Making women in data more than a reality

AI (artificial intelligence) and data have become one of the hottest topics within the technology industry, and women have been playing an instrumental role in the advancement of and development of technology, especially when it comes to career pathways.

Stem (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) is no longer a group of industries that is dominated by men; women are coming to the fold to drive innovation and make real change, all while tackling the many obstacles that still come with it.

For account executives Chelsea Nothard and Lays Bammesberger at Meltwater, it's time to make women in data a reality. Sharing their thoughts at the recent DataCon Live Panel Discussion, Nothard and Bammesberger highlighted the need for self-confidence and mentorship in an industry that is calling for more women in the field.

Facing obstacles in Stem

According to the National Center for Women and Information Technology (NCWIT), the number of women within the computing industry has seen a steady decline since 1996. Could it be that women simply don't have an interest in IT or are the pathways to success too gated?

For Bammesberger, who entered the Stem industry four years ago, this wasn't a career that she had planned for. With a law degree, data was something new but this didn't stop her from taking the initiative to learn more. "The desire to learn and the support I had from my managers as well were really the catalyst in my career."

Meltwater DataCon Live: Women in Data

Advice for Women in Data

"Development is multifaceted, so if you are looking to grow in data and tech space, make sure that you cover not only your self development from an educational perspective but look at yourself and think about the things that you want to improve. Whether it's leadership or voicing your opinions or connecting with other women in the space. Just make sure that you have goals that you have set out that are really going to help you achieve what you want to do."

Lays Bammesberger
Key Account Executive, Meltwater

click to enlarge

Women who pursue careers in technology have often cited not only the barriers to entry but the state of the industry as a whole. The gender gap within technology has grown and many have questioned just how open-minded this industry really is when it comes to closing this gap. Nothard shares how Stem can be a demanding industry and for women, finding balance can be a challenge. "To grow yourself and develop yourself takes a lot, and getting that balance right in terms of work-home or life balance is difficult."

The need for mentorship

It's no secret that female representation in leadership roles related to Stem is lacking, and the desire to feel like women belong in this industry can lead to isolation. But women-to-women mentorship may be the answer to this problem.

Early on in her career in data, Bammesberger had leaders who pushed her to find female role models within the organisation that she could relate to. "Through this engagement, I realised how important it is to have allies that will be speaking on women in data, women in tech and women in leadership who are going to remind you of your full potential."

Representation matters, and the current gender gap that women in data face is the current reality. But it can be more than a reality - it can be the future. "The need for mentorship and having that female in the workspace to look up to is so important," says Nothard. "It's also up to organisations and industry to pave the way for women to have fast-tracked career growth and development."

Women may still be the minority with the Stem industry, but this reality is changing fast and the future is one that calls for more awareness on this reality, to highlight the challenges that women face and to ultimately provide meaningful methods of career growth. Women have a lot to bring to the technology table; it's time to make sure that they are recognised for it.

About Meltwater

With 20 years of experience in the field of online media monitoring, Meltwater is a global leader in media intelligence and social analytics solutions, helping to bridge the gap between public relations, communications and marketing departments with an all-in-one solution powered by AI-driven insights. Over 30,000 of the world's most respected brands rely on Meltwater to help inform their marketing and communications strategies and executive decision making.
With over 55 offices across six continents, Meltwater is a truly global partner with local customer success teams. Meltwater also supports the Meltwater Entrepreneurial School of Technology (Mest), a nonprofit organisation devoted to nurturing future generations of entrepreneurs.

For more information, follow Meltwater on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn or visit www.meltwater.com

- **South Africa's digital landscape maturation in 2024: Insights from the 2024 Global Digital Report** 27 Mar 2024
- **Black Friday media coverage 2023** 1 Dec 2023
- **Springboks media coverage at the RWC 2023** 2 Nov 2023
- **How to use technology to prepare for Black Friday** 1 Nov 2023
- **B2B and TikTok - more compatible than expected?** 5 Sep 2023

For more, visit: https://www.bizcommunity.com