

[Open in app](#)[Sign up](#)[Sign in](#)**Medium**

Search



Write



Latinas in Tech Austin, Will You Be My Mentor?

Viridiana Romero Martinez · [Follow](#)

8 min read · Nov 8, 2018

90



It was fun and tragic at the same time, walking around downtown on a rainy night to get at Uber Headquarters, until I finally made it! It was late and the talk was already started, but it was worth the experience. Got to know people with similar experiences, latinas from different countries and backgrounds, sharing their own stories in this path and how they got to grow a career in the tech industry at the United States. Diversity is our greatest strength in an age of multicultural interconnection.

I was inspired by all the women that participated that night, especially, by Yasmin Sussel from Cuba, sharing her story about coming to the US for better opportunities and how she got a career in a tech company, thanks to her dedication and perseverance.



The reason I'm sharing my story, is because the path hasn't been easy and I'm still looking for the pot of gold. I hope people going through the same experiences can read this. I like to think there truly is a light at the end of the tunnel for all of us.

I was born in Mexico City, but my parents moved out to Mazatlán, Sinaloa, due to the earthquake in 1985, I was a baby when that happened. I lived all

my life in Mazatlan, a beautiful town, paradise beaches and amazing food, but sadly, not a place of opportunities for a software engineer.

Never expected to come to US, actually, I didn't have a visa or passport to travel there either. I was married and renting a house, had my job, friends and my parents were living in Mexico also. I have two sisters, both of them live in the US and settled down there. Life in unpredictable and in the early 2016s, I got divorced and this situation changed my life.

After what happened and an endless feelings found in such a short time, in which I went through a long period of stress, which even caused me hair loss for 3 months, I decided a change of air and put an end to what I was living in that moment and took the opportunity offered by one of my sisters to travel to Austin, Texas. I guess that was the first reason to consider going to US, at least, just to visit my sisters and take a break from my town. A turning point in my life, full of situations both good and bad, but full of experiences.

The thing is that when I got here in Austin, Texas, I fell in love with the city, I thought, Viri, why don't you apply for jobs? This city seems like a great chance to work in the tech industry and connect with people, most of the big tech companies have offices here, If you get lucky, you can start a living here and be successful in your career, you are not alone, you got family here.

Starting over new in every aspect of your life, coming to a new country, learning a new language and adapting to a different culture, willing to find a better opportunity, because is the only way, it's really motivating but at the same time, it causes you stress and make you feel worried about the future, uncertainty is the worst feeling, in my opinion.

I am very grateful to have met many valuable people in Austin, whom I consider today as my friends. Thanks to this new experience, a lot of possibilities opened up. At first, english language was a barrier to which I had to lose the fear of talking to new people, attending telephone job interviews and, finally, attending recreational groups. I continued my hobby of going to the gym and leading a healthy lifestyle, which helped me discover the passion for running around the town lake. I also have the opportunity to babysit for 4 months and met a wonderful family.

Having a bachelor's degree in Computer Science and an unfinished master's degree in Networking and Information Technologies, kept me looking for a career in my field. When I was in Mexico, I didn't have good opportunities to grow in my field, so the only experience I had, was my freelance projects in web development. I worked for 3 years at the Mexican government in the Foreign Affairs Department and as a Public Relations at Alamo Rent A Car, very different from my background, each one of those jobs were good and gave me different skills that I can add to my future career.

It wasn't easy, I didn't have the experience to apply for the job positions I was interested, I feel, I needed to update my resume, because I wasn't getting any interviews, zero. I know that applying for jobs in the tech industry would require from my part to sharpen my skills in programming languages and get experience through new projects.

So, I decided to attend free workshops, then I found out on Facebook about General Assembly and Galvanize, where I attended Data Analytics and Data Science workshops. Also attended a workshop called: "The Winning Job Search Package: Digital Presence, Resumes and Cover Letters", which helped me out to update my resume and work in cover letters, which was very useful, in Mexico, we don't use cover letters.

After applying for several jobs, I got interviews from PayPal, Bigcommerce, Solar Winds, Procore Technologies and Indeed. I applied for similar positions such technical support, but wasn't lucky. My situation requires a permission to work in any company here, I need a TN Visa, which apply to Mexican and Canadian citizens. For now, I just have a tourist visa.

After twelve months in US, my permission to stay expired and sadly, had to go back to Mexico again. I didn't have the house I was renting and was unemployed again. So, I told myself, you are going back to US, this is temporary, so find a job and stay focused, prepare for a new chance next year.

So, while I was in Mexico, I applied for several companies, including Facebook. I wasn't expecting nothing, but I remember, I received an email from Facebook to schedule an interview at the Integrity team. I prepared for a week, I even studied SQL, one of the requirements in the job description. I was nervous and excited to have this opportunity in such a great company. I succeeded in the first interview and got to the second phase when I came back to Austin. I remember the interview was like study cases, but wasn't lucky and received an email that I didn't make it to the next phase.

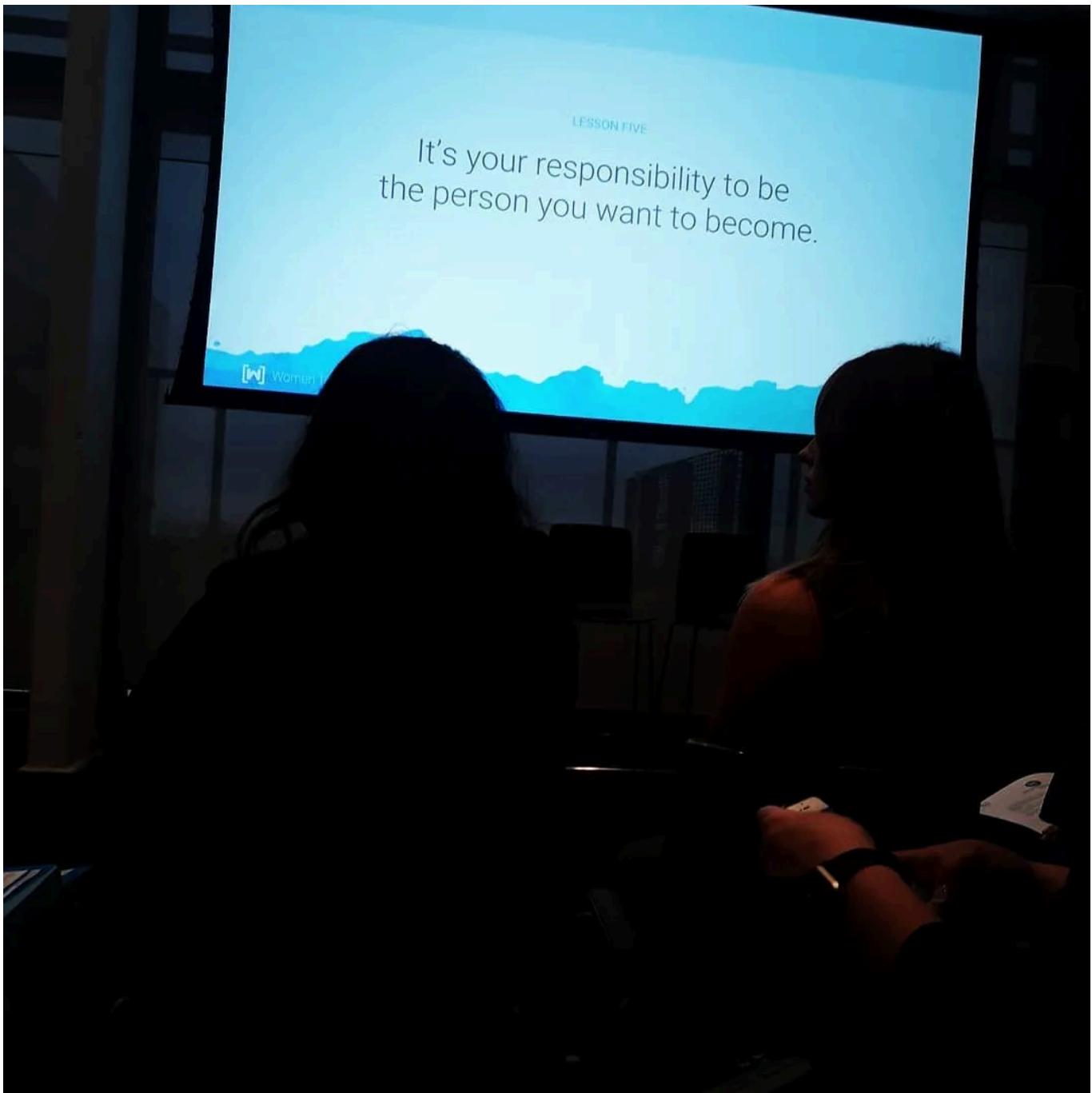
That didn't keep me away from applying, it just motivated me to get better at interviews.

I applied to get an invitation at the Women Techmakers Summit in Austin, at Google Headquarters and lucky me, got the invitation, I was excited to go to Google headquarters and meet new people!



I remember, having a bunch of business cards in my purse and promised to myself to share them with people, at least five and try to connect, so, everytime I attended a conference or a meeting, I was the one sharing my business card as crazy. It hasn't been easy for an introvert like me. But it's really satisfying once you get to connect with people and talk about your story.



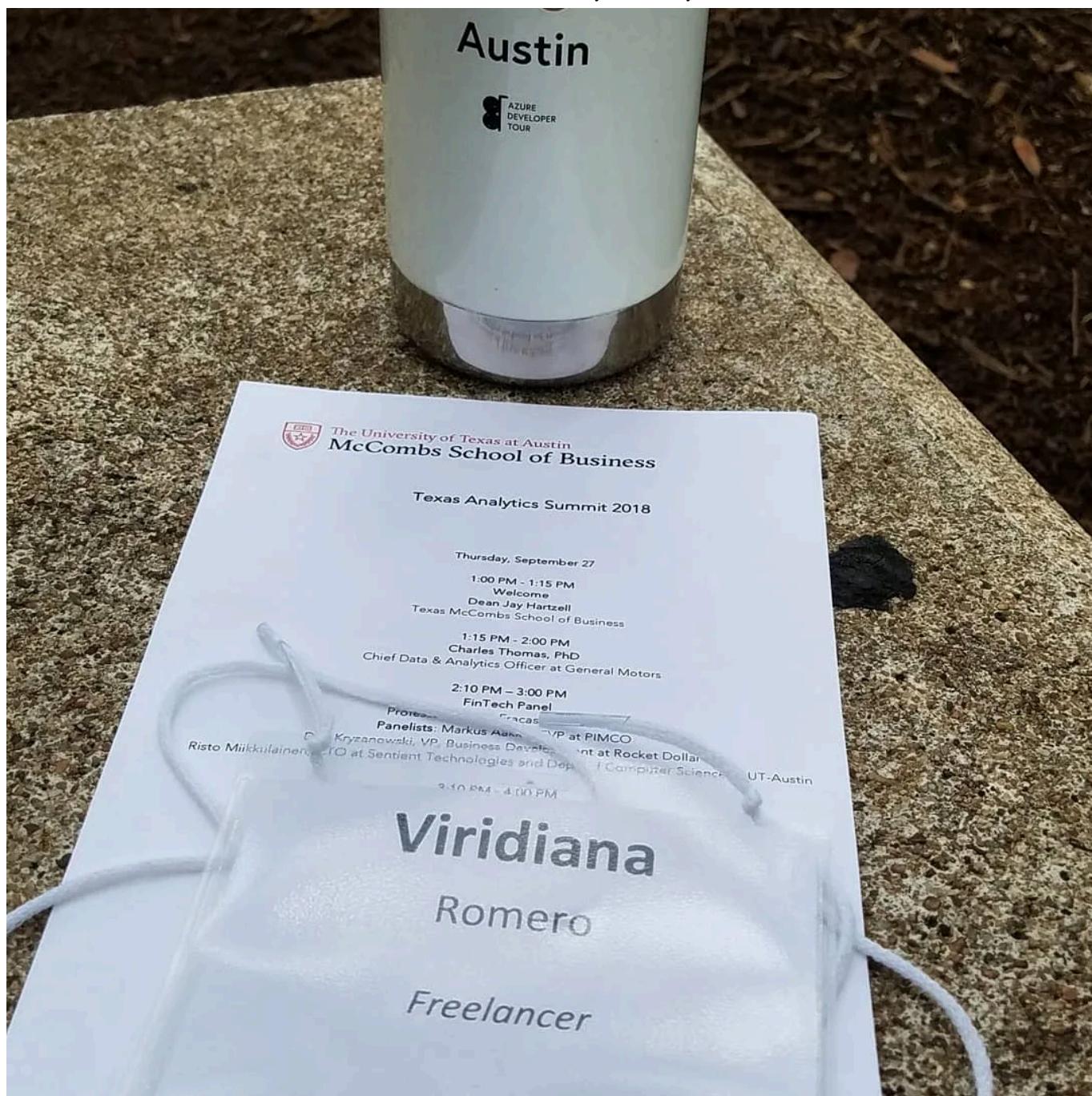


This year, I got three more interviews: one at Facebook and two at Indeed. I applied for a Software Engineer position at Facebook, prepared as much as possible in a week. Got to the second phase but didn't succeed in the technical interview, but I had the opportunity to know what's the preparation for a engineering interview and realized you need more than a week to prepare. I even asked my recruiter if there's any chance to apply for a Data Science role and told me they ask for at least two years of experience

in the field. At Indeed didn't have the chance to advance in the process due to my status.

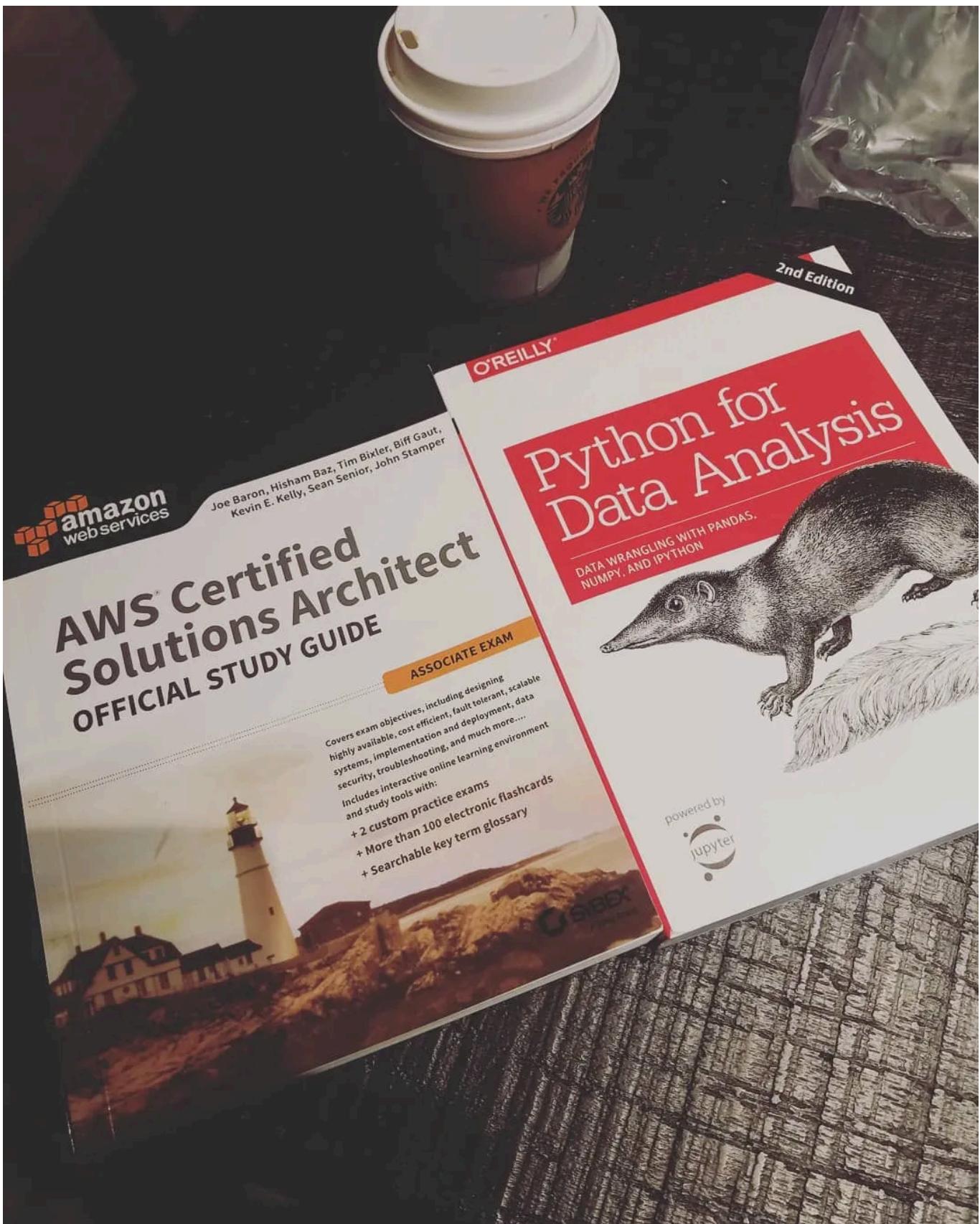
I've been rejected several times but that won't stop me from applying. I've been preparing so hard for technical interviews, so in the future I could make a better job.

I'm trying to change my career from Web Development to Data Science. I know is a difficult path, but what I have learned from life is, if you persist and keep disciplined, you can achieve everything. I bought some books to start the journey and been looking for resources on internet. Attended my first Data Science and Machine Learning conference also!



This year, got my GitHub account, started to add people on my LinkedIn and updated my resume and website. Got a new blog to share my thoughts and tutorials in Data Science, Machine Learning, Computer Vision and Augmented Reality. I find it a good way to sharpen your skills and network with people interested in the same field. It's always satisfying to help people.

Sometimes life puts you in difficult circumstances you didn't choose.



I didn't realize how useful is to attend meetings and network with people who could guide you and recommend you at different companies. I've had

more success attending meetings and creating a network on my LinkedIn than before, when I was only applying directly to the official websites. It's a blessing that we have these spaces to talk about our situation and get support. I'm not yet where I want to be, I don't have a job yet, but I hope to find it very soon, and I'm willing to work hard and just worry for the things that are in my control. The rest will work out soon.

I'm looking for a mentor to get through this path. Finding Latinas in Tech group, has been a positive thing in this period of my life.



I wish all of you nothing but the best and have a great journey in this path called life!

You can find me on:

- GitHub

Software Engineer, passionate about Data Science and Machine Learning. - viritaromero

github.com/viritaromero

Viridiana Romero - Software Engineer - Viridiana Romero | LinkedIn

View Viridiana Romero's profile on LinkedIn, the world's largest professional community. Viridiana has 8 jobs listed on...

www.linkedin.com/in/viridianaromero/

Viridiana Romero - Personal Website

Data Science Student (Bertelsmann/Udacity), Technology enthusiast and passionate Software Engineer with 7+ years of...

www.viridianaromero.co

Tech

Latinas In Tech

Machine Learning

Computer Science

Journey

**Written by Viridiana Romero Martinez**

856 followers · 174 following

Follow



Data Solutions Infrastructure Manager at Novartis. AI and Machine Learning enthusiast. Data Driven Investor writer. Healthy lifestyle lover ❤



No responses yet

Write a response

What are your thoughts?

More from Viridiana Romero Martinez

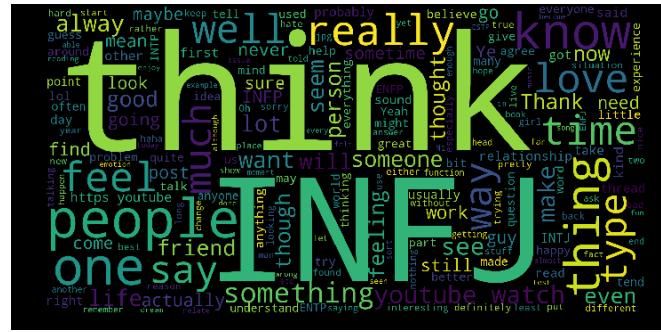


Viridiana Romero Martinez

“Synthetic Data using LangChain and OpenAI: The Ingenious...

When ChatGPT first came onto the scene, I was hooked. Prompting it to generate a text...

May 13, 2024



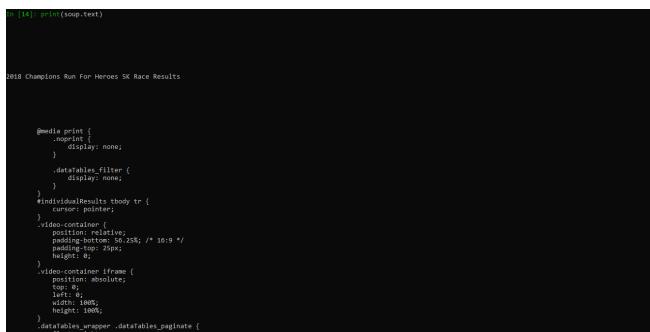
In Towards AI by Viridiana Romero Martinez

Training AI to predict Myers-Briggs Personality Types From texts

When I was in college, I used to watch Gilmore Girls, an american comedy-drama series...

May 29, 2019





```

    @media print {
      .noprint {
        display: none;
      }
      .dataTables_filter tbody tr {
        cursor: pointer;
      }
      .video-container {
        position: relative;
        padding-bottom: 56.25%; /* 16:9 */
        padding-top: 25px;
        height: 0;
      }
      .video-container iframe {
        position: absolute;
        top: 0;
        left: 0;
        width: 100%;
        height: 100%;
      }
      .dataTables_wrapper .dataTables_paginate {
        float: right;
      }
    }
  
```



Viridiana Romero Martinez

Web Scraping 5k race results with Python and BeautifulSoup

Recently I got installed Anaconda in my laptop, for the open-source fans, Anaconda i...

Sep 16, 2018

348

4



In DataDrivenInvest... by Viridiana Romero Martin...

How Artificial Intelligence can detect emotions in children's...

Children's drawings are a window to their feelings and experiences.

Mar 13, 2019

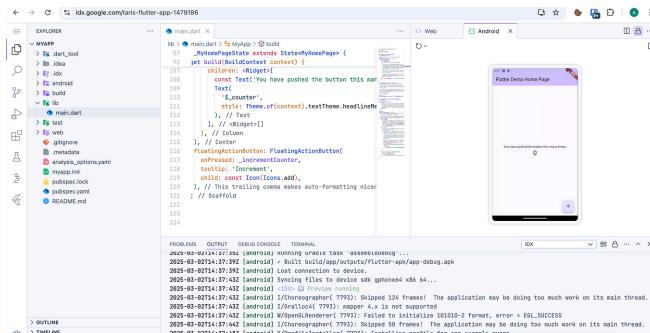
157

8



See all from Viridiana Romero Martinez

Recommended from Medium



```

    flutter build apk --release
    flutter run -d android
  
```





In Coding Beauty by Tari Ibaba



Daniel B. Gallagher

This new IDE from Google is an absolute game changer

This new IDE from Google is seriously revolutionary.

Mar 11 5.2K 306



Apr 21 17K 339



In LearnAIforprofit.com by Nipuna Maduranga

You Can Make Money With AI Without Quitting Your Job

I'm doing it, 2 hours a day

Mar 24 9K 413



In ILLUMINATION by Dr. Nikita Singh

After Age 40, You Need to Stop Doing These Morning Habits—...

Your Morning Routine Making You Age Faster?

Apr 21 9.1K 189



In Write10x by James Presbitero Jr.

The Only 7 Signs of AI Writing You Need to Remove in Your Text

Never be accused of using AI again.

In Write A Catalyst by Adarsh Gupta

Google just Punished GeekforGeeks

And that's for a reason.

Mar 11 11.1K 422

Apr 10 3K 135



See more recommendations