How We Launched, Grew, and Scaled Womxn in Engineering at Splunk

Chrystal Zou

Software Engineer | Splunk

Anny He

Software Engineer | Splunk

Forward-Looking Statements

////////////////////////////

During the course of this presentation, we may make forward-looking statements regarding future events or plans of the company. We caution you that such statements reflect our current expectations and estimates based on factors currently known to us and that actual events or results may differ materially. The forward-looking statements made in the this presentation are being made as of the time and date of its live presentation. If reviewed after its live presentation, it may not contain current or accurate information. We do not assume any obligation to update any forward-looking statements made herein.

In addition, any information about our roadmap outlines our general product direction and is subject to change at any time without notice. It is for informational purposes only, and shall not be incorporated into any contract or other commitment. Splunk undertakes no obligation either to develop the features or functionalities described or to include any such feature or functionality in a future release.

splunk> .conf20

Chrystal Zou

Anny He

Agenda

Lessons from launching, recruiting, and scaling a womxn in engineering group at Splunk

1. **What, Why, How**
   Our purpose

2. **Establishing Our Mission**
   Early events

3. **Refining Principles**
   Pivot from Feedback

4. **Growing Leaders**
   More events and work streams

5. **FAQs and Feedback loop**
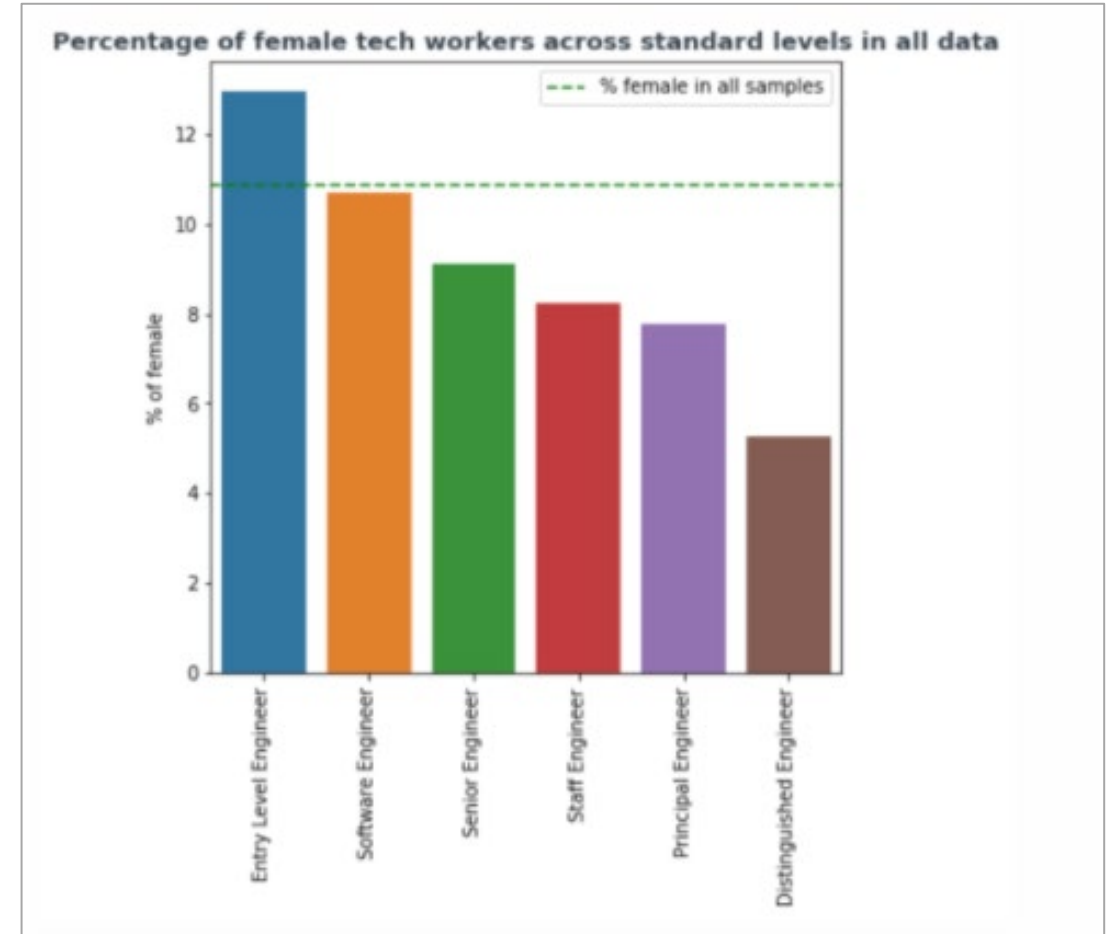   Main takeaways

splunk> .conf20

What is WiE?

Womxn in Engineering

- Part of a broader Womxn+ ERG

- A community enabling womxn to reach their full potential as individual contributors (IC)

- Our vision: an equitable number of womxn and gender-diverse engineers represented at all levels of the individual IC ladder

- Supported by Senior leadership

splunk> .conf20

Why Was WiE Created?

We've heard this story a million times...

- Decreasing representation of womxn in engineering with increasing IC seniority

Percentage of female tech workers across standard levels in all data

--- % female in all samples

% of female

Entry Level Engineer / Software Engineer / Senior Engineer / Staff Engineer / Principal Engineer / Distinguished Engineer

splunk> .conf20

How Was WiE Created?

Womxn in Engineering

- A group of 3 female software engineers connected over the shared challenges of being an underrepresented group in engineering

- The group connected with womxn engineers in the company, and found more engineers who felt strongly about the shared challenges

splunk> .conf20

July 2019: Lots of Questions

1. **Who is allowed in WiE?**

Include engineering management, non-eng roles?

2. **Should this be a closed or open community?**

How to balance a safe and honest space with inclusivity and allyship?

3. **Should we become our own ERG, or be part of the Womxn+ ERG?**

4. **Execs are interested in helping. What to do with them?!**

splunk> .conf20

August 2019: WiE's First Event
Fireside Chat with Navid Rezvani

- Womxn engineers got to meet each other and establish a small community

- There was a broad set of experiences that womxn faced in engineering that we recognized could be improved together

splunk> .conf20

October 2019: Introducing WiE to Splunk

With female distinguished engineer working on GCP

1. **WiE was informally introduced to 200+ attendees**

2. **Slack requests to join our private channel**

3. **We needed to open the community**

splunk> .conf20

December 2019:
Vision, Mission, Principles, and KPIS

Received feedback on the WiE charter from engineers, ERGs, and executives

- Is job promotion the goal, or a signal?

- While a job promotion is one indication of career growth, focusing on a wide variety of levers that individuals can move is better than optimization of a single goal

splunk> .conf20

Early 2020: Staying on the IC Path

Event on why womxn engineers should stay ICs

1. **300+ attendees, NPS score of 9.7**

Examples of feedback:

This was absolutely the best event I have attended in my career because it was full of information and advice that is directly applicable and explained in real language rather than business jargon and indirect language.

What an amazing experience! So many topics hit so close to home on my side — particularly about women experiencing impostor syndrome as well as the interesting facts that women are likely to apply to a job if they have 80% of the required points.

As a manager, I find her advice extremely helpful for the ICs that report to me, so I'd recommend the event to anyone else

2. **We incorporated feedback into our mission and principles**

splunk> .conf20

Our First Principles

Principle 0: Disrupt conventional recruiting, retention, and promotion processes

Principle 1: Equitable representation at every level of engineering

Principle 2: More transparency and data for better decision-making

Principle 3: Diverse representation at the highest technical IC levels

Principle 4: Equal access to resources, opportunities, and support to create maximum amount of impact

splunk> .conf20

Attracting Working Group Leaders

Check list +sign up form

1. **Use a check list for events**

2. **After each event:**
   Share sign up form attract organizers/supporters

3. **Funnel the interested supporters into working groups**

splunk> .conf20

Scaling With Events

Collaboration is key

- Encourage supporters to put on events

- Work with broader ERG
  - Shared resources

- More events → more feedback!

splunk> .conf20
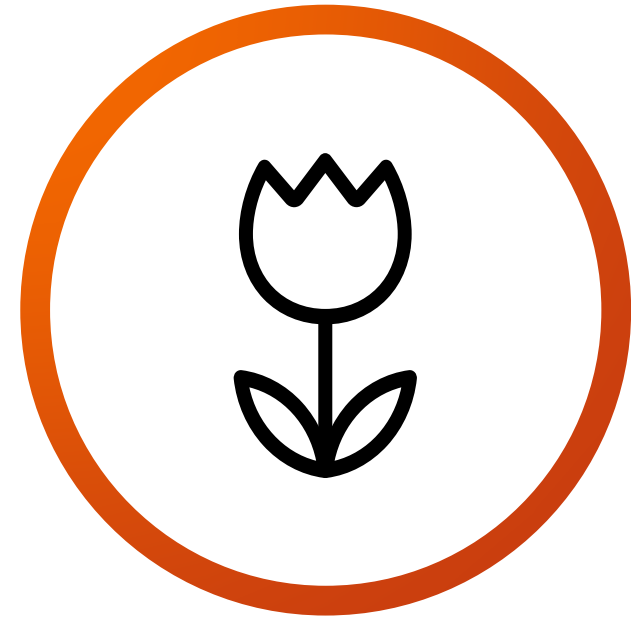
Work Streams

P.S: it's growing!

1. **Mentorship for female engineers**

2. **Recruiting to attract talent**

3. **Events to connect with our community**

4. **WiE x ERG collaboration so ERGs can collectively make more impact**

splunk> .conf20

FAQs
Frequently Asked Questions

- How do you please everyone in the community? You can't

- How do you work with harsh criticism? It's an opportunity to grow.

- "I'm not an engineer. Can I join?" Yes.

- "I don't identify as a womxn. Can I join?" Yes.

- "How to keep working group leaders accountable?" Regular check-in's

splunk> .conf20

Feedback Loop

1. **Event form:** sent after every event

2. **Contribute form:** sent after every event

3. **Slack channel public group**

4. **Slack channel for WiE-leads group**

5. **Slack DMs**

splunk> .conf20

Main Takeaways

1. Listen to your community
- Cater to audience's needs
- Multiple feedback mechanisms

2. Empower your community to lead
- Allow people to take ownership of initiatives

3. Pivot quickly and accordingly
- Multi-dimensional goals

4. Scale
- Continuous call for volunteers
- Define responsibilities and tasks, then delegate

5. Share
- Connect with other communities and companies
- Share you own journey and success at .conf21 next year!

splunk> .conf20

Thank You

Please provide feedback via the

SESSION SURVEY