the IT industry as well as dozens of reasons and motives why they chose this particular career path.



Myladie Stoumbou

 Regional Director

 Microsoft



Myladie Stoumbou is a world-class leader and strategist, focusing on building high-performing teams and assisting businesses with digital technology innovation. She started as a systems engineer and later became an innovation evangelist. Myladie is a regional director at Microsoft and recognized as a top Female Leader for 2022 and 2023 by CRN. She is a mentor for the European Innovation Council and MIT EF, and Chair of Women in Business committee for the American-Hellenic Chamber of Commerce.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

When I was young the technology industry was evolving and becoming more visible in everyday life. I was filled with curiosity about this brave new world that was unfolding before me. It was the early days of the internet, with no mobile phones, no social media, no streaming platforms, no on-line booking services, no on-line learning, ... I feel so blessed, so inspired, so happy that I've been able to experience this amazing technological revolution firsthand!

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I am proud of my agility to navigate change and my courage to undertake tough assignments. Our world is changing rapidly driven by technological evolution, and our ability to deal with uncertainty and ambiguity is a critical skill for leaders today and for the future. I had the privilege to be assigned high-risk, high-impact international projects, gaining international recognition for these special assignments.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Dealing with cultural diversity in my first international managerial position posed a significant challenge for me. Balancing various perspectives, communication styles, and work approaches required an intentional effort to foster an inclusive environment where all team members would feel valued and respected. I had to adapt strategies to accommodate diverse backgrounds and that ultimately helped me to enhance collaboration and drive organizational success.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

When I was studying computing, I was surprised by the low representation of women in my class. Later at work, women continued to be a quiet minority. While women were initially at the forefront of the tech industry, sadly today in the EU there are four times more men than women in ICT jobs. Stronger participation of women is crucial not only for ethical reasons; it promotes innovation and better business outcomes in a rapidly evolving industry with opportunities for professional/personal growth.



Anna Strojwas

 Vice President & COO

 Instytut Industry 4.0

Anna is a manager with over fifteen years of experience in international organizations. From the beginning of her professional career, she has been associated with quality management, production management and optimization of production and service processes. Anna is also a Project Manager with experience in managing Greenfield projects.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

My motto is to Empower Employees Through Innovative Technology. I believe that the highest value of any organization is the team. The development of technology is the work of man and is intended to improve efficiency of processes. I believe that regardless of the dynamics of innovative solutions, the HUMAN is invariably the most important.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

The adventure with every team I've had the opportunity to work with and the pursuit of achieving goals has been a unique achievement and each of them the greatest in its own way.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

When I became a Manager, I wasn't sure about how to be a good leader. In organizations, promotions to managerial positions are often not related to the preparation of the employee and the development of his leadership competencies. For this reason, in my professional life I constantly promote the importance of developing managerial competencies.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

Understanding that the world of industry and the world of IT speak different languages. The key to success is the ability to develop proper communication between these worlds. Simple, transparent, open and understandable.



Honorata Stuczka-Kucharska

 Director of QA

 ShiftKey Poland

Honorata is an Agile enthusiast with over 18 years of experience in QA. She has experience in defining and transforming testing processes, as well as setting up and developing QA organizations (at Aviva and Nationale Nederlanden, Schenker Technology Center, Ergo Technology & Services). Currently, as QA Director at ShiftKey, Honorata leads the QA team in Poland and the US. As a mentor in various programs (Mom Works in IT, Dare IT), she supports others in taking their first steps on IT career paths.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I started working in IT in the first online bank in Poland – Inteligo. In retrospect, I believe I could not have chosen a better place to start my IT adventure. Whilst there, I understood that the key to success in IT is to combine technical knowledge with the ability to work in a team. The opportunity to develop in both areas made me consider IT as an industry in which I want to build my career. IT is a domain for people always hungry for development and new knowledge. I am one of them.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I think a leader is as strong as the strength of his/her people. That's why I consider my greatest achievement to be building several strong QA organizations. In the last few years, I have been setting up from scratch and/or developing QA organizations at STC, ETS, and also at ShiftKey. I feel that through consistency and leading by example, it has been possible to create committed teams constantly improving their skills and the processes related to QA.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

The biggest challenge I faced as a leader was building relationships with the new team. As a leader, I had to gain people's trust and keep them engaged. Over time, I realized that giving people space to act on their own and providing support when needed was a much better way to unleash their potential, as well as gain their trust, than giving them specific tasks to perform.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

At the beginning of my career in IT, I didn't expect everything to be changing so fast in this industry. On the one hand, there are new tools, technologies and concepts that are adopted very quickly. On the other hand, IT must be ready to respond to rapidly changing trends and market needs. The other thing that surprised me – a beginner in testing – was that even after deep testing, software is not perfect. I had to accept one of the principles of QA: it is impossible to test everything.



Anna Styralska

 Marketing & PR Director

 Exclusive Networks Poland

She is the marketing and PR director at an international IT company present in over 100 countries around the world. Her adventure with promotion and marketing started over 25 years ago. She has been building her competencies while working in various industries: FMCG, construction, automotive and IT industries. As a lecturer, she has shared her knowledge and experience with students of the AGH University of Science and Technology in Kraków.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

The IT industry for me was synonymous with constant development which itself requires the constant acquisition of new knowledge. I always wanted to work with professionals; people who are curious about the world, who are full of ideas, and who test their ideas in practice. Those who are not afraid to experiment, are not afraid of new things and are not afraid of change. I imagined it would be something amazing and I was not disappointed.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Team Building – creating a space and environment which people who want to learn, develop and work together would want to join. Inspire each other, help each other, enjoy spending time with each other. It is usually said that the role of a manager is to develop the team, and I agree with this, though I also develop myself thanks to the people in the team.
And on a personal note – I have reached a level where work is fun ...

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Guiding the company through the huge change that was the sale of Veracomp to Exclusive Networks. Developing an appropriate communications strategy, and implementing and executing the rebranding process.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

What surprised me most is that IT is not hardware and solutions. IT is how technology supports development, affects the efficiency of the economy, and responds to the needs of users.



Aleksandra Suchorzewska PhD

 Managing Director

 Accenture



Aleksandra is a Managing Director at Accenture; Head of European Technology Strategy & Advisory Practice, with over 20 years of robust experience in technology consulting and developing long-term partnerships with clients. She is a recognized expert and trusted advisor in areas of enterprise architecture, digital transformation & operating model. Aleksandra has a strong personal brand, having been named as one of TOP-15 women in 5G in Poland. She is also an active academic lecturer (PhD in Law, author of books and articles, and a conference panelist.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I am a big fan of technology and the opportunities which technology brings to our life. Immediately after graduating from Wroclaw University of Technology, I started working for the Global IT Department at Procter & Gamble. There I quickly made the decision that I want to be personally part of the rising technology revolution, and till this day I am happy with my choice.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

My team. I joined Accenture 5 years ago as the 11th person to join the newly formed Technology Strategy Team. Now I am leading a team of almost 200 people, recognized by the European market. The team is distributed across Poland and Italy and the team members are engaged in the largest technology transformations in Europe. I have great, highly skilled professionals around me. We have achieved a lot together, however there is still a lot ahead of us, especially now, in these challenging times with so many unknowns.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

I think the pandemic period was the most challenging. We had to completely change the way we worked and a new operating model was needed. My team, which has always traveled a lot and worked from the client's location, suddenly had to stay at home. On the one hand we had to learn how to build trust and work remotely with clients and on the other how to manage and keep the team together.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

Such a small presence of women and this fact still surprises me. I see that the situation is slowly changing, nevertheless there is a lot of work to be done – especially in the technology strategy area and the whole consulting industry. Nowadays, more and more girls are deciding to start their career in IT, though unfortunately only a few manage to go up the career ladder and take leadership positions.



Agnieszka Suchwałko

 Head of Delivery & Co-founder

 QuantUp

A PhD in Technical Sciences with a specialization in Biocybernetics and Biomedical Engineering. With over 15 years of experience in professional data analysis, Agnieszka specializes in analyzing image data. She has extensive experience in projects that involve AI and computer vision, specifically within the fintech, e-commerce, industry (proptech, energy, logistics), and life science sectors. Currently Head of Delivery and Co-owner at Quantup, a company that specializes in AI and Data Science.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

Having successfully commercialised my PhD work in recognising bacteria species, I aimed to be involved in daily development of AI algorithms.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Developing AI algorithms based on computer vision for Martha, the intelligent elevator that received the 2022 PropTech Festival award. An AI engine is being developed for a fashion e-commerce startup's multi-agent system to aid in the selecting, purchasing, & virtual trying on of clothing using photorealistic visualizations. It's likely the world's first of its kind. I also created QuantUp as a Service as a Product (SaaP) company & commercialised my PhD thesis, which was cited in Nature mag.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

When you are responsible for delivering a project, there are two important things to keep in mind: The first step is to build a team, specifically an A-team. Secondly, it is important to deliver the projects. So I have created my own AI project delivery framework, named QuantUp Thinking. It is unique.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

As someone who has moved from science to business, I've learnt how important it is to develop and nurture relationships with people who are your employees. I think they should be treated as partners: subjectively and holistically.





Karolina Sulich

 Senior Project Manager

 A4BEE

Karolina has a background in Fine Arts, and experience in stage and costume design. After working for several years in the creative sector she became more interested in life sciences. In recent years Karolina started to work in a company that provides IT and OT services to the life science industry.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

Considering myself a techno optimist, I believe that advancing IT and OT technologies as well as ML will unlock new paths in developing life sciences. I wanted to work in the new technologies industry since I am convinced that through carefully curated and innovative technological solutions we can successfully address the important challenges that we currently face as humanity.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I quickly picked up a new technological language and successfully began to merge my insights from the realm of biotechnology and biology with the automation of laboratories. Working with my team to successfully accomplish the projects we have been assigned was one of the achievements that I would like to list. Besides, successfully transforming my career path is also something I am very proud of.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

I believe that facing the burnout of a team member is very difficult and supporting them in overcoming this has been the most challenging part of my professional life so far.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

Kindness and atmosphere. I discovered that this industry or at least the company that I am part of is a place where servant leadership is really applied, which creates a great environment to grow and innovate, and sets a tone of mutual support and respect.



Róża Szafranek

 Founder & CEO

 HR Hints



Roza is founder & CEO of HR Hints, the first HR boutique operating on a subscription model. She is also the author of a book and an HR expert who has led tech companies from early startup through exit. Roza has co-built super successful startups and tech companies that were sold to giants or are now publicly traded. Roza and her team have supported over 80 companies in two years, teaching leaders how to be better in the People area (i.e. Shoprunner, JOKR, Codewise, Kulczyk Investments, Inovo, and Ramp).

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

Although, as HR Hints, we work with Partners not only in the tech industry, we certainly have gathered a lot of experience in this sector during more than 2 years of cooperation with successful tech companies in the EU and the US. It's a very dynamic industry and reality changes quickly and often. We love working in such an environment. Also, the tech teams tend to have mature, intelligent people, and the founders are driven and passionate.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

My company proves every day that the mission for which it was founded – to make good HR scalable – is a reality. In just 2 years of HR Hints' existence, we have co-built more than 80 companies around the world. The Partners we work with are achieving incredible success – they have received more than \$900 million in total investment, and a top company backed by us is valued at over \$1.3 billion. The fastest growth we co-created was from 20 to 200+ employees (Ramp Network).

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

The situation when after having hired dozens of senior HR people, from Senior Recruiters to Chief People Officers across Europe and the US, I did it wrong hiring such a person for my own company... I just made a rather childish and simple mistake. As a result, I hired a person mismatched with the company in terms of values, managerial culture, and transparency. Fortunately, this became apparent quite quickly, and we were able to say goodbye in harmony and friendship.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

I was a little surprised to discover that even with technical backgrounds, hiring managers often rely on intuition and biases. According to our study conducted on business leaders in early 2023, AI will not replace HR professionals. Processes related to people in organizations are intricate and challenging to automate. However, HR processes still require implementation and monitoring to ensure predictability.





Lucyna Szaszkiewicz

 CEO & Co-Founder

 1Strike.io

Lucy is a restless spirit and sales revolutionary who seeks thrilling ways to change and break stereotypes. An innovator by education and manager in practice she is an expert in technology commercialization in startups and corporations. Lucy has been responsible for the successful implementation of breakthrough concepts and B2B business models combining technological expertise with the ability to build relationships, create high-value international partnerships and spot unique market opportunities.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

It's been fascinating for me to study why things and processes don't work in the way expected by the audience; let's call them USERS. Why do people not communicate their real needs and expectations? My rebellious & researcher nature compelled me to search for answers, which, I realized, could easily be found in emerging technologies. When I entered this world, its infinite possibilities absorbed me completely. My childhood dream was also to travel around the world and the IT industry gave this possibility.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I was the only female Polish entrepreneur to receive an invitation from the US State Department to the prestigious leadership program; The International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP) in the "Promoting Cybersecurity" stream. I was listed as one of the most influential women in the payments industry '22 (by Visa, Mastercard and Cashless) and in the Top 100 Women From CEE VC and Startup Ecosystem - Poland. But my greatest achievement has been starting to believe that I am a trustworthy expert who knows what I do, what I say and why I say it.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Oh plenty! But in the end, being a manager is always about the same thing - taking ownership and responsibility in a world where you have limited resources and unlimited expectations. We all need to face challenges in order to feel successful and failures are the most effective lessons learned. Being a CEO is the greatest challenge so far. I didn't know the difference when I was C-level on the payroll. Now my main wonder is how to stay healthy and strong enough to manage all the risks, all day, every day.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

That everything is difficult until it becomes easy.



Karolina Szelażek

 Head of Communications & Marketing

 Billennium

Karolina is a communication specialist, a leader, and a mother. She has 13 years' experience in marketing, PR and employer branding, which she gained in the financial sector. Since 2014, Karolina has motivated and developed teams, as well as managed multi-million budgets. Having worked for 12 years in finance, she entered the world of IT, where as Head of Communications & Marketing, she helped achieve the company's strategic objectives. Karolina is committed, hardworking, and focused on growth and the advancement of goals.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

After 12 years in finance, it was time for a change, and my dream was to transition into the IT industry. Technology companies have a direct impact on the environment. They change the world and people's lives. It was important for me to be part of something bigger, a company with a conscience that strives to do better, is committed to social and ethical causes and which truly cares about its employees. I enjoy challenges.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I am proud of my career path and my achievements over the past 13 years. One of my key accomplishments was in 2016, during the merger of two companies, when, thanks to my dedication, diligence, and work ethos, I became the youngest Director in the company. Another success is my involvement in the development of my employees, who have also spread their wings and kept growing beside me. Another of my achievements has been changing industry after 12 years.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Everything that's new to us can prove challenging, but I see such situations as opportunities. It's essential to seek solutions and stay focused on the goal. Many people struggle with that, though the biggest challenge is to learn how to let go and resist the temptation of doing everything at the same time.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

Several things surprised me based on my previous experience in the financial industry. On the positive side, I did not expect to have the freedom to work remotely almost the whole time or to see such modern offices or find innumerable benefits and initiatives directed towards employees. On the negative side, I was surprised to see how many people feel the need to express negative opinions about their employers on dedicated platforms. The level of competition in the industry also took me aback.



Marta Szwakopf

 Marketing Director

 APN Promise



Marta has 18 years of experience in the TMT sector. During that time, she has collected expertise in different marketing roles such as brand management, strategy creation, product development, pricing and digital lead generation. Marta has been a team leader in small companies, the corporate environment and in growing startups. She utilises her experience helping companies remain at the forefront through digital transformation and strategic focus.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

Technology helps with literally everything. It's true. Whatever you need technology to do, it can pretty much do it. Things which look impossible or difficult can be easily solved. From a professional perspective being in IT companies gives me the opportunity to be in a very fast changing environment. I simply like permanent changes and high speed.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

When I enter a new company I always try to "rebuild the world" by challenging the status quo. It is not comfortable for the people who are there and for the management to trust a new person but this is the only way to change the dynamics of business development. In almost every company I was in, I left behind a ready team, channels and tools to grow and usually some revenue too.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

It is critical to find the balance between being a boss and being a colleague, control and trust, giving more time and saying stop. From my perspective achieving the right proportion is a permanent process.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

I totally didn't understand most of the topics at the beginning of my IT career but the openness of technological people (developers, consultants, architects etc) to help us (marketing and sales) to understand IT always surprised me very positively.



Cecylia Szymańska

 Head of Education Central Eastern Europe

 Amazon Web Services



Cecylia's entire professional life of more than 20+ years has had enormous links to education combined with a never-ending passion for this industry and ICT. She joined the Polish Microsoft team in 2011. As a Director of Education Cecylia gained experience in managing multiple international and local educational programs that focus on the utilization of the newest IT solutions in a broadly-understood field of education. In 2022 she continued her journey in "the cloud" leading education and research for Central Eastern Europe at AWS.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

It all happened by chance – technology chose me. I was into social work and policy, eager to make a difference and help people. Then, I stumbled upon an incredible company creating digital educational content. They entrusted me with building a team of tech-savvy teachers and incorporating technology in their daily teaching. I found purpose and mission in this and the need to help people, but in a different way, by developing their skills and acquiring digital skills.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

As the Education Director at Microsoft, my main role was to bring technological solutions to educational institutions. During the pandemic 85% of schools and universities in Poland opted for Microsoft solutions, actively used by 6.2 million users. We even managed to train over 1 million people! Our success was all thanks to a well-planned strategy, effortlessly weaving Microsoft technologies into everyday learning, teaching, and school management.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

I found building and developing the team relatively easy, but dealing with people who had a negative and destructive impact on a team was tough. I spent too much time and effort trying to include them into a team. I allowed them too much time for this and it took a toll on the team. Cutting ties was hard, painful, but necessary, and it's been a long learning process to find the right moment and handle such challenges effectively.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

It was clear that technology was a man's world, that it was a challenge, and you are required to be a programmer or have completed an IT degree to really understand this world. Technology demands people with a wide range of skills, from those who may adapt it to satisfy the demands of users or clients to those who are able to sell, promote and deploy it. Since there is enough space in the IT sector for people with a variety of skills, you must understand and keep up with technology constantly.



Katarzyna Szymerkowska

 Service Manager & Business Intelligence Competency Center Lead  DNV

As DNV's Service Manager & BI Lead, Katarzyna drives end-to-end BI solutions, managing a team of skilled professionals. She brings over 10 years of experience, showcasing change leadership, innovation, and business growth strategies from her time at Alexander Mann Solutions and The National Centre of R&D. Katarzyna is dedicated to process efficiency, HR analytics, GDPR coordination, and team development, aiming for secure and scalable BI solutions.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I chose the new technologies industry because it's exciting and always changing. Here, innovation is a constant, making every day a new opportunity to solve problems and make things better. In this dynamic and impactful field, I have the opportunity to utilize cutting-edge technology for enhancing business performance. The ceaseless inspiration it provides truly invigorates my professional journey.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

My greatest professional achievement is leading the transformation to agile development at Alexander Mann Solutions. Managing a team of 20 BI consultants, we successfully transitioned to an efficient, responsive work method. This shift not only improved our workflow but also boosted the team's morale and productivity. It was a challenging but rewarding process, showcasing the power of adaptability and teamwork in achieving operational excellence.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

The toughest situation I faced as a manager was during COVID-19. We had to deal with a lot of unknowns and, sadly, cut down on staff. It was hard to balance the need to keep the business running and care for our team. We tried our best to be open with our communication, treat everyone fairly, and help those affected to learn new skills. It was tough but necessary for our long-term sustainability.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

When I started in the IT industry, the pace of change surprised me the most. Technologies, methodologies, and best practices evolve so rapidly. It requires constant learning and adaptability to stay on top. But it's this very dynamism that makes the industry so exciting and fulfilling. Every day is a new challenge, a new opportunity to innovate and create solutions that can make a real difference.



Anna Świątkowska



Senior IT Director, Site leader of Central Europe Global Business Services



Procter & Gamble



Anna graduated from the Technical University of Łódź with a Software Engineering degree. She started her professional journey working as a programmer and researcher at University and joined Procter & Gamble as an IT Manager after graduation. Over the last 20 years she has had a range of diverse experiences working as a designer, architect, project manager and has led successful global teams, delivering products to Fortune 500 scale Company. Anna lives in Warsaw with her husband, two teenage daughters and a dog.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I have been interested in the STEM domain since my teenage years. I wanted my future work to be linked with solving real, practical problems vs. academic ones. I took the risk by picking IT studies, having absolutely zero experience with programming or algorithms at that time, which many of my high school colleagues had already started to explore. Choosing to work in the IT industry and specifically be involved with business environment problem solving has been a natural continuation of that plan.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

In my current role, we are digitizing all P&G R&D laboratories where consumer products are invented as well as Quality Assurance processes at manufacturing lines. As a result we can deliver superior quality products to billions of consumers around the world and reduce losses due to early detection of any anomalies that can cause further quality incidents. It is a great feeling when you see your IT solutions being used around the world and having such a meaningful positive effect.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

I have been leading multiple teams over the last few years: diverse teams, geographically dispersed, with individuals representing different combinations of experience in technology and business domains spanning from fresh graduates to long time experts. The biggest education and sometimes challenge for me has been to focus on enabling the team vs. doing things in a way that looked most effective short term. That has involved learning how to actively listen, talk less and let the team thrive.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

I remember coming into my first job straight after studies with a head full of concepts, the newest technologies and solutions. I so much wanted to apply it all immediately. The lesson I have learnt is that technology is very important but it is just a means to solve a problem. The best inventions and breakthroughs are discovered when "one falls in love with the problem and not a solution". Having the passion to address the problem and to engage a diverse team of business and technology enthusiasts will lead to success.



Katarzyna Tatomir-Rebeś

 COO

 Monterail



Katarzyna works as a Chief Operating Officer at Monterail; a web and mobile development company from Wrocław, Poland. After completing her computer studies degree, she started working as a Ruby on Rails developer, before moving into project management and eventually operations. Katarzyna is an accomplished leader with over a decade of industry experience.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I had my first computer when I was a child. It was my dad's device, that he let me use from time to time. This was something that strengthened the connection between us and that's when I got hooked. I decided to study computer studies at the University of Wrocław. I chose these studies because I saw computers as something interesting to be around and at the time, this specialization seemed future-proof. I wanted to shape the then-very-new internet as a creator, not only as a user.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

If I had to pick one thing, it would definitely be becoming a Chief Operating Officer at Monterail where I started as a Junior Ruby Developer. That's something that I'm extremely proud of and I wouldn't trade my journey for anything else. Supporting and guiding others as they move through their daily tasks and work on their professional development is a huge privilege. Watching team members grow and lean into various responsibilities and roles is an even bigger one.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

I would say that as a manager, the most challenging is addressing the needs of all of the stakeholders: the business executives, the clients, and the employees – all at the same time. It is an ongoing challenge, no matter how long you've been working as a manager or how much experience you have. Finding the right balance can be only achieved by being transparent and talking with all the groups involved about the wider context of decisions or actions that are being taken.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

I graduated from computer science, so I had a certain image in my head of what actually working in the tech sector would be like. After I got my first job at a software house, I quickly realized that my concerns were baseless: everyone was genuinely friendly and compassionate, and encouraged me to ask as many questions as possible. Also, no one expected me to know everything right from the start. I could learn at my own pace, and that's what I still see happening with the newcomers to Monterail.



Alexandra Tessari

 Poland Head of Markets & Securities Services Technology

 HSBC

Alex has worked for HSBC Technology since 2006. The first 6 years she worked as a software developer on the trading floors of Paris, New York and London. In 2013 she became the IT project manager for a vendor Equity derivatives trading application. Then in 2016, she moved to the team building HSBC's electronic trading applications in house. In 2019 she relocated to Krakow and in 2021 Alex was promoted to markets technology department head in Poland. Recently she has been given an additional hat as HSBC Poland's D&I Lead.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

Growing up I had a few uncles who were engineers and many had interesting careers abroad. I decided to study engineering because I wanted to understand how things worked and I saw lots of interesting opportunities in different sectors.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I am delighted to have had the opportunity to grow such a successful Polish technology department from 100+ in 2019 to nearly 500 people now. We have software developers building out and owning strategic systems, from surveillance systems with big data, to algorithmic trading systems in the front office, to critical finance systems managing billions of trades for accurate financial reporting... there is something for everyone!

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Once I took over responsibility for a critical system with a tight knowledge transfer deadline and low team morale. There was historic segregation and mistrust between the development and support teams. The only way forward was empathy, rebuilding trust, asking for help and hard work to upskill fast!

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

As a student I was unsure about what entering the job market would be like, what kind of support I would get as a junior developer and what it might be like in a big corporation. But I needn't have worried! My first job was an internship with HSBC 17 years ago. As it happened I joined a team that was all men, of largely North African descent, in Paris. I learned some Arabic words and an appreciation of Moroccan pastries. I made good friends and that was the start of my career at HSBC!



Ilona Tomaszewska

 Public Sector Lead & Member of Microsoft Poland Leadership

 Microsoft

Ilona is a daily reminder of what hard work combined with respect for values can bring to business. Her professional attitude never lacked compassion and empathy, helping the people she has worked with to grow and climb the ladder developing successful careers. She has been seen as a role model for many women in business not only on account of her business achievements, but also because of her appreciation for diversity, inclusion and the belief that people are the greatest asset.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I found my first IT company by accident, and the next one was just a pit-stop for me before fulfilling my dream of working at Microsoft. I chose work in this sector to be able to influence changes in every sector of the market through technology, help people realize their dreams, show that the impossible becomes possible thanks to technology (digitally excluded people), share knowledge and inspire others, and to help others achieve their goals.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Working in a corporation is a constant challenge; changing technology gives new opportunities for development, but for me the most important thing in this world is always the human being. During my career, I have worked with many people and what I offer them is help in achieving goals, building a career and believing in their abilities. I look back with a smile at those people whom I helped to develop their potential and who currently hold high positions in multinational companies.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

I had started in a new company, in a managerial position without direct subordinates, and had only started getting to know the company and its people. After just 2 weeks, my boss (a wonderful Leader) said: 'We are closing the financial year in June & the sales budget has to be met. You are a talented person, so go & show us how to do it!' After a few weeks I had a Team, a market strategy and I was not afraid to reach high and ask for help. In this way, I exceeded my first sales budget and this was followed only by subsequent successes.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

What surprised me most was the lack of women in leadership positions. Starting my career in American companies in the 1990s, management positions were held mainly by men. Women appeared sporadically and did not support other women at all. I was very lucky at the beginning of my career (my first job) to find a management team that did not look at gender but at predispositions and skills – this allowed me to discover my talents and build faith in my abilities.



Anna Topol

 CTO

 IBM



Dr. Topol is the CTO in IBM Research responsible for Client Experience. She is an IBM Distinguished Engineer, an inventor (94 patents), a leader in the IBM Open Innovation Community and a prolific technical author (>100 technical publications, 3 book chapters, 6K citations). She is a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), a Senior Member of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE), and a recipient of the 2021 Society of Women Engineers Award.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

Every technology has a lifecycle: Initially, we have 'emerging technologies' (with development/practical applications largely unrealized and a limited audience), then we have the early adoption stage (with some users testing its applicability), and finally, when the new technology "hits the street" and we all get to experience it and drive further enhancements. Emerging technology is my passion, as it gives possibility of changing the status quo and driving towards more sustainable and equitable well-being of a society.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I delivered foundational CMOS technology solutions. My contributions include three-dimensional integrated circuit capabilities and novel SRAM process technologies for which in 2015, I received the "Most Frequently Cited Paper Award between 2001-2014" by Symposium on Very Large Scale Integration (VLSI) Technology. I am a valued member of the research community, with a wealth of experience stemming from 20+ years in research and business alliance, working with partners, vendors, and universities.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

After I became a manager I realized that it is simply very important to understand that not all people in the team will like each other. The best managers build teams based on mutual respect, courtesy, professionalism and empathy. Team members do not have to like each other but they have to learn to prove their capability and credibility so that they can all respect one another. The manager has to have the emotional intelligence to build teams that value creativity, good communication and courage.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

Information Technology is critical to every industry & business. With improvements in statistical analysis and computational capabilities we should have no problem quantifying IT benefits or progress. But how do you measure quality of life, human or sustainable development? As we enhance AI and IT systems, we have to build frameworks & policies that focus on enhancing people's wellbeing. "The past cannot be changed, the future is yet in your power," Mary Pickford, the 1st female movie producer.



Nato Toronjadze

 Co-founder & CEO

 Bizon.ge



Nato is a highly experienced individual holding a BBA and MBA in Quantitative Finance from the Georgian American University. She excelled as Deputy CEO and Chief Commercial Officer in a leading leasing company in Georgia. Presently, Nato is the co-founder and director of Tera Leasing, a pioneering hybrid leasing company established in collaboration with Terabank and the online marketplace; "Bizon.ge," which she co-founded. Nato contributes to academia as the Vice Dean of the Business School at GAU.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

It's a rapidly changing, interesting and brave new world: To be part of that change is inspiring and fulfilling.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Creating a successful team. Besides their formal positions, most of them became independent leaders who could solve complex tasks and lead difficult situations. Helping them achieve their potential was the biggest professional achievement for me, as it translated into growth and prosperity. With the help of this team we have secured multi-million investments for our startup and upgraded to a different and exciting level.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

The most challenging situation has been managing people. At the beginning of my managerial career I struggled with motivating my team, even though I was achieving KPIs and various goals. Then I understood that the most important thing is to make your team feel understood, respected and given every chance to reach their full potential. After that became my priority, there was never any problem with achieving any result.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

The IT industry holds a paradox: people prefer familiar and comfortable technologies but eagerly embrace innovation when it arrives. Tech startups must understand this to meet customer needs and desires effectively. Striking a balance between familiarity and innovation is key to success.



Audrey Mae Turay

 Mandiant Philippines Enterprise Lead

 Google Philippines

Audrey recently joined Google Philippines as Mandiant Philippines Enterprise Lead. Prior to joining Google, she was the APJ CyberRes Services Practice Lead for Micro Focus Hong Kong. She brings with her over 15 years of Cyber Security experience covering APJ working for major IT companies such as IBM, Oracle and HPE where she had consistently overachieved her targets while balancing the delicate roles of being a single mom and breadwinner of the family.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I landed in the niche field of Cyber Security accidentally after giving birth to my second child. I find selling CyberSec very challenging and yet very exciting and fulfilling because I'm helping customers protect their organization. When asked by friends and family, I always tell them I fight the bad guys! How cool is that?

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I consider the time during the height of the pandemic where I overachieved my target covering the whole of APAC & India despite the fact that I had a very difficult and complicated pregnancy, my baby was born premature, my anxiety was over the roof. I was still able to meet my commitments to the business while taking care of a newborn. I believe all these achievements paved the way for me to join Google. Mandiant is the epitome of Cyber Security. I'm very proud to be part of one of the best, if not the best Cyber Security solutions in the market, which, not to mention, is now part of Google.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Right before signing a commit deal for the quarter end, the key stakeholders internally including the Lead Delivery Consultant resigned. I had to reassemble a brand new team within one week and regain the customer's confidence in order for the deal to move forward.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

Before working in the IT industry, I always had the impression that it's a male dominated industry. I was surprised to see that there are a lot of female leaders as well which inspired me to excel in my field and become a female leader myself in the future.



Cristina Turbatu

 CTO

 Casumo

Cristina is a CTO celebrated for innovation. Beyond her professional accomplishments, she actively contributes to shaping the future of the industry. As a respected judge and influential speaker, Cristina's expertise spans various aspects of technology, allowing her to drive tech trends in remarkable ways. Cristina is committed to make a positive impact on society aligning herself with noble causes that resonate with her values.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I believe there is a lot of untapped potential within new technologies and creative ways to improve business processes and KPIs whilst keeping the technical team involved.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Dealing with regulation and organising the threads of work across tech teams/ deliveries/ processes/ operations/ security.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I am very proud to have 2 active patents for innovations within the industry.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

That there is no stupid question. Questions are asked all the time and they always contribute to growth – both for the company as well as for the individual.



María de los Angeles Vela

 General Director

 Csoftmtty

She is a Mexican industrial and systems engineer, having graduated from a Jesuit university: Universidad Iberoamericana, which instilled values that through their profession they can generate service and good for others. Later she studied for an MBA at the Tecnológico de Monterrey. Since then she has been participating in Private Industry in Production and Quality Control areas in charge of ISO 9000. She has also been involved in a federal project supporting Small & Medium Businesses and subsequently she started in the ITC cluster as a Director.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I chose this career in new technologies because through them I can achieve my goals as a person and have an impact on Mexican society by supporting young people, women and older adults. Through technology we can achieve a more just and equitable society for Mexico; a better quality of health, education, communication, entertainment and a 5.0 society.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Achieving, with the best team, an impact on more than 10,000 women and children in Mexican society through our programs, ensuring that they have a better quality of life and a better chance to achieve their goals. Changing the perspective of their future through better opportunities.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

To stand out in a world of men as a leading woman with two children (one newborn) Obtaining, with the best team, the ESCA GOLD certification as the only woman in Mexico: <https://www.cluster-analysis.org/gold-label-new/?country=6bf487690ce6458c88e2aff0e44d27fb>. Obtaining, with the best team, funds to develop projects to train girls, women and youth through: Federal sources, State sources, the Motorola Solutions Foundation and now from BID (Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo).

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

What surprised me the most and continues to surprise me is the impact that can be had in a society like Mexico's when impacting the lives of women, for if you change the life of a woman, you change the life of a family and ultimately of an entire society. Through technology we help to have better education, health and a better quality of life. During the Pandemic we also helped a lot using technology generated by the companies in the cluster.





Katerina Vesela

 Country manager Poland

 Patron GO

Kateřina studied public administration at a university and completed her studies remotely while working full time. After gaining initial work experience, she ventured into start-ups, co-building the social media project Winitio from scratch. Later, she moved to a managerial role at an IT company developing software and providing IT services. Currently, she utilizes her past experiences in the tech start-up domain.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

By chance, it became my best decision. My background was in sales, marketing, and social media. Seeking new challenges, a close friend insisted on an IT job interview. Despite my hesitation, I recognized IT's immense potential and the need for more women in the field :). Grateful for the opportunity, I joined the IT world. I am still benefiting from this experience.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

So far, it's my current work position. I have successfully completed several remarkable projects that achieved substantial successes, leading me to this point. At the moment I am actively involved in an exceptional and remarkable fintech project; Patron GO, where I can exert considerable influence. Starting as a project manager for the Czech Republic entity, I have progressed to the role of Country Manager for Poland. And the journey is still ongoing.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

During my first major project, the greatest challenge for me was gaining respect while managing significantly older team members, particularly those of the male gender. Enforcing respect through job title alone doesn't work; colleagues must trust you for other reasons, mainly for your past achievements and capabilities. It is a long-term matter, but it also serves as a motivation to work hard and defend one's position.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

I was pleasantly surprised by the distinct mentality and behavior of technical professionals, which I found truly appealing. Equally, I was astonished by the support women offer one another in this industry – contrary to other fields where competition among women may be more prevalent. With my experience in the IT industry, I witness women increasingly asserting themselves. I am wholeheartedly enthusiastic about all initiatives led by or for women in this field.





Katarzyna Wabik

 Country Manager

 Binance

Katarzyna is currently working at Binance, where she is taking care of the Polish market as Country Manager. Previously at Revolut, together with 4 co-workers, she scaled the user base in Poland from 300 000 to 1 000 000 users within 12 months. In 2013 she was hired by an American tech company - Yelp, where, starting from scratch, she built a community of thousands of active users. In 2018 she entered the crypto world becoming involved in an educational blockchain project.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I'm a big fan of technology. I'm fascinated by how it changes the world and supports positive change. A case in point is that, after 18 years, I gave up owning my own car in favor of using car sharing apps. In this case, technology supports saving money and a citizens-friendly city (after all, cars in the city are parked for the most of time and take up space). Also this is an industry of endless possibilities - for example, Binance has become the world's largest crypto exchange in only 165 days from its start.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

My career path at Binance: from being the first employee in Poland as Community and Marketing Manager to becoming head of Binance Poland.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

The Crypto industry is very dynamic and challenging so stepping out of the comfort zone happens almost every day. The key is to have a great team!

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

In 2013 the first company I was hired for - Yelp - sent me to offices in San Francisco and London on business trips. I remember that I was positively surprised on how well the IT industry treats employees in terms of work standards - good salaries, amazing offices, great equipment. Also remote work was a common thing. Back then in Poland and outside of the tech industry all these were definitely not a standard.





Edyta Walczak

 Chief Customer Success Officer

 Profitroom

As a successful IT and hospitality professional, Edyta has achieved continuous growth with expertise in revenue management, customer success, and leadership. Passionate about innovation and excellence, she optimizes revenue strategies, forges partnerships, and inspires women in IT to embrace challenges and reach their potential. Edyta is committed to driving positive change and fostering an inclusive work culture.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I chose the new technologies industry because of its dynamic nature, igniting my passion for innovation and constant learning. Embracing cutting-edge solutions, I contribute to positive change and growth. At Profitroom, a leading tech company, I thrive in an innovative environment, driving advancements that transform the hospitality sector.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

My greatest achievement has been leading diverse teams and driving revenue management in hotel-tech. Overcoming challenges, I fostered inclusivity, leveraging team strengths. Data-driven revenue strategies boosted profitability and efficiency, leaving a lasting impact on the organization's success.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

In my hotel-tech managerial role, bridging knowledge gaps between hospitality and technology was a major challenge. Despite my hospitality background, I quickly adapted and led a tech-focused team, fostering collaboration and knowledge-sharing. Overcoming this hurdle enriched my understanding of hotel tech and reinforced the value of adaptability and teamwork for success.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

Entering the IT industry, I was amazed by the constant need for agility, swiftly switching between topics due to the dynamic nature of the sector. Embracing change and continuous learning became essential for success, empowering me to thrive in the fast-paced world of emerging technologies, market trends, and client demands.



Paulina Walkowiak

 CEO

 CUX Research



Paulina Walkowiak is the CEO & co-founder of cux.io - A Digital Experience Analytics Tool providing real-time insights into user perspective and what you can do to improve their experience. She helps companies translate knowledge about users into specific business decisions. She supports enterprises in data-driven transformations and developing analytical strategies. Paulina has worked with, among others, Warner Bros. Discovery, Schibsted, PZU and EFL. As a mom of two, she proudly calls herself a Mompreneur.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

Nowadays the field of IT provides a certain degree of freedom and is responsible for changing the world. Initially, my goal was to work as a digital nomad and have the flexibility to raise my child without missing any significant milestones. However, I now take pleasure in being a part of the world's fastest-changing industry, witnessing the AI transformation, and adapting to all the changes that accompany it.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I am successfully running an IT and analytical startup, despite not having an engineering degree or background. My vision is to cultivate an inclusive environment that promotes growth for all individuals, especially women with marketing, sales, or IT backgrounds who aspire to make a substantial impact in the IT industry.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

I realized that in order to succeed, I needed to prioritize business above product and people. Although I highly value the importance of people, I came to understand that running a business requires a different set of rules. However, this doesn't mean that one needs to be ruthless or unkind. Instead, it requires a focus on the numbers. After all, without profit, a business cannot sustain itself and becomes more like a charity.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

The speed of progress surprised me the most. There is no option to stay still in IT, even for a moment, especially in the startup world. You have to move forward no matter what.





Bei Wang

 Co-Founder & CMO

 StraightFire Studios

After a career in NGO and international media, Bei co-founded the digital consulting firm FIVE Group and StraightFire Studios, a fast growing web2/web3 startup creating 3D assets and turning them into AAA quality 3D animated content and gamified Metaverses. Bei is also a university lecturer and working on her PhD about digital culture in China and the Global South. She is on the jury of the Mobius Advertising Awards and a keynote speaker at Advertising Week Europe, and the European Women in Tech Conference.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

With a professional background as an environmentalist and journalist, I have gained first hand experience in global digital transformation and witnessed how digital technologies bring changes to the world, to societies and to people's lives. As a humanist being schooled in the liberal arts, I believe in a human first future. Therefore, I chose the new digital technology industry with the mission of emphasizing the social construction of technology and philosophy of technology.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

My greatest achievement is fourfold: firstly, together with the team, we launched the digital China department at a Dutch media organisation. I then co-founded a digital consulting firm specializing in digital China. Subsequently, I developed a minor Digital China programme for university education. Finally, all these professional achievements together led to a solid empirical PhD research project.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

When I was the head of the China department of a Dutch media organisation, we faced both domestic and global challenges. Domestic challenges were due to budget-cutting and reorganisation, while our news platform had to optimise technically in order to maintain access to and traffic from China. I had to make crucial decisions within a short period of time and no mistake was allowed. Agility, flexibility and teamwork helped me and the whole team conquer the difficulties and we achieved great results.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

Working in the IT industry as a humanist with a liberal arts and social sciences background, I am mostly surprised by the lack of transnational and cross-cultural understanding of technology narratives and the philosophy of technology.





Fleur van Wely

 CEO

 NextSales

Fleur is the CEO of NextSales. NextSales supports IT, High-tech, Consulting and Public Safety & Security companies from all over the world by growing their business in Europe and beyond. I am proud of the type of clients we support by leveraging the Ambassador Network to generate leads and scoring deals. I am committed to everything I do and enjoy sharing the knowledge I have gained over the years teaching others to become better sales. My motto is: explore the world while working!

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I didn't choose the new technologies industry, it found me. Sometimes people have a clear vision at a young age of what they want to do or what they would like to become when they grow up. My journey to where I am right now is something that happened step by step and wasn't planned at all. Now that I am in the industry and have built a lot of experience, I believe I am in the right place.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I am proud of the way we look at the future and, on the one hand, adjust what we offer to the changing market, whilst on the other hand, always staying close to what we believe is the right approach to support our clients growing their business.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

The lockdowns during Covid brought challenges for companies to change the way they work and how they perceive the future. The initial reaction was to cancel their investments and growth plans. For us it first reduced our funnel, but then brought the opportunity to offer support to clients growing their business around the globe. We were able to leverage our Ambassador Network in flexible, scalable, global sales services and working with people that live in different parts of the world.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

That many people working in the IT industry have little IT knowledge beyond their specialism. It is shocking, but it's reality...



Agnieszka Wilczek

 Director of the General Director's Office & Head of CoE

 Ministry of Finance

Agnieszka is a Director, supervising the Process Robotization Center of the Ministry of Finance and managing the complex organization and automation of processes using software robots. Professionally associated with the Ministry of Finance since 2006, she held managerial positions in the management of IT infrastructure and the management of the Data Center construction project for the Ministry of Finance.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

New technologies are a field that knows no borders; it is constantly developing whilst ensuring the development of both the company and the individual. Investments in new technologies often determine the company's competitive advantage. For each of us, new technologies mean a challenge, striving for perfection and a chance for an extended youth. Facing new technologies means that we are constantly learning and developing our capabilities.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

My greatest professional achievements have been:

- co-creation of a Data Center for the Ministry of Finance – construction of infrastructure and preparation of the Data Center organization,
- creation of the Process Robotization Center (CoE) – an organization providing new office work tools (virtual assistants). In other words, creating organizations that provide specific benefits for the company and employees, and in which people can develop.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

A big challenge was the implementation of new RPA (robotic process automation) technologies and the creation of the Process Robotization Center (CoE) at the Ministry of Finance. It is a kind of startup that was created practically from scratch, and within two years it provided 62 virtual assistants that support office work. Today, we scale software robots to the entire Ministry of Finance, gaining significant amounts of FTE.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

Working in the IT industry offers a wide range of employment and self-development opportunities. It is dedicated to those who want to change the world using new technologies.





Hendrika Willemse

 Country Manager G Cloud

 Devoteam Netherlands

Hendrika is Country Manager G Cloud at Devoteam NL, the author of Kick-Ass, is a high performance enthusiast, a former top athlete and has been in IT for over 20 years. Over the years she gained extensive experience in building her business, selling the company and then within various IT corporations. Besides business she has 20 years of karate experience at an international level and Hendrika is a three-time World Champion and a two-time European Champion.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

Since I was young I knew I wanted to move into the Tech industry. It was mainly because my brother was working in Tech and I was fascinated with what he was doing. The fast moving industry, the traveling, his personal development and all the career opportunities.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Building my business and successfully selling the company which made me financially independent at the age of 27.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

I was 27 years old when I moved into corporate life and I had to grow up very fast. I had to learn how the dynamics work in this type of organization and that you need to work the system from time to time. I also had to learn that things are not personal and that it's sometimes better to not respond in the moment but to take your time and breathe for a bit.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

The fact that the possibilities are endless if you just grab the moment and if you are willing to take a leap of faith sometimes. People are so much more willing to help than we often think.



Stefania Winkel

 Line Manager, Software Testing Trainer, Coach & Mentor

 Spyrosoft



Stefania is a software testing enthusiast who is a line manager at SpyroSoft. Her essential task goes beyond just selecting the right testers for projects and provides, she analyzes and engages with clients regarding testing processes. You can find her under the profile @mentor_testowania_opr. Her enthusiasm, keen observation, and ability to build lasting relationships make Stefania Winkel not only a captivating speaker worth listening to but also an inspiring figure for the entire community

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

Software testing involves stepping into the shoes of an end-user, ensuring that the software meets their needs. This verification occurs at every stage of software development. New technologies make life easier for end-users. Their joy and appreciation after software implementation, as well as during acceptance testing, are the greatest rewards, confirming that what we do (as a whole team) makes sense and is valuable.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Obtaining all three ISTQB Advanced level certifications and achieving ISTQB trainer accreditation so as to be able to share this knowledge and train software testers, ensuring their work is of high quality. Over the past six years of training, I have reached out to more than 300 testers, infecting them with a passion for testing.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

I work every day with a team of 50 software testers assigned to various projects. When the decision to stay at home due to COVID was made, I picked up the phone and personally called each person, listening to their concerns and explaining how our work would look like in the coming weeks. Providing the right support helped minimize stress, allowed us to focus on our work, and smoothly navigate through this challenging period.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

I was surprised that many people openly admit when they don't know something, that they need to check and make sure. During school and college, the lecturers created an impression of being infallible and all-knowing. But suddenly, at work, it turned out that it's perfectly fine to openly say that you don't know something and to come back to the topic once you've obtained the answers to the questions. Open communication allows us to achieve better solutions.





Agnieszka Wiśniewska

 Head of Marketing

 Bauer Media Group

Agnieszka is a manager with over 19 years of experience in marketing. She has worked for the B2C, B2B and FMCG markets. Currently working for the IT industry in the digital services sector. Agnieszka graduated from philosophy, pedagogy, marketing and management. Recently, she has been training and developing in the field of Customer Experience and GA4. She loves Japanese culture and is currently learning the language. In her private time she dances tango and builds Lego.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

Modern technologies are the most dynamic in allowing change and opportunity for improvement. They have a significant impact on how we function and how we live. This industry is also an opportunity for continuous learning, so as to support our clients' business with the best solutions that are simply up to date.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Implementation of a brand new communication system to an entire organisation of over 600 personnel. Implementation of a communication strategy for a Brand and building a strong marketing team with data-driven skills.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Creating a marketing department team from scratch in an environment where the goals to be achieved were already defined, yet at the same time there was no transfer of views from the previous team. Another challenge has been to revise the existing strategy and update it to market changes.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

I've always been used to a fast pace of work and being under time pressure. I knew that this industry is similar, although it turned out that the dynamics is even greater. In addition, the frequency of changes to the Meta or Google ecosystem with new algorithms or solutions. It requires constant work, deepening knowledge and being really up to date.





Maryla Wojcieszek

 Head of Knowledge

 Huge Thing

As an Innovation Shaper, Maryla supports large organizations in processes related to innovation via structuring their work with innovation as well as supporting testing and acquiring new technological solutions. As the Head of Knowledge, she is responsible for the materialization of knowledge at Huge Thing, including the design of new products, services and new models of delivery. Maryla manages the team and is a co-host of a podcast focused on innovation-related topics. She is also a gardener and a LEGO fan.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

Some years ago I chose to get close to the innovation industry and it turned out to be quite closely related to the new technologies industry. As a fan of the McKinsey 3 Horizons approach to innovation, I'm mostly keen on future-oriented technological solutions, especially those which have the power to transform current models of functioning. I also like to observe how technologies modify people's and organizations' everyday functioning.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Co-designing public support programs for startups and linking them to corporations (within PARP, back in 2016), which has become a predominant model of acceleration in Poland. More recently: co-designing innovation frameworks for large organizations (corporations) which then get implemented and designing the tools which are also used in practice by persons responsible for innovation within large organizations.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

The most challenging professional situation was actually related to my saying 'yes' to taking a managerial position. As I'd been avoiding it in the past (focusing on gaining expertise in the field), my natural reaction to the proposal (when it appeared in my current organization) was to step back. Yet looking at other female leaders (those whom I have had the fantastic chance to work with) I thought I need to say 'yes' to this new opportunity – both to challenge myself and to grow.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

What surprised me was discovering that technology is usually not a goal in itself – it's usually an element of the longer process aimed at bringing change to various organizations. A change which is a result of not accepting the status-quo. Both surprising and fascinating is the fact that technology usually goes hand in hand with psychology and it is not always technology that wins.



Alina Wojna

 Vice President

 Tpay

Alina is the Vice President at National Payment Integrator SA, owner of Tpay. She is responsible for co-creating the organization's strategy, defining key processes and creating internal and external communication standards. Alina's experience and talents helped Tpay to increase the efficiency of process management in key areas, as well as to create short- and long-term strategies for further development. She is also an enthusiast of lean management and scaling an organization by properly matching talent to role.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

In addition to a great work-life balance & flexibility, good salary & benefits, I also have the opportunity to work at the heart of innovation & change! Some of the biggest disruptors of all time are tech businesses. When you choose a career in technology, you dive into one of the fastest evolving sectors, which offers endless opportunities to learn and develop alongside brilliant minds.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Apparently, when you really want to achieve success, you can lose a lot along the way and never experience this success. But when you have a mission to change something crucial in the surrounding world, success comes – as a result of implementing this important plan. I always knew that I couldn't achieve as much on my own as I can with the right people. That is why I value the most that I am able to find talented people and give them the power to carry out a common mission.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

I was given a new role during turbulent changes in the organization. I had to quickly look at the company from the air, and introduce key changes in a short time, due to the fact that people expected valuable signposts that could lead them, and the company, in the right direction. In a very short time, I had to ensure the employment of the right people in managerial positions, improve internal communication and inter-team work, and define a coherent strategy for the development of the company.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

Problem-solving is a huge part of any IT job! You arguably have to love solving problems to do well in IT. There are few, if any, IT pros who know how to fix every problem. The ones who excel are the ones who don't give up until they've found solutions. And importantly, problem solving is not only about technology, but good communication plays a huge role.



Jadwiga Wojtas

 Director of Production & Development

 Soneta



Jadwiga has been a manager in the IT industry for 25 years, running projects in various business environments. She is responsible for a team of 130 people, and presenting to the Management Board and in front of clients. Jadwiga is aware that the decisions she makes are demanding, although not always infallible, she tries to act effectively. She works on improving herself; building knowledge and gaining skills. She builds her professional relationships on trust and commitment, using her personality in the best possible way in given conditions.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

The IT industry in the 90s was a riot of opportunities. It was a novelty in the economy that exploded and attracted everyone who wanted to get to know, touch and try the world of computers, new technologies, and new working methods. I accidentally found a company called CDN in Krakow, which was one of the first in Poland to implement systems for servicing small and medium-sized companies, and this world has swallowed me up. I combined my dreams of an interesting job with the opportunities offered by the IT world, and so it continues today.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Co-creation of the enova365 solution, with almost 20,000 customers in Poland. A tool supporting the work of management boards, traders, accountants, human resources, and also individual employees. Each user has a choice in which configuration they want to work in, whether on a smartphone or laptop, or a classic interface on a browser. Do you want to own the system or pay a subscription? Whether the user wants to have the system installed on his servers or in the cloud. A wide range of options in one solution.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Organizing new methods of work, communication and tools for the whole team, which were necessary because they resulted from the dynamic development of the company, from the scaling of operations from a small to a medium-sized company. Lack of understanding of the environment, sometimes also of support, and frequent gravitation to the "old"; that which was known. At the same time, we had the implementation of current tasks, which were equally demanding, and where no leeway was given for the restructuring of the department.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

I was surprised by the youth and that it was such a male world with 99% of programmers, IT specialists and business owners being men. Women were underrepresented, usually found in the marketing or sales departments. At the time, I assumed that was typical of the industry. Also they were all young, mostly under 30. Working overtime was also considered by everyone as something normal.



Agnieszka Wojtera

 Managing Director Asia Pacific

 incadea Asia Pacific

Agnieszka holds a Fin&Banking degree from the Faculty of Economics and an IT from the Math. Dep. at the University of Lodz. She began in banking, contributing to the establishment of mBank; a pioneering internet bank. Agnieszka then transitioned to SAP where she gained valuable experience and now works in the IT automotive industry. She undertook an EMBA at Oxford University and studied AI and Quantum Computing at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I am a person driven by my passion for new technologies and a curiosity which allows me to constantly expand my knowledge, adapt to emerging and innovative IT trends. Moreover, new technologies enable me to observe the evolving IT world from a different perspective. I'd like to challenge stereotypes, inspire more female participants, and bring a diverse perspective to design and problem-solving in IT, thereby fostering more inclusive and innovative solutions.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

As a woman in IT, my greatest achievement has been leading an international company for the Asia-Pacific Region providing innovative digital solutions for the automotive industry globally. I reorganized the APAC's business model, resulting in significant improvements and positioning the region as a leader within the company's global structure. This accomplishment is due to my professional expertise, understanding vulnerabilities, and commitment to promoting diversity within the technology landscape.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Global experiences gained through working on 6 continents, dealing with intricate project challenges, including managing intercultural differences, have become defining factors in developing my new skill set. A notable example is the implementation of IT solutions for a multinational group across multiple countries in the Asia-Pacific region, where the complexity of legal frameworks, cultures, standards, and work styles presented formidable barriers that required deft resolution strategies.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

The noticeable underrepresentation of women in managerial positions has surprised me. While I've observed some changes in recent years, but progress is still slow. This is even more apparent in Asia, where cultural influences are strong and hinder women's career advancement. The rapid pace of IT changes in Asia and the preference for specific products add another layer of complexity.



Judyta Wolak

 Lead PM, Program Manager

 OANDA, Tech Leaders

Judyta is a flesh and blood Agile Leader with good people ability and experience in many different industries, incl. fintech, electronic, lighting, and automotive. She has created hardware and software products for clients all over the world. Currently, in OANDA, she models business processes, analyzes needs, designs solutions and runs a project management office. Judyta is also a Program Manager and mentor in the TechLeaders 4-month mentoring program for women on behalf of Women in Technology.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I think it was my destiny :) I always had an analytical mind, was curious, and was interested in how techie things were built. Luckily, I became a project manager in the R & D sector and I began my journey in the lighting, automotive and EMC industry. I like changes, learning, and overcoming my limitations. For the last 6 years I led projects, products, services, and teams in the fintech industry for clients around the world. In my spare time, I support women in their development by creating Tech Leaders.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

The growing success of the Tech Leaders program, and the number of wonderful people met over that time. Since I became the program manager, me and my team have helped over 350+ women to enter the IT industry and/or develop their skills. It's a great feeling to have an actual impact and hear all the success stories. My Personal branding and being a role model, has shown that people appreciate my authenticity, vision and hard work. The result of which has been the nomination for this report.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Restructuring the team and setting up new PMO processes for the whole company. Empowering people to grow in their careers during an unstable company situation. After work, leading the largest free mentoring programme for women in Poland – Tech Leaders, often with our volunteers having very limited time.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

Many of the technical aspects I was able to grasp fairly quickly, but I still recall the hours spent trying to figure out how IT networks work (ports, switches, LANs etc). Another surprising aspect was that the IT industry is never boring; project dynamics, tech stacks, methodologies – they are all evolving and living their own life and so you never stop learning.



Bożena Wolińska

 CEO

 BZ Solutions



Bożena has a law degree from the Faculty of Law at the University of Warsaw. She took part in an internship in insurance product development at Hamburg-Mannheimer Versicherung AC. Beata then worked in various institutions such as PTU S.A., TU Compensa S.A., the University of Wrocław and the Insurance Ombudsman Office. She is currently the President of In-Solidum and BZ Solutions and the Vice-President of the BZ Group Sp. z o.o. Beata is also deeply committed to a new project; Pet Mediq, which concerns tele-veterinary solutions.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

Frankly, the new technologies sector was not my first professional choice, but as I gained more experience in insurance, law and affinity, I realised that no service could genuinely address the needs of customers or business partners without using new technologies. That is how I began to design, look for and implement modern service models that were well-received in areas that did not appear to rely on technology.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

This question is a bit tricky because I believe that my biggest professional achievement consists of dozens or hundreds of smaller accomplishments. That is why, for me, every new day, contract or business solution is an achievement.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

The most difficult professional decision for me was to quit a “steady job” and invest in my own career. At that time, it was a risk, but it paid off with greater satisfaction.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

I think that the fact that the IT industry is not “restricted” to IT specialists, programmers and other technical professions. What is more, the new technologies sector is also not prejudiced regarding age, gender or lifestyle. It is a very flexible space. That is why, with the right approach, discipline and hard work, everyone can find their own niche and growing space.





Ewelina Wołoszyn

 Managing Partner & Founder

 AI Healthcare Capital

Ewelina is the Founder and Managing Partner of AI Healthcare Capital, a Private Equity Fund 100% focused on protecting and improving people's lives, from patients to healthcare professionals, by revolutionizing the healthcare system through investments and acquisitions in Healthcare Technology. She is also a trusted advisor with ASTIA, a global investment organization that is leveling the playing field for female founders. Ewelina has been featured in Forbes Magazine.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

What excites me the most is the speed of change and the scale that can be achieved in a relatively short period of time, when you compare it to other inventions that took more time in the past. The industry is always open to great talents, ideas, and solutions. And by focusing on AI & healthcare I can be a part of significant change and help to improve millions if not billions of lives.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Defining a new patient care journey by evaluating AI-based solutions that are reimagining the healthcare system in ways that could not exist without the use of AI. The team I am leading is at the forefront of the transformation of how the healthcare system treats people that are impacted daily.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

The most challenging situations were dealing with the Russian invasion of Ukraine, or natural disasters in the US, which were affecting other team members. Knowing that people that you care about are in danger or could be in danger, addressing their feelings, and speaking freely about them with other team members was a challenge.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

The industry holds so many opportunities for people with different skill sets, ages, and lifestyles. The IT industry is more diverse than other industries and increasingly female founders are getting the investment and attention they deserve.





Kamila Wosińska

 Head of Global ESG Data Governance & Senior Manager CSR, Social & Business

 GFT

Kamila is a Head of Global ESG Data Governance, and a Senior Manager in CSR, Social & Business. She has over 15 years of professional experience in people management, and the planning and implementation of business strategies in the IT, SSC, finance, banking and consulting sectors. Kamila is an accredited Coach & Mentor supporting leadership development of women in IT. She is a talent-based people management enthusiast and motivational conference speaker, Lecturer at Kozminski University and ESG Leadership Mentor and Coach.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

It was not about a specific industry, but about a workplace and employer with values consistent with my own. I strongly believe in the people first paradigm, and I sought a workplace for which this is not just another buzzword, but an actual value; a key element of the organisation's culture. Equal opportunities, thinking out of the box, creativity and innovation, impact and contribution are crucial. The ICT sector met my expectations in terms of organisational values, the mission and the management paradigms.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Creating from scratch the postgraduate programme 'GFT & Google Cloud-solutions in practice' at Kozminski University. The idea was born in my mind as a response to the ICT market's need for experts in the cloud area with a high level of emotional intelligence. We therefore included soft skills workshops in the programme. The success of the whole project has been the result of the voluntary involvement of passionate employees showing creativity and a desire to go the extra mile.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Handling a senior domain expert's expectations and approach in a field that was unfamiliar to me was a major challenge. I had managed similar situations before, as for me, leadership doesn't require domain expertise; it's about supporting and empowering experts. This expert's lack of trust and respect was unique and had an impact on team morale and their sense of community. Seeking guidance from experienced leaders helped me navigate this situation and foster better teamwork.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

I was positively surprised by the openness of the organisation and of the IT world to trial and fail. Also, the constant pursuit of professional and personal development, which is somehow required by the dynamics of technological transformation. However, here, the need for development does not stem from an organisation's requirement, but from an internal need of the employees. Personally, the greatest value for me was the opportunity to take on initiatives close to my heart and values.



Wiktoria Wójcik

 Co-Founder & CMO

 inStreamly

Wiktoria is the co-founder of inStreamly & Streamcoi. She has been awarded Forbes 30 under 30 (2022) in Media and Marketing, Forbes Poland 25 under 25 & Businesswoman of the Year: Leader in New Technologies. She has been a streamer and an e-sports host as well as working as a marketer in an e-sports organization. Her companies have helped over 100 000 gaming creators work with 120+ brands including Netflix, Samsung and PlayStation. With inStreamly, she wants to build a better world for metaverse creators and everyone working with them.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

It chose me. I grew up a digital native; splitting my free time between going outside with friends to spending time with them online in games. I started live streaming myself playing games and quickly realized that there is a future and many career paths in gaming. So I started exploring as many of them as possible.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Being able, at such a young age, to do things that excite me for a living. Feeling that the best use of my time at work is to do what I like doing.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

1. Learning to let go – hiring people to do a job you were used to doing yourself. I had to learn to trust others, allowing them to do things differently than I would do.
2. Allowing yourself to be straightforward instead of being nice. Learning that the right people will appreciate straightforward negative feedback and that I should prioritize it instead of the delusional "keeping it nice" approach which was a mistake that shot me in the back the most.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

That you do not need to have a technical background or skills to bring something valuable to the table. And that there is a great need for Swiss-army-knife-generalists instead of very narrow specialists.



Agnieszka Wrońska

 Managing Director Services Transformation Division

 PKO BP

An experienced leader and a driving force behind technology integration in organizations, Agnieszka possesses faith and expertise in integrating low code/no code development. Taking on the challenge of bridging the gap between operations and the IT domain, she has initiated and led the transformation of services at PKO Bank Polski. Over the last 10 years, she successfully guided teams of 3k+ employees from manual task coordination to hyper-automation.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

It was my passion for transformative change that drove my path to the new technologies industry. I saw the potential to reshape the understanding of back-office functions, empowering teams through low code/no code. Embracing tech-driven efficiency and automation, I seek to inspire progress and unlock untapped potential.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

My greatest professional achievement is reshaping back-office functions and embracing technology-driven efficiency and automation in the financial services industry. Leading transformative projects at PKO Bank Polski, I empowered teams to upskill and reskill as low code developers, analytics and driving a culture of collaboration and innovation. This achievement unlocked untapped potential, boosting productivity, and elevating the organization to new levels of efficiency and effectiveness.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

The most challenging professional situation I encountered after assuming a managerial role was leading the transformation of services at PKO Bank Polski. Guiding a large team of 3k+ employees from manual task coordination to hyper-automation required strategic thinking, collaboration, and innovative approaches. Overcoming resistance to change and fostering a tech-driven culture were key to achieving successful integration and enhancing overall efficiency.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

The most surprising aspect of the IT industry was its dynamic and ever-evolving nature. Technologies and trends change rapidly, and continuous learning is essential. Embracing this fast-paced environment, I found the boundless opportunities for innovation and growth both exciting and challenging, inspiring my passion for transformative change and driving progress in the field.



Ewelina Wyspiańska-Trojnarz

 Vice President

 Gra o Sens Foundation



Ewelina is passionate about Agile and servant leadership. She also believes in the importance of building inclusivity in IT and healthy work environments, which is why she became a Vice president of Gra o Sens Foundation in order to work on these topics on a larger scale. Besides work, her hobbies are psychology in management, dancing and cosplay. Meditation gives her respite. This year she'll also become a writer, as her first fantasy book - "Rytuał Krwi" is going to be published in August '2023. A big year!

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I'm confident that this industry creates the future and I want to be a part of it. I also think IT is an industry that sets good standards and work ethics, for example in management, which can also be promoted into other industries. This is what I try to do.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I'm not the type that needs a trophy to feel like I achieved something. For me, the smile of a person that I have helped is the best reward. That feeling when you know you made a positive impact is the biggest achievement.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

I think there were many, but for me the most difficult are those that required changing my mindset and thinking differently. There were, for example, moments when I made a mistake and needed to admit to it. That's always a good lesson in humility.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

The work culture and the completely different treatment of employees. Before I started my journey in IT I had worked in few other industries, and it felt much more like carrying out orders than doing creative work and being trusted by my boss. In IT it's different and allows more freedom.



Lyubov Yudenko

 Chief Operations Officer

 Infopulse



Lyubov was born in Dnipro, Ukraine, and embraces life, math, and sports. Her family values are empathy, compassion, and involvement. Her passion drives her career and personal growth. Life is her marathon: 28 years in IT, from QA engineer to COO; 25 years happily married; Proud of 3 adult children; Swam ~2000 km in 5 years, incl. 3*6.5 km Bosphorus races, 2*10 km races; At 42, ran a 42 km marathon (Nice-Cannes). Lyubov possesses boundless energy, which she gladly shares with those around her.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I was born into a family of mathematicians and since childhood I have been fascinated by logical puzzles. On my first Spectrum computer, I played and created my first programs. In 8th grade, I became charmed by a boy who was configuring computers at school. Through my friendship with this boy I fell in love with Information Technologies. Later, I enrolled in "Computer Systems and Networks" at the Dnipropetrovsk Institute of Railway Transport. That is how my IT career started.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

It's tough to pick one achievement. Progressing as an executive manager in the QA, HR, and now as COO, I've always gathered professionals, who share my values and who work together to achieve goals and overcome challenges. I take pride in each professional who has grown with me whilst teaching me and returning the support. In other words, I'm proud of the environment I've built and the management style I've developed, where everything revolves around people and is for people.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

As a manager in the modern VUCA-world, I've grown by facing dozens of intensive challenges. As COO, the most complex one was ensuring business sustainability over subsequent unstable years marked by global COVID pandemic and the full-scale invasion of Ukraine by Russian aggressors. Leading the Crisis Management process, I coordinated 150+ persons from 7 departments in 3 countries. The project included business continuity planning, communication flows, data center distribution, and internal IT solutions.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

What surprised and inspired me at the beginning of my career in the IT industry was the rapid pace of technological advancements. Now, it serves as motivation for personal growth and constant enjoyment in my work.



Noemi Zabari

 CEO

 Astrotectonic



Noemi is a researcher and entrepreneur in the field of science, specializing in theoretical physics and dense matter. She is a co-founder of *Astroteq.ai*; a company focused on the intersection of astronomy and geology and the co-lead of the *CREDOcosmo-seismic* group of *credo.science*, which works to advance our understanding of the interactions between the Earth, the cosmos, and seismology. Noemi is a fan of new technologies and an enthusiast in embracing a positive mindset in life.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I chose the new technologies industry because it aligns perfectly with my passion for exploration and innovation. As a researcher and entrepreneur in STEM, I have always been fascinated by pushing the boundaries of knowledge. Embracing new technologies allows me to delve deeper into these realms, enabling us to make groundbreaking discoveries and solve complex problems. This feels like an amazing opportunity and I am honored to be taking part in the world's new discoveries.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

One of my greatest professional achievements is spearheading a groundbreaking research project through vast collaboration that resulted in a significant scientific discovery. This achievement not only advances the knowledge in our domain but also opens up possibilities for practical applications. Witnessing the impact of this work on the scientific community and the potential for real-world implications has been immensely fulfilling. Moreover, it reinforced my belief in the power of dedication.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

The most challenging professional situation I faced was leading a team through a major organizational restructuring. Despite guidance from mentors and advisors, it was an extremely challenging endeavor. Navigating through uncertainties and maintaining team morale required a delicate balance of diplomacy, empathy, and strong leadership skills. However, I consider these challenges as opportunities for growth and continuous learning with the ultimate goal of creating a supportive environment.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

I think it was and still is the incredible pace of technological advancements. The speed at which new technologies emerge and disrupt traditional ways of doing things is astonishing! and now with AI, the possibilities are even more visible.



Katarzyna Zalass

 CEO

 Zalass Consulting (IOA Software House)



Katarzyna is a Digital Transformation Architect at Software House IOA. Passionate about using distributed data for business development, she is the co-author of the crowdsourcing platform PeekQuick and the retail execution platform c-How.io. She is also co-owner of one of the first coworking offices in Poland - StudioPrzyLea. Katarzyna is an entrepreneur, manager, business trainer and sociologist. Before taking up the challenges of running her own business, she worked as a marketing manager for companies in the construction and advertising industries.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

It was actually an accident, not a choice. A combination of professional paths and people allowed me to reach the place where I am now. It turned out that I feel good here and it has stayed that way.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I am proud of what our company is like. Everyday, I see smaller and bigger successes, and how we deal with difficulties. It's been 10 years, so sometimes I allow myself to say: you made it :).

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Years are passing by and I still think that it was leading the company through a significant pivot without harming the team and keeping the focus on development. That was the only time I felt lost. Where are we going? How to do it? I remember the awareness of having a great responsibility - people important to us depended on us, trusted us and waited for the next moves.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

I was surprised by the low level of understanding between the IT and non-IT worlds. It still surprises me sometimes, although I seem to be more skilled at communicating now and avoiding the unpleasant consequences of seeing the same things differently.



Dorota Zaremba

 Vice President, MidMarket Sales Director

 SAP Poland



Dorota is currently the vice president of the management board and MidMarket sales director at SAP Poland. She has been part of the company's ecosystem in Poland for 15 years and has unique experience, gained both on the customer and partner side of SAP and within the organization itself; a leading provider of business applications. On behalf of the management board, she is responsible for the development of the SME offering, with a particular focus on cloud solutions.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

In the early nineties, when I was in primary school, my dad used to take me with him to work at a technology company (cable TV and, later, an internet provider). I could play The Prince of Persia on his PC and eat cookies for the whole day, and I thought this must be the best job in the world. From an early age I have witnessed the development of IT in Poland and have soaked it up so much that IT seemed to me a natural and fascinating direction of development. I was not mistaken.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Assuming my current role as a Board Member and Sales Director for SME at SAP at the age of 36 was somewhat early. I view it as a remarkable achievement, something I've strived and longed for, though I didn't anticipate it happening quite so soon. I carefully crafted my position, and in turn, gained autonomy and confidence. I am firmly convinced that the best part of my journey still lies ahead.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

When I returned to work after maternity leave, I confronted a drastically different scenario in the company. I had to start from zero, rebuilding my position, even trust from my team which was affected by personal conflicts. I was also adjusting to my new role as a mother. Torn between work and family I felt that I needed to catch up with the 'backlog' in the company. That experience left a lasting impact on me. It allowed me to better distinguish between professional and personal challenges.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

I was surprised by how many different types of jobs there are in IT. It's like being a doctor: you can be very good at one type of technology, but only know a little bit about the other types. What I learned in school about Computer Science didn't show me everything about the industry. When I started to work, I saw that people in this job can talk in very different ways (somewhat like different languages), and they can see technology in different ways.



Anna Zarudzka

 Co-CEO

 Boldare



Anna is the Co-CEO and Co-Founder of Boldare, which supports clients from all over the world in the development of apps and other digital products. She has been involved in the IT & Services industry since 2008. Anna is experienced in business transformation, change management and self-organisation (including holacracy). Outside the business world, she acts as an ambassador for democratic education - she is the founder of the Boldare Foundation and the democratic school "Grajka".

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I always wanted to live an interesting life. Before entering the IT world I used to work in the television and media sector. Due to boredom from the dwindling opportunities in the industry (television networks were just starting to buy digital cameras at the time) I wanted to use my skills and experience in the new digital online reality. I've always been driven by curiosity, I've tried many different things in life and back then the rapidly emerging IT sector was very attractive to me.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I would say that sticking to my values and continuing to go off the beaten path regardless of obstacles and challenges we've encountered so far. Five years ago we decided to choose a different, rather unique and unpopular business model which means that we've been growing more slowly than a typical dev shop but we've been developing the company entirely on our own terms. And I consider this independence as one of the biggest successes.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Our company is based on self-organization which means that we have distributed responsibilities. I'm not a manager - I'm a co-CEO but like every other employee I fulfill many different roles. In this context, when a few years ago we introduced a holacratic model the biggest challenge was to convince others that they have a real autonomy in decision making and I'm not the one to control them or tell them what they have to do.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

When I entered the very top-heavy world of software development I was surprised by a new way of thinking, acting and making decisions which is based on sound analysis and data. It took me a while to get used to it. However, a few years ago I went back to intuitive decision making and to compare my "gut feelings" with some data. And I think that's the best combination.



Agnieszka Zarzycka

 CEE SMC Corporate Business Applications Lead

 Microsoft

Business oriented sales manager with senior level execution in all segments of enterprise IT applications business models. Helping customers to develop and implement a successful business transformation using cloud-based solutions as the enablers. Professional experience gathered during fascinating journeys from PR through marketing, partner recruitment to direct sales and business development. Working in a multinational environment, leading and coaching sales teams.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

The new technologies industry was a new undiscovered land back in the late 90s. It was a promising and fascinating journey into the future. Nothing was set in stone; new ideas were converted into solutions in the blink of an eye. Whatever I touched opened new horizons of opportunities. It was so tangible. The revolution was happening before my eyes and I could be part of it, experience it, and see how impactful new technologies could be in all aspects of our lives and economy.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

The place where I am today is the result of a sum of achievements I have accomplished in the past 20+ years. Each role brought me joy, satisfaction, and a sense of success. Looking from today's perspective, I would not focus on achievements like tripling or quadrupling the revenue, gaining more market share, beating the competition, or winning new projects. I see building great teams, creating an atmosphere of trust and collaboration, and looking beyond today as my biggest professional achievement.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Doubling my team just two weeks before lockdown and making the newcomers become one team working 100% remotely was the most challenging situation I have encountered, but also one that helped me to get rid of the "am I good enough to handle it" syndrome. No lessons from the past, no golden rules. I just had my intuition to rely on; I had to trust myself fully and realize I was good enough. The reward was priceless. The team we built over three years was the best ever!

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

I was surprised by the diversity and inclusivity of the IT industry. I had the wrong idea that IT was only for analytical brains. I did not see the value of a humanist in IT. I learned that IT is also about understanding and communicating with people, creating user-friendly and meaningful products, and bringing social and ethical insights. I felt valued and respected for my perspective and skills. I can't imagine any other industry benefiting so much from diversity.



Magdalena Zawadzka-Kiczko

 IT Senior Director

 Procter&Gamble



Magdalena started her career at P&G in 2000 in Warsaw, after graduating from the University of Economics in Poznan, enriched with graduate Economics studies at the University of Massachusetts. She has since held a variety of IT roles across brands, sales, product supply and x-domain, mainly in the Data and Application & Integration disciplines. She has led major business transformations across technology, processes and organization. She has recently stepped into the sustainability area and created a new team to support the company's ambitious goals.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I have always been a "math" person. When I studied Management Systems and Mathematical Economics, I was one of only four females in the group, but it did not feel odd, as it was where my passion lay. Then I had a choice of following a PhD path at the university or joining industry. Choosing P&G and an IT Analyst position there was like closing my eyes and jumping into deep, unknown waters. Only after some time, growing and maturing, I realized how many opportunities are in front of me.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Reaching the level when I became an organizational leader growing the careers of others and enabling them to deliver great business results. Setting moonshot goals and strategies in a way that others could follow, and being inspired and energized, are not only great personal accomplishments, but a way to grow big, capable organizations. I am proud of seeing so many talented women around me whom I have been managing, helping grow, supporting and mentoring and how much IT has changed its face into a more feminine one.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

I had to convince the leadership of the company in Europe that we needed to fix master data. Master data is a complex topic, not easy to understand and not obvious how a quality product master data can help deliver better business results. I came up with a complete business case, convinced the leaders and got all the support I needed to run a multi-dimensional transformation: across the organization, its work processes and technology. My reflection is that the experience was like doing an MBA, just inside P&G.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

An IT professional does not need to have a back-office career and be detached from the business. I have always felt like a true business leader, having sat at the table among multifunctional and diverse teams, and bringing very distinctive skills to the mix. Front leadership and thought leadership are so much needed and appreciated when coming from IT professionals, especially at times when technology brings so many new opportunities for businesses.





Alicja Zawadzka

 Director of Business Operations, Global Procurement Services

 Cisco Systems

Alicja is a senior leader with 16+ years of experience in managing global procurement programs within the IT industry. She is an Influential driver of change who motivates and brings together global teams to achieve business value. Alicja is passionate about developing talent by finding the best in people.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

Working in the IT industry came as a natural career path driven by a sequence of personal and business opportunities. The continuous evolution of technology presents endless opportunities for learning and growth. Being able to influence the development of solutions and driving positive change for people and business is both inspiring and fulfilling.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

Successful implementation of a global procurement operations vision and strategy by implementing cost-saving initiatives, optimizing procurement processes and by bringing new procurement solutions to enhance buying behavior at Cisco. Building up and mentoring high-performing teams. Personally developing and driving global teams from Poland which is still unique in this part of the world.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

Building up new cross-functional teams and processes to adapt to new company strategies and solutions. Changing organizational culture towards agile decision-making and speed of execution.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

The IT industry is a global, dynamic and constantly evolving sector; teams and projects are driven across different countries and time zones. Working with teams that have technical skills are essential, but soft skills like communication, collaboration, and adaptability are equally important. It's also a key to build strong internal and external networks to be able to influence the correct path for the company or organization.



Magdalena Ziębińska

 COO

 eVolpe Consulting Group



Magdalena Ziębińska is a skilled professional with a diploma in Computer Science from two universities: Universität Klagenfurt and Poznan University of Technology. As COO of eVolpe, she manages internal company operations and leads the IT Business Analysis Team. Moreover, she is responsible for project management (for large-scale projects) and business analysis. With vast expertise in agile methodologies, she adapts to changing requirements in the dynamic business landscape.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I have always been fascinated by technology and had a strong interest in STEM subjects. In high school I read the book "Symfonia c++" by Jerzy Grębosz and it fueled my passion for the industry. Technology's ever-changing landscape and its impact on society motivated me to pursue a career in the new technologies industry.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

My greatest professional achievement is owning and operationally managing a company as big and dynamic as eVolpe. Successfully leading and growing the business has been a significant accomplishment in my career, showcasing my capabilities as a leader and entrepreneur.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

The biggest challenge in my managerial career was returning to work after my first year-long maternity leave. As I held a critical role in the organization, my absence significantly impacted the company's performance and condition. My primary goal was to introduce new processes and management strategies, appoint a new management team (including middle-management), and, above all, motivate and inspire the team again.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

I used to believe that coding skills were the sole focus. Now I know that soft skills are equally crucial. Having well-developed soft skills can lead to a remarkable career. Technical skills taught in studies are not always the key; it is essential to communicate effectively, be able to manage projects, identify risks and excel in business analysis. While technical skills are common in IT, it's the rare and valuable soft skills that are in high demand. Mastering them can set one apart and help them become a leader.



Zanda Zilgalve

 CEO

 IT Education Foundation



Zanda is Head of the IT Education Foundation in Latvia with a sound leadership background in public, private and NGO sectors. She returned to IT three years ago to fully realize the potential of impact that the industry can make in the education system through corporate philanthropy projects. Zanda is a design thinking enthusiast and lecturer who teaches those who teach.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW/ TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

I chose corporate philanthropy, which has enormous, untapped potential to influence processes, including education. Technology as a basis for innovation and accessibility were decisive criteria for accepting the challenge of running the foundation. Latvia needs development in the field of IT in all sectors. I am fortunate to be able to apply and promote them in a meaningful way to and for society.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I devote the greatest energy to building long-term, trusting relationships among various stakeholders. The biggest challenge and responsibility is to gain the trust of the education sector in my own country, by implementing initiatives on a national-scale. When I started managing the Foundation, I set a goal for this organisation to be heard by both the Ministry of Education and the Parliament, which I achieved; after a few months, we publicly signed a memorandum of cooperation.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

The biggest challenge in every new leadership position is to ensure success, raising previous activities to a new quality – with greater positive impact. I am sure that under my leadership, new initiatives such as design thinking workshops in schools, the "Inspiration Day" conference, collaboration with neighbouring Lithuania and many others have already reached new target audiences, promoting IT as a profession of the present, not only of the future.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

When I entered the IT industry, I was surprised by the dynamism of the industry, its ability to adapt to changing conditions better than other industries. At the same time, I felt the depth and importance of the industry – being in constant motion, the impact that this industry can create is massive and lasting. I kept that feeling as an essential skill – to make a significant contribution and remain open to everything new.



Dorota Zimnoch

 Global Industry Advisor

 Microsoft

Dorota Zimnoch, a Global Industry Advisor at Microsoft, Innovation & Digital Transformation leader who reshaped businesses at Citi, AIG, Volvo FS, Santander, and more. Entrepreneur, Investor, NED. Women in Tech advocate, mentor, and speaker. President of Polish City Club (2010-2014), honoured with the Gold Cross of Merit for boosting Poland's global image. She holds degrees from Warsaw University, Warsaw School of Economics (Leader 2022), Budapest University, and Stanford's Tech Entrepreneurship.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES INDUSTRY?

The interesting question is, what is the 'new technologies industry'? It has been around since the mid- 20th century, yet its rapid evolution challenges the perception of 'new'.

What attracts me to work with technology are: 1. endless opportunities to innovate and create; 2. tangible impact on our lives and the planet; 3. human-technology connection, embracing adoption and adaptability. For me the excitement is the convergence of people, processes, and technology to drive transformation and progress.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT?

I've been fortunate to pioneer many cutting-edge solutions, leveraging tech for real impact. For instance, digital banking proved to be our lifeline during the lockdown. Or, digital insurance platform, where purchasing coverage against calculated risks, empowers us to push boundaries and achieve more. However, my most significant successes lie in driving culture change in organisations. Inspiring people to see things differently and view assignments as opportunities to excel is truly rewarding.

WHAT WAS THE MOST CHALLENGING PROFESSIONAL SITUATION YOU HAD TO SOLVE AFTER TAKING A MANAGERIAL POSITION?

I was asked to take over a struggling multimillion-dollar transformation with low morale. I prioritized people. Engaged the team in candid discussions. We addressed root issues, co-created a clear strategy and effective execution plan. Fostering positive, fun, open, and transparent work culture where everyone felt valued was vital. Everybody took ownership of the project, going the extra mile, knowing that each team member's contribution mattered. The result? A team success and a lasting bond.

WHAT SURPRISED YOU WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN THE IT INDUSTRY?

You don't need to be a tech expert to succeed in IT. While programming and engineering are valued, creativity, empathy, problem-solving, an open mind, and effective communication matter too — like in the prompt engineer role.

What surprises me also is women still underestimating their potential in tech and their exclusion. Let the examples of those who dared to step out of their comfort zones become inspiring examples of driving positive change.



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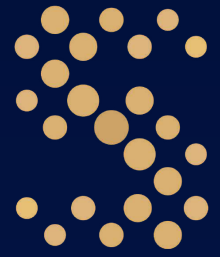


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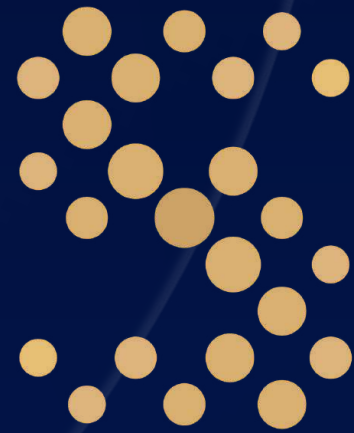
Anita Kijanka
Founder & President of Strong Women in IT



Contact to our team: raport@strongwomeninit.com +48 606 691 708

Contact for media: agnieszka.wronska@strongwomeninit.com +48 607 292 224

#StrongWomeninIT



STRONG WOMEN IN IT TEAM:

Founder & President: Anita Kijanka

Vice President: Małgorzata Gryz

Project Manager: Justyna Burghardt-Sokłyga

Design Specialist: Aleksandra Sypek

PR Account Manager: Agnieszka Wrońska