

AI National Ladies Meal

5th July 2019



Agenda

Time	Activity
12:00 – 12:10	Introductions
12:10 – 12:30	What is Imposter Syndrome
12:30 – 12:55	Guest Speakers
12:55 – 1:15	Discussion
1:15 – 1:25	Planning for next meeting

House Keeping

- Sydney - Room S16.14
- Melbourne - Room M19.18
- Brisbane - Dalgai - L20

Google Hangouts:

meet.google.com/jzx-cqod-hmv

Join by Phone:

+61 3 8594 5297 PIN: 682 865#

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Introduction

2

Imposter Syndrome

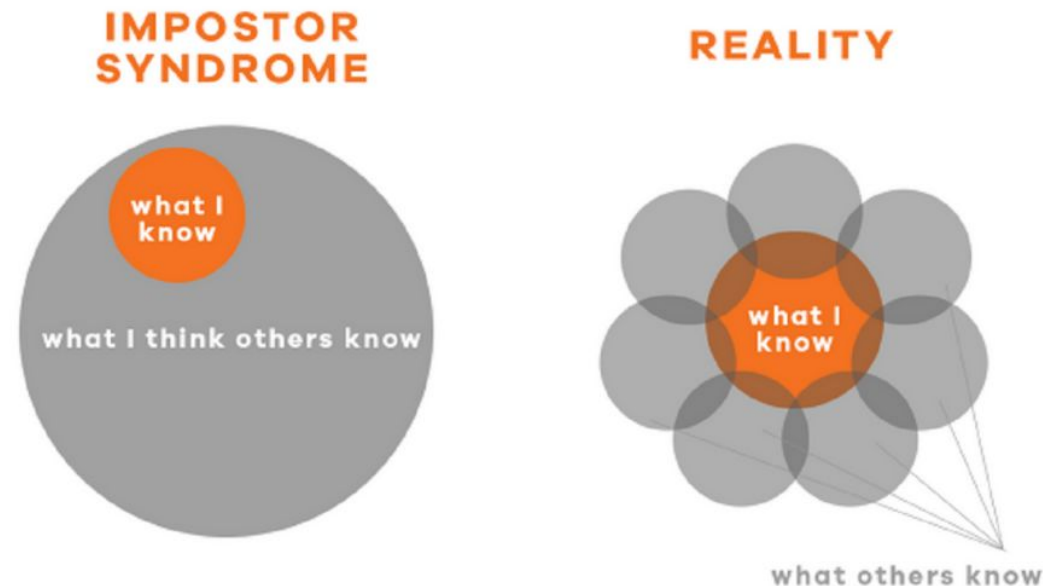
What is imposter syndrome?



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZQUxL4Jm1Lo>

Imposter Syndrome

- Imposter syndrome affects 70% of the population at some point in their lives
- It is usually triggered after a significant accomplishment such as winning an award or getting a promotion
- People from all demographics suffer, however imposter syndrome is more prevalent in:
 - Females, who are socialised to be more risk averse than men
 - In particular, females with careers in male dominated industries
 - Millennials who have grown up in an age of technology and social pressure
 - First born children who are expected to behave or perform in a certain way



Recognising Imposter Syndrome

Do any of these feel familiar to you?

- Thoughts of 'I'm not worthy' or 'I don't deserve this'
- Worrying that you can't live up to others' expectations
- Focusing on your mistakes rather than your achievements
- Think that your talents and strengths are common or unremarkable

Do you recognise any of these in your team mates?

- Being uncomfortable with compliments or praise
- Attributing success to luck, good timing or knowing the right people
- Turning down promotions, switching roles or avoiding high exposure projects
- Expressing fears of failure or incompetence
- Comparing themselves unfavorably to others

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Guest Speakers

Imposter Syndrome

Q & A

1. Can you briefly share your career background ?
2. Have you experienced imposter syndrome ?
3. Do you sometimes feel like you have more to prove as a woman in STEM? How do you deal with these feelings?
4. As a woman do you think your mistakes in the workplace are more heavily scrutinised? How do you deal with mistakes?
5. Do you find that you compare yourself to others too much? How can you measure your progress more constructively?
6. Have other people played a role in your feelings of imposter syndrome (either increasing or diminishing it), and how?
7. Do have have any personal strategies you use to overcome feelings of self doubt/build confidence?
8. Have you noticed any trends over the course of your career when it comes to imposter syndrome among women in STEM?
9. What do you think we can do as a group to help combat imposter syndrome in our team?
10. What steps, resources or tools did you use to overcome imposter syndrome?
11. Would you have any advice to women starting out their careers in STEM?
12. What's the best advice you have been given by a mentor in your career?

Naomi Hamilton-Hakim

Double H Marketing - Founder and Principal Consultant, Women in Machine Learning and Data Science Meetup, Sydney Chapter

About Naomi Hamilton-Hakim

Naomi is passionate about strategic digital marketing. She founded Double H Marketing in 2018 to help small to medium Australian businesses and startups to become more strategic in their marketing efforts.

Naomi has over 13 years of marketing experience and she has worked in marketing roles for international media, technology and not for profit brands. She holds a Bachelor of Music/Bachelor of Arts, a Master of Arts in Writing, and will finish an Executive MBA with the Australian Graduate School of Management (AGSM) at the end of 2019.

Naomi is also a co-founder of Data Translators, which aims to bridge the gap between mid-market organisations and their use of data, and the Women in Machine Learning and Data Science (WiMLDS) Sydney chapter.

You will generally find Naomi getting excited about projects that empower women, as well trying to effectively manage her time between working 'on' and 'in' her business, finishing her MBA and enjoying time with her family, particularly her son.

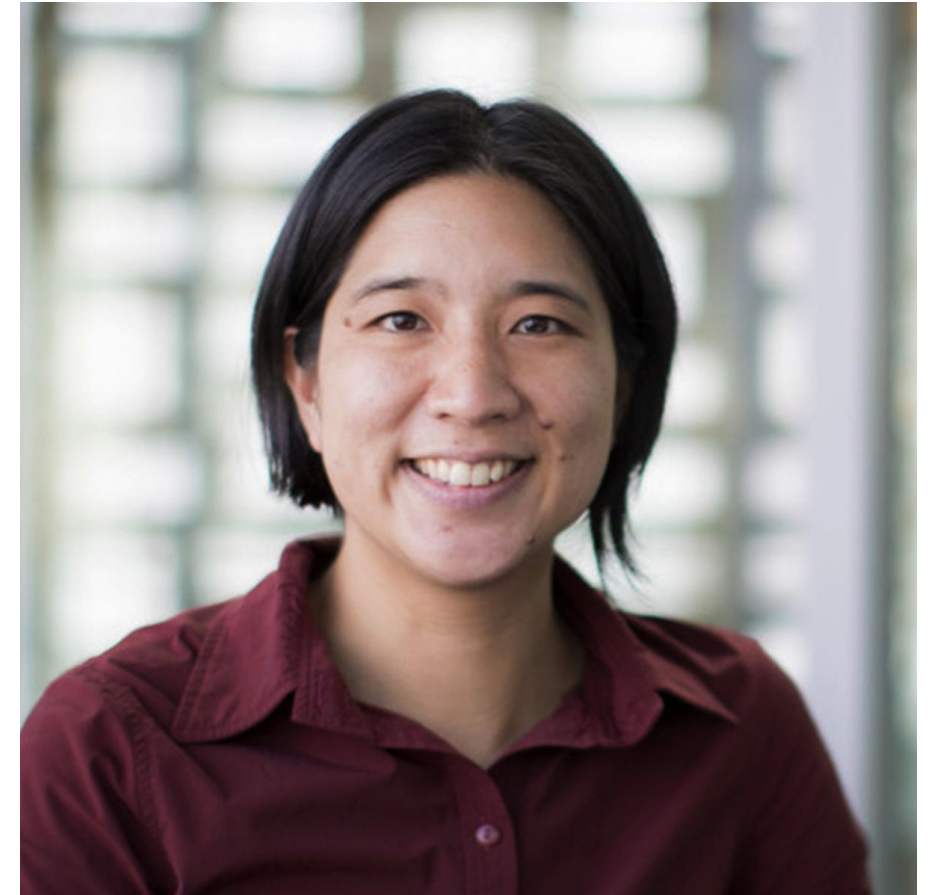


Eva Cheng

Deputy Director Women in Engineering and Information Technology and Senior Lecturer in the School of Electrical Engineering and Data Engineering at the University of Technology, Sydney

A telecommunications engineer by training, Eva connects her passion for music into her engineering background to collaborate with musicians, visual artists, architects, biologists and non-profit organisations on various multimedia research projects.

With social justice values underpinning her work, she engages with the community in STEM education outreach, diversity in STEM, and humanitarian engineering. Collaborating with Unbound global education and Engineers Without Borders Australia, she has travelled with students to Cambodia, India, Vietnam and Timor-Leste in experiential learning programs to take the classroom into the world to explore human-centred engineering. Eva is currently a Senior Lecturer and Deputy Director of Women in Engineering and Information Technology at UTS.



Eva Cheng

Deputy Director Women in Engineering and Information Technology and Senior Lecturer in the School of Electrical Engineering and Data Engineering at the University of Technology, Sydney

Can you briefly share your career background ?

Why telecommunications engineering? This will show my age but when I was in high school, the internet became consumer technology so I wanted to know how it worked! How can you connect people and information from all over the globe, and instantly? About halfway through my degree I discovered the field of signal processing – where signals to be computationally processed can be data signals (telecommunications) but they can also be speech and audio signals! So, up pops my musical background to combine with engineering – and that's the field of research that I dove into during my PhD and is still my research field today. Prior to joining UTS as an academic and in the Women in Engineering and IT program, I was at RMIT University. So I've very much in the university sector - I love being in education and exploring new ideas and collaborating with diverse experts!

Have you experienced imposter syndrome ?

Regularly! I have to catch myself when those self-doubt thoughts creep in, especially as I'm embarking on something new or where someone else has put me forward for something. I've caught myself in those situations sometimes where my instinctive reaction is to suggest someone else instead, who I think is more suited to the opportunity!

Do you sometimes feel like you have more to prove as a woman in STEM? How do you deal with these feelings?

Earlier in my career I did feel like I had to prove that I was capable, especially technically, but over time I'm building the confidence and chosen to work and collaborate with people who recognise capability, not characteristics or labels.

As a woman do you think your mistakes in the workplace are more heavily scrutinised? How do you deal with mistakes?

I haven't felt more scrutinised, and over time I am learning to overcome my fear of failure to embrace mistakes and failure as a key part of learning. If we're not making mistakes and failing, then we're not pushing forward and making progress!

Eva Cheng

Deputy Director Women in Engineering and Information Technology and Senior Lecturer in the School of Electrical Engineering and Data Engineering at the University of Technology, Sydney

Do you find that you compare yourself to others too much? How can you measure your progress more constructively?

I used to definitely compare, and measure success in a comparative way – this is in part because society and our schooling system can create a mindset of competition. Now, I embrace an abundance mindset (rather than scarcity, which leads to competition), where there is plenty for everybody – and we reach further when we work together. So, now I’m always looking to work collaboratively, and also looking at progress through collective impact – are we making a difference together?

Have other people played a role in your feelings of imposter syndrome (either increasing or diminishing it), and how?

Others have certainly helped by pointing out and celebrating achievements, no matter how small or large, and putting me forward for opportunities – I certainly now do the same and pay it forward, we need to support each other! I wouldn’t have built up the self-awareness of my self-doubt, without those around me helping to call it out now and then.

Do have have any personal strategies you use to overcome feelings of self doubt/build confidence?

I take the time to journal, and in doing that think about gratitude – what/who I am grateful for, and achievements (again, no matter how small or large)? By thinking about what has been already achieved helps to rejuvenate that spark to keep pushing forward. We can do it! And if you don’t know, the best way to find out is just to get started!

Have you noticed any trends over the course of your career when it comes to imposter syndrome among women in STEM?

I’ve definitely come across more women than men with imposter syndrome, or who will admit it. It also ties into coming across more women who don’t feel confident about their capabilities, skills and knowledge. This needs to change.

Eva Cheng

Deputy Director Women in Engineering and Information Technology and Senior Lecturer in the School of Electrical Engineering and Data Engineering at the University of Technology, Sydney

What do you think we can do as a group to help combat imposter syndrome in our team?

Raise awareness of what imposter syndrome is – many people have not heard of it before. Celebrate learnings, success, failures, achievements – no matter how big or small. Put your peers forward for opportunities, support someone who is capable but doesn't believe so – buddy or join opportunities together, it might help to break that barrier or fear of the unknown to jump into something new, but then allows space to build the confidence once you're both there and they realise that they *can* do it.

What steps, resources or tools did you use to overcome imposter syndrome?

I don't think I've overcome it, but certainly journaling helps to keep track of my thoughts and reflections – and calling out your own instinctive responses to things, and others around you as well. And choosing great collaborators to work with – whilst we need to face challenging people in pushing for change, we don't need to work with them all the time! Surround yourself with awesome people and be awesome to other people

Would you have any advice to women starting out their careers in STEM?

Be yourself – you don't need to change to fit whatever stereotypes or expectations out there. Your gender does not define who you are or what you are capable of. And a supportive community is important – get to know people, put yourself out there for interesting things – if your first reaction is “Oh, that sounds interesting!”, and then the self-doubt voice kicks in with “But you don't” – go with the first reaction! A large part of how I got to where I am today is through volunteering, getting involved in things, trying new things and meeting people alongside or outside of work – especially in volunteering, you meet people who *choose* and *want* to be there, not because they have to be there.

What's the best advice you have been given by a mentor in your career?

Embrace the unknown and be comfortable with ambiguity.

Esther Tan

Entrepreneur, Luminosity Global

Esther Tan is the Managing Director of Luminosity Global. An eCommerce business selling a range of items including kitchen appliances, electronic goods and clothes.

She is also working at Woolworths Online (WooliesX) and is also a Software Engineering student at the University of Technology, Sydney.



Esther Tan

Entrepreneur, Luminosity Global

Can you briefly share your career background?

- 15 years experience in Financial Services at AMP, Perpetual, ANZ, MLC & CBA in Superannuation and Property Custody.
- 8 years was working as a Financial Planner.
- 4 years experience working in eCommerce in my own business and working at Woolworths Online.

Do you sometimes feel like you have more to prove as a woman in STEM ? How do you deal with these feelings?

- At times when completing group technical tasks as the only female software developer I would feel I need to do my best work and show that we don't create major problems and understand the nature of the task.
- That we are just as competent or more outstanding than the men.
- I recognise these feelings and just continue on with doing the best work that I can.

Do you have any personal strategies you use to overcome feelings of self doubt/build confidence?

- *Being open and honest* when working in Scrum teams (This is an Agile method of Software development) at problems I am encountering and putting my hand up if I need help so I can learn from others.
- *Getting feedback* on my work from the Project Manager so I know how I am tracking.
- Travelling overseas to China and South East Asian countries to source supplies I observe and meet other business men & women, manufacturers and trading companies at different trade shows and events from all around the world. There are often large business deals in the tens of millions with buyers from Walmart, Target and other large businesses being done. This can be a little intimidating. I *prepare myself and do my homework* before I meet the counterparty on their offering. I am *confident in myself* on who and what I represent and the outcome of what I would like to achieve. *Change your thoughts*. You might be thinking "I don't belong here", "I won't be taken seriously". People out there in the world do respect women and want us to succeed. The culture you have been living in and your frame of reference to the world isn't how the whole world thinks. My experience on business trips have been that people have been very impressed with me and want to get to know me. I *follow role models* that I respect and have a connection with in life and business. e.g. Gary Vaynerchuk, Pedro Adao.

Hessie Jones

Global Privacy and Security by Design - Strategic Director

Hessie Jones, Strategic Director, International Council for Global Privacy and Security by Design and is an advocate for AI and emerging technology readiness through education and the ethical distribution of AI.

As a seasoned digital strategist, author, tech geek and data junkie, she has spent 20+ years on the internet at Yahoo!, Aegis Media, CIBC, and Citi, as well as tech startups including Cerebri, OverlayTV and Jugnoo.

Hessie saw things change rapidly when technology and social platforms started to change the game for advertising and she co-authored *EVOLVE: Marketing (as we know it) is Doomed!* in response to the changing market dynamics and their impact in process, culture and mindset.

She launched her own business, ArCompany and through the weekly think tank discussions her team curated, she surfaced the generational divide in this changing technology landscape across a multitude of topics. Hessie is also a tech journalist and regular contributor to Forbes, Towards Data Science and Cognitive World publications.



Hessie Jones

Global Privacy and Security by Design - Strategic Director

Have you ever experienced any of the symptoms of imposter syndrome?

This is all too common. I catch myself when I write an email and I have to revise the language so I sound more direct and less “uncertain”. I fight the anxiety I feel when I sense a confrontation coming my way. I am, for the most part, obsessive about detail and over-prepared for meetings so I sound prepared even though I feel like I can’t wait for this to be over. This sneaks in all the time regardless of experience, wisdom or how many times I’ve dealt with negative situations. I obsess over little mistakes, not realizing that while I’m amplifying the error, everyone else has moved on. Am I a perfectionist or do I put myself to a much higher standard?

Do you have any successful strategies for working past those feelings?

I’ve come to realize that I am human. I make mistakes. BUT, in the same vain, I am also very experienced. I’ve done this before... many times and I’ve gotten through it and have gotten through it effectively. The most important thing is being able to communicate and vent with a trusted ally – someone who gets it and is willing to listen to you. Once you find that person, it is much easier to get through days ridden with anxiety and self-loathing.

Getting outside of your comfort zone helps a lot. Doing things that put you in the best light but initially make you hesitated because of fear will make things easier as time goes on. I look at it as a step at a time. A smile at a time. And eventually, leaps of confidence at a time.

What do you think we as a team can do to counter imposter syndrome?

We should support each other and over communicate someone’s success and amplify it until it drowns out the bad stuff. We should recognize the signs of imposter syndrome ? What are the cues? How do i know when someone is suffering? What should I do to help? More importantly, how do I pay it forward consistently so there are more people that can help one another to lessen its reigns on each one of us? Can we make it more prominent and put it on a website and create a hashtag #ImWithYou or something on social media so we’re constantly supporting each other? Maybe one good deed per day and one piece of advice per day? We need to make this more widely known and we need to continuously hear the stories of others who are suffering. We need dialogue. We need support. And we need tools to help.

Helen Ngo

Dessa - Machine Learning Engineer

Helen is a Machine Learning Engineer at Dessa, a Toronto-based AI company deploying machine learning across industries such as banking, telecommunications, insurance, and more.

Helen has experience deploying models for pricing sensitivity, customer churn, acquisition marketing, credit card fraud, and iconic mobile device launches in enterprise environments producing 100M+ scores weekly. She was a founding member of the AI Labs team at Canada's largest telecommunications company.

Outside of work, she co-organizes the Toronto Women's Data Group and was named a Sidewalk Toronto Fellow as part of the Sidewalk Labs & Waterfront Toronto smart city initiative.

She previously served on the editorial staff at Towards Data Science and the steering committee of Aggregate Intellect's Deep Learning Series. She is a techno-optimist with interests in technology policy and the intentional politicization of AI by technical actors.



Helen Ngo

Dessa - Machine Learning Engineer

Do you sometimes feel like you have more to prove as a woman in STEM? How do you deal with these feelings?

Always. I channel these feelings into motivation to be the very best I can be in my role. I've noticed that women (even with technical backgrounds!) are often pushed into non-technical roles by well-meaning people in leadership who may not be familiar with their capabilities, so in my day-to-day work I've purposefully taken on tough technical challenges to combat this bias.

What do you think we can do as a group to help combat imposter syndrome in our team?

Celebrate each other's successes publicly. It can be tough to talk about your own accomplishments openly. Surround yourself with teammates and allies who will lift you up and amplify your contributions and wins. Actively seek out opportunities to do the same for others in front of their peers, their bosses, and in wider professional circles.

Have you experienced imposter syndrome?

Yes. The clearest example I can think of is when I started pair programming with other engineers who I deeply admired. I realized that they also Google as many things as I do, and ask the same questions that I would. This was eye-opening to me, since I was under the impression that I was the only one, and everyone else had these things committed to memory. I had a deep-seated fear of other engineers judging me for looking things up. It was a revelation when I realized that we're all in the same place.

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Discussion Time

Discussion

1. Have you ever experienced any of the symptoms of imposter syndrome?
2. Do you have any successful strategies for working past those feelings?
3. What do you think we as a team can do to counter imposter syndrome?

One Person from each location can share a summary for a collective discussion

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Key Takeaways

Overcoming Imposter Syndrome

1. Acknowledge your feelings

- Keep a Journal
- Cognitive restructuring to counter negative thoughts with positive statements

2. Talk to Others

- “To me, they were intelligent, articulate, supremely competent individuals. To learn that even they felt like they were fooling others rocked my world” - Valerie Young author of The Secret Thoughts of Successful Women

3. Understand your Strengths and Weaknesses

- Build up your confidence and become more aware of your strengths and weaknesses.

4. Overcome perfectionism

- Set yourself realistic, challenging and achievable goals

5. Own your successes

- Take responsibility of your achievements and keep record of positive feedback

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Resources

Imposter Syndrome - Interesting links for us to use

Symptoms of imposter syndrome and how to overcome it: <https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/overcoming-impostor-syndrome.htm>

Imposter syndrome pertaining to women:

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/jennagoudreau/2011/10/19/women-feel-like-frauds-failures-tina-fey-sheryl-sandberg/#259a7f3730fb>

Different imposter syndrome personas <https://www.themuse.com/advice/5-different-types-of-imposter-syndrome-and-5-ways-to-battle-each-one>

Boosting Confidence



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I_NYrWqUR40

Mike Cannon-Brookes, Co-Founder Atlassian (TEDxSydney 2017) on imposter syndrome



7

Closing

NEXT AI Ladies meeting is

- Who would like to volunteer ?
- What would we like our next topic to be?
- Next Meeting: 6 September

Thank you

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