

why we Don't Need More Women In Tech

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What is the problem?

- As of 2023, women held only 35% of technology roles in the United States.
 - Women leave tech roles at a rate 45% higher than men.
 - 50% of women who take on a tech role drop out by age 35.
 - The percentage of women technology workers was lower in 2019 (32%) than it was in 1984 (35%).
-

According to the latest census data, women make up 50.5% of the US population and 58.7% of the US civilian labor force, so...

- Why aren't there more women in tech?
- Why do so many young women leave the field?
- Why are there so few women tech leaders?



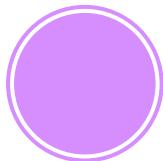
The “Pipeline Problem” (and why it’s a problem)

- The “pipeline problem”: there is little diversity in the tech industry because there is not enough qualified talent from diverse backgrounds.
- Blaming “the pipeline” doesn’t explain why so many women leave the industry once they’re in.
- It also allows for hand-waving the issue away with the excuse that women “simply aren’t interested in technology”.



- “I had it rough, but I stuck it out and don’t complain about it.”
- “Women aren’t as good at technology, their brains work differently.”
- “Women just want special treatment so they don’t have to work as hard.”
- “I’m not a woman, why is this my problem?”
- “Tech is a meritocracy.”
- “If women are so upset, why don’t *they* do something about it?”

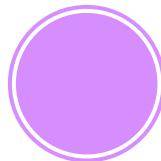
So, what *is* the problem?



Unfairness or mistreatment is the #1 cited reason for voluntary employee turnover.



Individuals in tech reported experiencing & observing more unfair treatment than in other industries.



Women report experiencing & witnessing significantly more unfair treatment than men.

74%

of women in computing
jobs experienced
gender discrimination
at work

38%

reported men were seen as
more capable than women in
their workplace

78%

felt they needed to work
harder than male colleagues
to prove their worth

4X

more likely to see
their gender as an
obstacle to promotion

65%

of tech recruiters
acknowledge bias in
hiring

57%

of women in
tech/media/telecom plan to
leave their jobs in the next
2 years

69.2%

of those affected by the
2022 tech layoffs were
female

1.5X

more likely than men to
be affected by tech
layoffs

What is bias?

- Bias: a tendency, inclination, or prejudice toward or against something or someone.
 - Biases are often based on stereotypes, rather than actual knowledge.
 - “Implicit bias” refers to bias that escapes conscious detection, formed from societal input.
-

Masculine Defaults

Business culture in the US is based on a white, male experience:

- Language in job descriptions
- Job perks & activities that appeal to a young, white, male audience
- Processes that favor masculine-coded approaches to work





42%

of white men think that DEI is very important, have pursued education about racism & sexism, and are more likely to talk about D&I issues at work

INSERT STANDARD DEI TALKING POINTS HERE



“Even if there *is* bias, tech is a meritocracy. Gender doesn’t matter, only performance.”

→ The “*paradox of meritocracy*”: people can show greater levels of gender bias when operating in a context which emphasizes meritocracy



How can ‘merit’ be biased??

- People who believe they are behaving objectively do not check themselves for bias, and believe any conclusions they reach are impartial.
 - Performance-based rewards may actually go mostly to employees who already enjoy cultural advantages in the workplace
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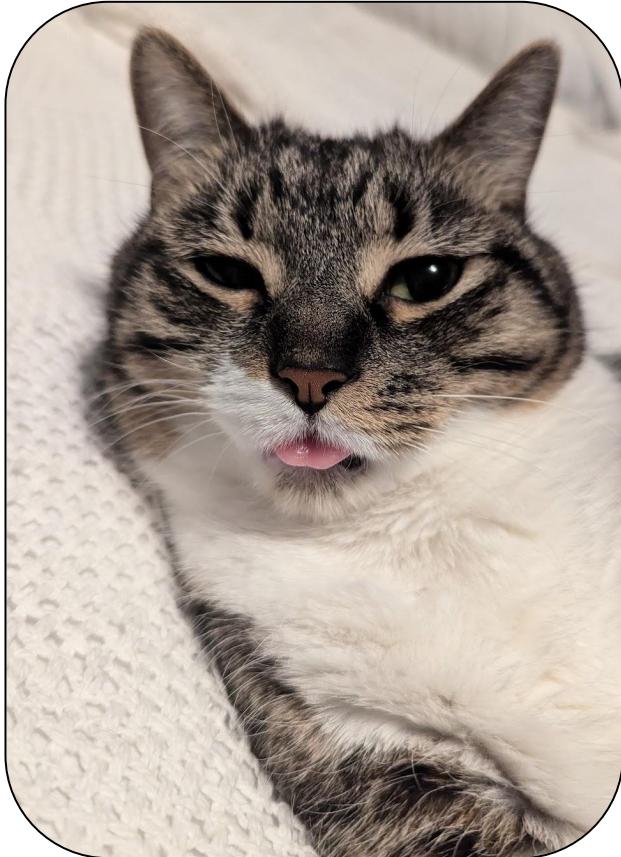


Systemic Advantage

- Not about what a person *has*, but about what they don't have to think about on a regular basis
- Having systemic advantage doesn't mean someone has never experienced hardship or received mistreatment
- It only means that folks don't see certain things as problematic, not because they benefit, but because they aren't affected



**So what do we
do about it?**



**THIS IS
BLANKET DEI
IMPLEMENTATION
PERMISSION ME AND
ALSO FROM MY CAT**

**GO FORTH AND USE YOUR
WHITE MALE SYSTEMIC
ADVANTAGE *FOR CHANGE!***



Hiring

- Recruit from a broad range of sources
- Write inclusive job descriptions
- Communicate expectations for working conditions
- Limit bias in resume evaluation
- Use an inclusive interview process



Inclusive Interview Processes

- Train employees on legalities & communication styles
 - Use standardized interview questions & feedback rubrics
 - Avoid trivia or single-answer questions
 - Request candidate feedback after interviews
 - Utilize small panels for interviews
 - Panel members should independently write & submit feedback on interviewees within 24 hours
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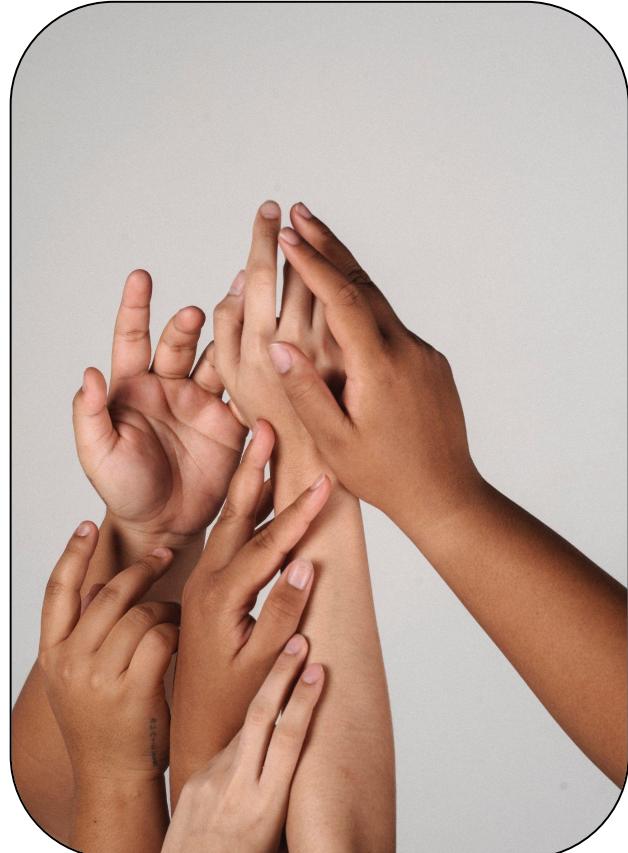


Overcommunicate Onboarding

- Set and communicate culture & performance goals from the very beginning
 - ◆ Identify goals for one week, one month, three months, six months, and one year
 - ◆ You don't have to set all the goals at once!
- Utilize a “buddy system” for everyday guidance
- Ask for feedback on your onboarding process

Workplace Culture

- Develop a code of conduct (and you don't have to call it a CoC)...
 - ◆ Define team values & mission
 - ◆ Establish expectations for behavior
 - ◆ Codify processes
- Encourage transparency
- Team-building activities should be accessible, enjoyable & safe for all team members
- Prioritize learning and development



Microaggressions

- *Microaggression*: a subtle, ‘everyday’ behavior that communicates bias, intentionally or not
- Can leave the target uncertain about whether the experience was due to difference, or something unrelated
- If you see it happen: call it out, but speak for *yourself*, not for the target

Performance & Promotion

- Identify & remove barriers to promotion that impact women & other underrepresented groups
- Publish clear performance guidelines for promotion
- Evaluate traits and actions that are not stereotypically masculine (ex. mentoring & collaboration) alongside work performance



Encourage Mentorship

- Mentorship programs boost minority representation at the management level by 9 to 24%
- Mentees *and* mentors report greater confidence and career satisfaction & are promoted 5 and 6 times more, respectively, than those without a mentoring relationship
- 25% of employees who participated in a mentoring program experienced a salary-grade change

we don't need
more women in
tech,
for diversity.

we need a more
inclusive tech
industry,
for all of us.

Thanks for coming.

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social (f1 stan account)

Catch me again in Sagewood at 11:30a tomorrow!
We'll be talking about teaching & speaking! <3

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