

CAREER TIPS FOR WOMEN IN TECHNOLOGY



In her 20 years of working in tech, consultant Blanca Leon-Carter has mastered the art of navigating roles she often sees dominated by men. She currently holds a rewarding position that supports major outcomes for her company—but her path to success did not unfold without hard work and lessons learned.

Whether you're considering the field of technology as a new path to explore, or are just getting started in your tech career, here are some of the top tips that Leon-Carter has learned—and recommends for growth—as a woman in tech.

1. NETWORK WITH OTHER WOMEN IN TECHNOLOGY

Leon-Carter understands the power and innovation women can bring to technology. After graduating from DeVry's Bachelor's in Computer Information Systems and Master's in Business Administration (MBA) programs, she advanced her tech career at a non-profit organization for nearly two decades. She took on positions spanning from Network Administrator and Database Manager to Director of Operations and IT, which allowed her to network across the organization.

Meeting other women in roles outside of your current one can broaden your perspective and help you find the right opportunities, Leon-Carter explains. To build a network for support, she encourages women to join reputable organizations that support diverse professionals and women in technology.

2. SEEK A MANAGER WHO IS ALSO A COACH

It may seem counterintuitive but “your boss should not be your best friend,” Leon-Carter says. “Instead, your supervisor should double as a coach or mentor.”

She encourages women in technology to foster a relationship with their manager that supports them showcasing their skills through hard work while maintaining a relationship that still feels “open” and supportive enough to simply say “I need a little bit of guidance here” when necessary.

3. TAKE ON NEW CHALLENGES

Leon-Carter enjoys working among people who support her taking on new challenges and projects, especially if they relate to her interest in technology.

“When people talk about challenges at work and you pitch an idea...and your team is interested in what you're saying and gives you the space to take on the challenge, that's a sign you're in the right place,” Leon-Carter says.

If you have a solution for a company problem, she encourages women in technology to find the resources to execute the idea, even if that means directly asking for them.

4. RECEIVE CREDIT FOR YOUR IDEAS AND WORTH

Through her own experience, Leon-Carter feels the most supportive work environments help ensure that women in technology are not simply seen, but also heard. “You deserve to be where you are valued,” she says.

“You have to bring your full self to work,” she continues. “Whatever your ethnicity, background or gender, you should be able to feel like you have a voice and what you bring to the table is seen.”

5. SEEK WORK-GROWTH BALANCE

You've likely heard of “work-life balance” but how often do you consider “work-growth balance” in a company? Leon-Carter advises women in technology to pursue opportunities where you can contribute the skillset and experience that you have, but you're not limited in a way where you can't learn anymore,” Leon-Carter says.

Her rationale for this approach is simple yet strategic: “If there's room for you to take on other projects and positions within a company, that's great because it's yet another way that you can demonstrate your value to your organization as you continue to challenge yourself professionally.”

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