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SCHUSTER

BeCOME ALLIES

A framework for change



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Introduction

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There are no words to express the abyss between isolation and having one ally.

G. K. Chesterton, Author

I've been in high tech for most of my career. Many times, I was the only woman in the room—a lonely place to be. Over those years, I've felt dismissed, disregarded, and disrespected. Even after I earned a coveted seat at the table, I was compelled to raise or deepen my voice just to be heard. And too many times, I've had to justify my presence and my opinion by listing a curriculum vitae of experience and education—something that was never asked of my male peers.

I admit that I became numb to these situations. Then, approximately five years ago, an email chain surfaced where women in my industry were sharing their stories and feelings. The email chain was extensive—it read like a Tolstoian novel. It was then that I realized their experiences were my experiences. I questioned why should we be forced to endure like this to work in this industry? Why should we become numb? Why are we putting up with this?

Since then, I have dedicated myself to making our industry welcoming and equitable for all.

To be clear, I don't believe any of the men in those meetings intentionally excluded or silenced me. But here's something I've learned over the years: one single ally in the room can make all the difference in the world. One ally can help you shed the cloak of invisibility by drawing attention to your presence and generating space for your voice and ideas.

Men hold 62% of entry-level manager positions, while women hold just 38%. The number of women decreases at every subsequent senior managerial level.¹

To make noticeable and purposeful strides in closing the gender equity gap in high tech, we need two things to happen; diversity figures must be reported to governing bodies so they can be tracked and audited, and we need stronger male allyship.

I'm tired of being the only woman in the room. We need more women in technology. We need more women in leadership. And we need more allies to help us get there.

I call on each person reading this eBook, regardless of gender, to BeCOME an agent of change—BeCOME an ally. I don't expect you to do it without guidance.

In my **TEDx Talk**, I outlined my framework for how to BeCOME an ally: Connect, Outreach, Mentor, and Empower. This framework addresses four fundamental methods to create a multiplier effect and get more women into tech. This eBook goes deeper into the framework and expands on the fourth method, Empower, with six additional actions you can take each day to help make our industry better, stronger, and more inclusive.

Actor Victor Webster said, “Everything we do, even the slightest thing we do, can have a ripple effect and repercussions that emanate. If you throw a pebble into the water on one side of the ocean, it can create a tidal wave on the other side.”

Consider the actions captured in this eBook your pebbles. Together, let's throw them courageously and with purpose. Hopefully, on the other end, we'll create a tidal wave of change.

— **Gabriella Schuster**



What is an ally, and why are they so important?





There is often a lack of awareness that stems from unintentional ignorance in conversations about diversity, equity, and inclusion. The problem is that, if one has never experienced something (in this case: being the only woman in the room), it's hard to imagine what that feels like or even recognize its consequences.

As Ipek Serifsoy, President of the Deep Coaching Institute, said, “Men have a terrible time fathoming the things women experience daily. Women are reluctant to share negative experiences with men because they know on some level that men don't share those experiences.”²

One in five women reports being the ‘only’ woman in the room at work. Senior-level women and women in male-dominated professions are twice as likely to have this experience. ‘Only’ women are also 50% more likely to consider quitting.³

Challenges women face in a male-dominated workplace:

- The “cloak of invisibility”
- Trying to be heard in a room full of loud voices
- Feeling isolated and lonely
- Having to justify their experience or worthiness
- Being talked around instead of spoken to
- Feeling uncertain that they belong

Having even one ally can help women overcome these challenges, and male allyship is part of an effective change strategy. According to a recent study, women who believe they have strong allies at work feel a greater sense of inclusion and more energy and enthusiasm on the job.⁴ Beyond creating a better workplace and a better industry, men who act as allies to women report proportionately greater levels of personal growth and are more likely to say they attained skills that make them better husbands, fathers, brothers, and sons.⁵

But what is an ally? According to a recent study, an ally is “...an organizational ‘champion for change’” and “refers to men who have enhanced credibility and positional power to confer approval for a cause, create accountability, and model behaviors and communicate personal diversity experiences that promote that cause over a sustained period.”⁶

The study clarifies that “simply being a ‘good’ man doesn’t make one an ally. Rather, a critical element of equity initiatives is that men understand their role as allies. In other words, effective allies understand how to use their powerful positions to support social justice without perpetuating domination.”⁷



When men are deliberately engaged in gender inclusion programs, 96% of organizations see progress—compared to only 30% of organizations where men are not engaged.⁸

“ —

My motivation has been that I think men need to be involved in the conversation to be part of the solution, because it's not a women's issue, it's a human issue.

Anonymous ally⁹



Research proposes that men may be uncertain about how to be an ally and have trouble navigating workplace power dynamics.¹⁰

“Often there is a reluctance to engage, because men are anxious about what they should be doing and are afraid to make mistakes. Or they back away because they think it's only a women's issue.”¹¹

To be clear: It's not a women's issue; it's a leadership issue because it affects the entire organization. And allies aren't just important for women; they are essential for people of color and any marginalized group who finds themselves “an only” in a room.

What follows is a tactical guide to allyship with clear steps that anyone can take to be an ally—exclusive of gender.

CHAPTER TWO



The BeCOME framework for change

In 1991, 36% of the computing workforce was women.¹² Since that peak, the percentage has been steadily declining and now sits at only 25% (only 2% are Hispanic women, 3% are African American women, and 7% are Asian women).¹³

We're going in the wrong direction.

The good news is that we can do something about these numbers and the corporate cultures perpetuating them. Through technology democratization, purposeful leadership, and male allyship, we can close the inequity gap and create a new narrative. Together, we can create access and opportunity and BeCOME agents of change by taking four actions.



CONNECT
EMPOWER
BeC@ME
TURN
RESEARCH

BeC: Connect

Make intentional connections with women in your network. Reach out and give women access to you and everyone in your community.

This simple yet intentional action can make a significant impact. Think about the introduction someone made for you that led to a new role or business opportunity. We all have those connections that changed our path and opened a door. What if you hadn't made that connection? Would you be where you are today?

It's time to return the favor by connecting. Invite female employees into your network and introduce them to your connections. Join an organization such as **Women in Cloud** or **The Women in Technology (WIT) Network**. At least a dozen organizations are dedicated to connecting women in the technology field and creating access to opportunities.

“ —

Networking is not about just connecting people. It's about connecting people with people, people with ideas, and people with opportunities.

**Michele Jennae,
Author, The Connectworker**

My moment of realization

A few years ago, I was having coffee with a couple of friends of mine. Like me, they were all too familiar with the struggles women face in the technology industry—being the only woman in the room, fighting to be heard and seen.

During that conversation, we agreed that one of the biggest hurdles to gender equity is access to business opportunities, leadership positions, venture capital funding, etc. The door doesn't just swing open for women in tech. Historically, when we knock, no one answers. And that's when we can actually find the door. Oftentimes, the entrance is hidden or inaccessible.

I remember after that discussion asking myself, how had I survived 27 years in this industry when the deck was stacked against me? How was I able to climb to a leadership position in one of the largest tech companies in the world while others couldn't even find the door?

It was because I had access to opportunities that eluded so many others. Of course, I worked my tail off to make the most of those opportunities. But it was the connections I made—and *that others made on my behalf*—that set me on a path to success.



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BeCO: Outreach

Examine recruiting practices, hiring practices, and supplier selection practices. When you post a job, do you screen *out* candidates or do you screen *in* for diversity?

When I first started at Microsoft in 1995, we were taught a “formula” for interviewing candidates and a way to assess if they were a “Microsoft fit.” It is funny to think about that now because I would argue that this was precisely the wrong way to go about hiring great talent.

With that approach, you rule out diversity because you are looking for someone who already “fits the mold.” Whether that means they came from the “right” schools or had the “right” background and experience. Luckily the leadership team recognized that the approach was not only cumbersome and narrowminded but that it was an obstacle to building an organization that had a growth mindset.

Patty McCord, chief talent officer at Netflix from 1998 to 2012, experienced the same phenomena, albeit she was well-positioned to reframe the issue and make the required changes. In her article, *How to Hire*, the opening statement says it all. “I really dislike the term ‘A player.’ It implies a grading system that can determine who will be best for a position.”¹⁴

McCord shares incredible words of wisdom about how to look beyond what is on paper and avoid the pitfalls of enabling interviewers to hire people just like themselves. McCord reflects, “In truth, one company’s A player may be a B player for another firm. There is no formula for what makes people successful.” She advises that companies need to build a hiring system that looks beneath the surface and probes for capability rather than platitude. McCord also shares the importance of recruiting as a core aspect of everyone’s job; a continuous process with accountability ultimately lying with the managers, not human resources.



Another article by James Milligan, global head of technology at Hays, stresses this same point and goes on to introduce the term “culture add” to replace “culture fit.” Culture add is “where companies should seek out people who will add something that the team does not currently have.”¹⁵

To build a more innovative workforce, one that thrives with a growth mindset, it’s critical to examine your recruiting, interviewing, and hiring practices to ensure your company is hiring for a more diverse and inclusive team.

In 2016, **Enavate**, an IT organization focused on Microsoft Dynamics, was at a crossroads. Revenue was down, and the leadership team was unsure about the company’s future.

“I had forgotten why I started the business, which was to create an amazing place to work that inspired our team members. So, we made a conscious decision to focus less on the numbers and more on our culture and our people,” said Enavate’s CEO Thomas Ajspur.

As Enavate’s leaders set out to turn things around, they realized it wasn’t just a revenue and culture problem they had to solve. They had a gender equity problem too. Only 20% of the company’s workforce were women. So, they changed their hiring practices—not by creating policies to require diversity, but by changing their approach to recruiting.

Instead of hiring based on skills or “people they knew,” hiring managers were expected to look at candidates for who they were as individuals. They started hiring for quality rather than skills or expediency. That approach has doubled the number of women at Enavate. Now, 40% of its team members and 40% of its leadership team are women.

“I’m proud of getting to 40% gender equity, but I’m not happy. We need to get to a 50-50 split,” said Ajspur.

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We have an obligation as a company and to society to help people who have a harder time getting access to roles in technology.

Thomas Ajspur, CEO, Enavate



My commitment

A few years ago, I challenged the leaders in my own organization to stop hiring for expediency and intentionally go outside the company to generate truly diverse candidate pools, and then to ensure a diverse panel conducted the interviews. We were all inspired by the high quality of diverse candidates that emerged. It changed the culture of our organization, and as a result, the gender diversity in our team improved dramatically.

There's something special that happens when you have gender equity in your team. There's more collaboration. You get new ideas and fresh perspectives. And as an organization, we became more empathetic. More vulnerable. More human. Overall, we became a healthier organization because we had equitable representation.

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BeCOM: Mentor

I would not be where I am today without the many men and women who have mentored me along the way. When you mentor, you blaze a trail for others to follow.

According to Chronus, a technology learning organization, 71% of Fortune 500 companies offer mentoring programs to their employees. They understand that mentorship benefits everyone. Good mentoring leads to more tremendous career success for the person getting the advice. The person *giving* the advice broadens their network and can strengthen their position as a leader. And mentorship benefits organizations by developing a culture of learning and growth, increasing employee engagement and attracting high-quality talent.

Paying it forward through mentorship

Mentorship has always been important to me. Even before I started working, when I was just leaving college and trying to figure out what kind of job I should even be looking for. I was so overwhelmed—I could do anything.

I started contacting people, Michigan alums who had titles or jobs that sounded interesting or impressive, and I would interview them. I didn't know it then, but those were all great mentors.

I was reaching out for mentorship to all these people. And the insights and the confidence those interviews gave me was tremendous, and it didn't take much of the mentor's time.

In every job I have ever had, I would look for people who I would admire for a specific skill or attribute. If I admired somebody's public speaking ability, I'd talk to them about what they did to get better. I would identify someone who knew so much about a particular technology and ask them how they learned and developed that knowledge.



Most often, people think of working with mentors only when they're planning their next career move. But I've personally reached out to mentors to gain their perspective on a challenge I'm facing in the business and understand how they would handle it based on their experience.

My mentors have shared the value of their successes and failures and have helped me avoid the invisible tripwires and unwritten business rules. They have lifted me up when my confidence waned.

To return the favor, I've always made a point of mentoring others and sharing my own experiences—the good and the bad. I've had people tell me that the 30 minutes I spent with them changed their perspective dramatically. And oftentimes, that introduction to one of your contacts can lead to a job, career change, and BeCOME a life-changing pivotal moment for someone else.

Mentoring—and being mentored—is a beautiful and fulfilling endeavor. It is a simple action you can take to bring light, energy, and focus to someone's life. And I know first-hand that mentoring is crucial to attracting and retaining more women in the technology industry.

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Mentorship is an exchange of wisdom. To learn from one another and our lived experiences, we must first find that spark of connection. There is nothing more effective for launching your career than connecting with the right people.

**Sarah Haggard,
CEO & Founder, Tribute Modern
Mentorship App**

That's all mentorship. It doesn't have to be a formal or long relationship. It can be, but it doesn't have to take that path. Mentorship can be a 15-minute virtual coffee conversation or a 30-minute interview. Just ask someone to talk about themselves—it's not as hard as you think, most people are willing.

Mentors can be anyone. A co-worker who has a strong skill set, a manager, an executive at a company you aspire to work at or in a role you aspire to rise into. To me, a mentor is typically someone who has experience you'd like to learn from. You may turn to a mentor when you want to learn how to work with different industry people, navigate the sales organization, or learn more about specific roles.

BeCOME: TUTOR ARCH
CONNECTOR
EMPOWER

BeCOME: Empower

The most impactful thing you can do for another human being is to empower them—to lift them and create an inclusive environment that gives voice to everyone and allows people to be heard and seen for who they are. By empowering someone, you provide them with the ability and the confidence to learn, grow, and do something for themselves.

There are many books on how you can empower someone else. It's something every leader aspires to do—empower their teams. But what does it mean in the context of creating an inclusive environment, to be empowering, to empower somebody to speak up, to be themselves, to bring their best self to work, to aspire to do more and do better, and be real?

At the root, it is allyship itself that empowers.

Because allyship makes you feel like you're not alone. Even if you're the only woman, the only person of color, or the only-only in the room, you are not alone if you have an ally with you. Not feeling alone makes it

easier to contribute, gives you the confidence to say something that isn't the mainstream, or offer a contrarian point of view. When we think about empowering someone, it means stepping up and being an active ally to them.

In the next chapter, I share how to be an active ally and empower your colleagues daily.

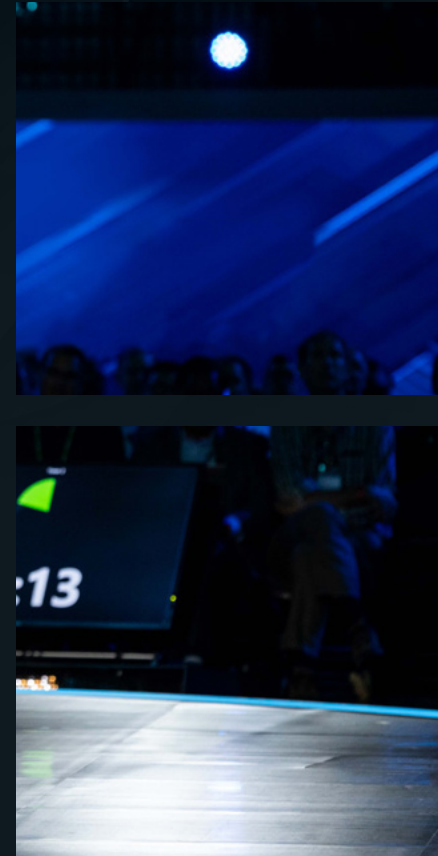
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I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.

Maya Angelou

CHAPTER THREE

How to show up for your colleagues, every day



BeCOME ALLIES

Being an ally is not as hard as you might imagine; it takes small, deliberate actions every day. The second part of the BeCOME framework is ALLIES—a simple and easy to remember acronym of six steps that allies can take every day to empower those around them. When you find yourself on a team or in a meeting, and you realize that someone in that group could use an ally, I encourage you to take any one of these six actions:



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Advocate

To advocate, you need to sharpen your situational awareness skills. It requires greater attention to the dynamics occurring in the workplace. It means putting yourself in the shoes of those you want to ally with and consider what support they need “in the moment.” Pay attention to who is included, and if someone is not invited who deserves to be, invite them in. Support the idea the person just shared. Amplify or expand upon what they said to encourage more conversation and inclusion. Reassure them that they are in the place they are for a reason.

Very often when there is only one of a minority, a woman, a Person of Color, a Native American, a LGBTQ+ individual, in the room, a behavior will be directed toward the singular as consequence of their association with the group. The majority will then lean on that person to represent their singular group. An advocate, who does not identify as the same as the singular, can take intentional action in that moment to stand with the individual so that the burden of representation does not unfairly fall onto the person who is a singular.

A L L I E S



Let me give you an example. Before a meeting starts, there is usually informal chatter. That chatter can take the form of inclusive chatter that applies to everyone in the room or exclusive chatter that might be political or sports-oriented or even child-oriented that by the nature of the topic will exclude some participants in the room. An advocate will notice those who are being excluded from the conversation and will either work to shift the conversation to something more inclusive or point out that the current discussion does not appear to be inclusive and suggest a new topic of discussion.

This type of ally behavior can be subtle and go unnoticed by most of the people in the room; or sometimes speaking up can take a tremendous amount of courage on the part of the ally. Either way, this behavior will always be noticed and appreciated by the singular who in that moment needed an ally.

Tuning your sensitivity in to when someone might either be excluded or singled out takes practice—it also takes courage and intentionality. When an individual routinely works with intention to observe and act in this way, it gets easier over time and mitigates the impact that these subtle and unconscious microaggressions can have on the minority representative—in my case, the only woman in the room.



Listen

Listen to what others have to say, regardless of their age, gender, or race. Ask questions of female colleagues, and then listen to learn. Be curious and ask questions. Too often, we listen to respond. Take the time to really understand someone else's perspective.

Also, be attuned to inadvertently biased language not just in formal conversations but by sifting through the ambient noise, side conversations, and everyday banter. Actively listen for those daily slights that leave women feeling lesser.



ALLIES

Lift

Lift up and build confidence in those around you. It is very easy in an environment where a woman is constantly dismissed or disrespected for her to lose confidence and stop speaking up. If every idea is forced to pass the “tear down” test it will further diminish her confidence and silence her.

Too often in high tech, there is a belief that great ideas must stand the “tear down” test. This has the effect of destroying one's confidence. Instead, take the approach of “building up” an idea. Take an idea presented and build on it—channel it, shape it. This has the effect of lifting someone's confidence. Find opportunities to provide positive feedback and share actions an individual has taken that are good and strong and that you would like to see more of. Avoid nit-picking and focusing on negative cycles and instead recognize the value of everyone's contributions.

Include

When you walk into a meeting, a team, or a group, seek out those not sharing their ideas and work to include them in the conversation. Look around the room and encourage everyone to contribute. When someone speaks up, demonstrate that their opinion matters. Include female colleagues in informal meetings that happen over lunch or drinks where they may not feel comfortable inviting themselves.

Alasdair James Scott, a senior consultant at diversity and inclusion training consultancy PDT Global, offers excellent guidance on how to ensure everyone is included across a company.



His advice:

- Defer to the subject matter expert when relevant questions are fielded, instead of answering yourself
- Do not let a good idea go unnoticed—repeat it, credit the source and share it to those in positions of influence or power. e.g. “I think Iman’s approach to entering into this new marketplace is excellent”
- Set ground rules for various communication channels and platforms to ensure everyone’s voices are equally heard
- Think of members of an under-represented group that could contribute to high-profile events and interactions—help get their voices into meetings, calls, newsletters, panels, soundbites, and other places where they could be heard¹⁶

Elevate

Elevate individuals by providing opportunities to be more visible. These could be small, easy things such as making sure they receive credit for their ideas in meetings or commenting positively and sharing their thought leadership through social channels. But it could also be as big as suggesting that a female colleague speaks in your place at an event. Look for new projects or opportunities for the individual to demonstrate leadership and gain visibility.



To elevate, Scott offers this advice:

- Have an inclusion rider for any conference, panel event or speaking opportunity that advocates for and advances the representation of non-dominant groups
- Sit out of a high-profile event in favour of an equally capable but often overlooked member of an under-represented group¹⁷



Sponsor

“When an ally takes on the role of the Sponsor, they vocally support the work of colleagues from underrepresented groups in all contexts, but specifically in situations that will help boost those colleagues’ standing and reputations.”¹⁸

Be supportive of individuals even when they’re not in the room. Ensure they are considered for new roles, new projects, or new opportunities they might not even be aware of. Seek out and share opportunities for that individual to grow and take on more leadership.



Karen Catlin, former vice president of engineering at Adobe, offers three ways to act as a sponsor:

- Talk about the expertise you see in others, especially during performance calibrations and promotion discussions
- Recommend people for stretch assignments and learning opportunities
- Share colleagues’ career goals with influencers¹⁹

CHAPTER FOUR



Meaningful measurements

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There's an assumption that things will just change – that it's natural that things will change. But they have to be targeted. We need actual numbers. You can't just say 'we want to improve'. You can't hit a target you can't see.

**Georgia Thompson,
Civil Engineer and STEM Coach**

Diversity and inclusion reflect a business' health, capability to lead, and dedication to both employees and customers. Businesses are used to target setting to measure success—in sales you have a quota to hit, in marketing you measure key performance indicators, and every major company purchase is weighed by a return on investment. Companies with a diversity, equity, and inclusion mandate can eliminate guesswork by using data analysis to highlight where improvements can be made and where their efforts are paying off.²⁰ You can measure the success of allyship as well.



Measuring allyship can be done in multiple ways. Here are my top three:

1

Measure the rise in diversity hiring and retention in your organization. If you are hiring diverse candidates, but the diverse hires tend not to stay long, then there is likely something off with the company culture.



2

Measure the succession pipeline in your organization of diverse candidates and women into leadership roles and the percentage of those individuals moving into leadership roles. Here are some questions you should be asking:

- a How many of these individuals are responsible for more than \$1M in revenues or manage a budget of \$1M or more?
- b Is the average tenure of these individuals the same, slower, or faster than their white male peers in moving positions or promotional velocity?
- c What percent of the management roles in the organization have diverse candidates on their succession slates?



3

Measure the affects of allyship by engaging in employee surveys and developing an “inclusion index” by asking questions that can be answered with a 1–5 scale response. Here are some examples:

- a I am comfortable sharing my ideas to the group
- b I feel recognized for my contributions
- c I feel valued by the organization
- d I am included in discussions and projects that are relevant to my work
- e I feel like I am part of the team

The challenge with surveying employees is establishing the proper metrics and then asking the right questions.

Gartner addressed this challenge by “building a model of inclusion based on qualitative interviews with more than 30 DEI executives and an extensive review of the academic literature and existing indices. This research identified seven key dimensions of inclusion: fair treatment, integrating differences, decision-making, psychological safety, trust, belonging, and diversity.”²¹ You can craft statements related to these seven elements.

THREE

As an example, here are the statements that form the basis of the Gartner Inclusion Index:

- a **Fair treatment:** Employees at my organization who help the organization achieve its strategic objectives are rewarded and recognized fairly.
- b **Integrating differences:** Employees at my organization respect and value each other's opinions.
- c **Decision making:** Members of my team fairly consider ideas and suggestions offered by other team members.
- d **Psychological safety:** I feel welcome to express my true feelings at work.
- e **Trust:** Communication we receive from the organization is honest and open.
- f **Belonging:** People in my organization care about me.
- g **Diversity:** Managers at my organization are as diverse as the broader workforce.²²



But the first step is to build a dashboard within your organization to measure your current levels of diversity and allyship. The data may reveal some uncomfortable truths about your organization, but the data will also offer a starting point for improvement, clear and targeted goal setting, and help you establish timelines for achievement.

“By collecting and analyzing data on diversity over time, comparing those numbers to the numbers at other organizations, and sharing them with key stakeholders, companies can increase accountability and transparency around diversity issues.”²³

In addition, set a personal goal and intentionally develop more diverse professional relationships—then share the steps you are taking to expand your network.

CHAPTER

FIVE

You got this





“ —

Having an ally has been instrumental in expediting my career over the last ten years.

When I changed roles to help CEOs develop their Cloud strategy, I struggled with ‘imposter syndrome’. I didn’t believe I deserved the opportunity to offer strategic guidance on improving their profitability in transitioning to cloud-based services.

During this time, one of the CEOs I was advising pulled me aside and asked for me to stop putting myself down and instead accept that I wouldn’t be in the position I was if I hadn’t earned it. He supported me in meetings, amplified my ideas, and even sponsored me for the role I am in today. He pushed me to believe that I was talented and smart.

Essentially this ally paved a path for me to simply believe in myself.

Melissa Mulholland, CEO, Crayon



It's up to you to take the BeCOME ALLIES framework and integrate it. Being an ally, at least at first, is conscious, deliberate, and sometimes challenging work. As the actions BeCOME ingrained, you won't have to think about it—the framework will just BeCOME part of your leadership style to benefit everyone you work with. As more men come forth as allies, it will empower you and your female colleagues and ultimately make high tech a better industry.

Fifteen years ago, I made the bold move to shift internally from licensing sales leadership into product management at Microsoft. Many people told me flat out that I would fail. This advice did not inspire confidence, but it did inspire me to prove them wrong. Knowing that this would be a tough road, I asked a leader in the engineering team, Brad Anderson (now President of Products and Services at Qualtrics), to help me learn how to speak to engineers and asked how I could provide value back into his division. I did not know it at the time, but I was building an ally.

Brad subsequently advocated on my behalf in many ways, most notably by introducing me to his team members and sharing my objectives. As a result, he provided me a level of credibility, which enabled me to lead some extraordinary efforts within his team and at Microsoft. At the time, I don't think that Brad even understood the impact of his allyship and his actions. However, he has learned from his experiences with me and with other individuals that he has chosen to support how to work with even more intention to be an ally.

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I think it's how I can be a champion, supporting women. Not dominating, but how can I walk beside women in the challenges that they face ... I think there's a lot of learning. And having to revisit, continually, thoughts on these issues as they come up is important. Some self-reflection, and where I can best support women. I think that internal journey is as important as the external journey.

Anonymous ally²⁴



And don't worry if you don't always get it right. It's a learning process.

The important thing is that you step up and take action to BeCOME an ally. Start big, start small—you can start anywhere, just begin. We need you to be an ally.

To get more great diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging content, be sure to **subscribe to my newsletter.**

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