

How to Be a Male Ally in Tech

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About Me

- Assistant Director of IT Planning, AITS and 20 years in the field of IT
- Racial Justice Allies & Advocates Lead Facilitator
- Women in Technology Leadership Team member



Why Is This Important to Me?

I'm a woman.

I have a daughter.

I care about other women in my field.



Think, Pair, and Share

- Why did you choose to attend the “How to Be a Male Ally in Tech” session today?



Why allyship should be important to everyone

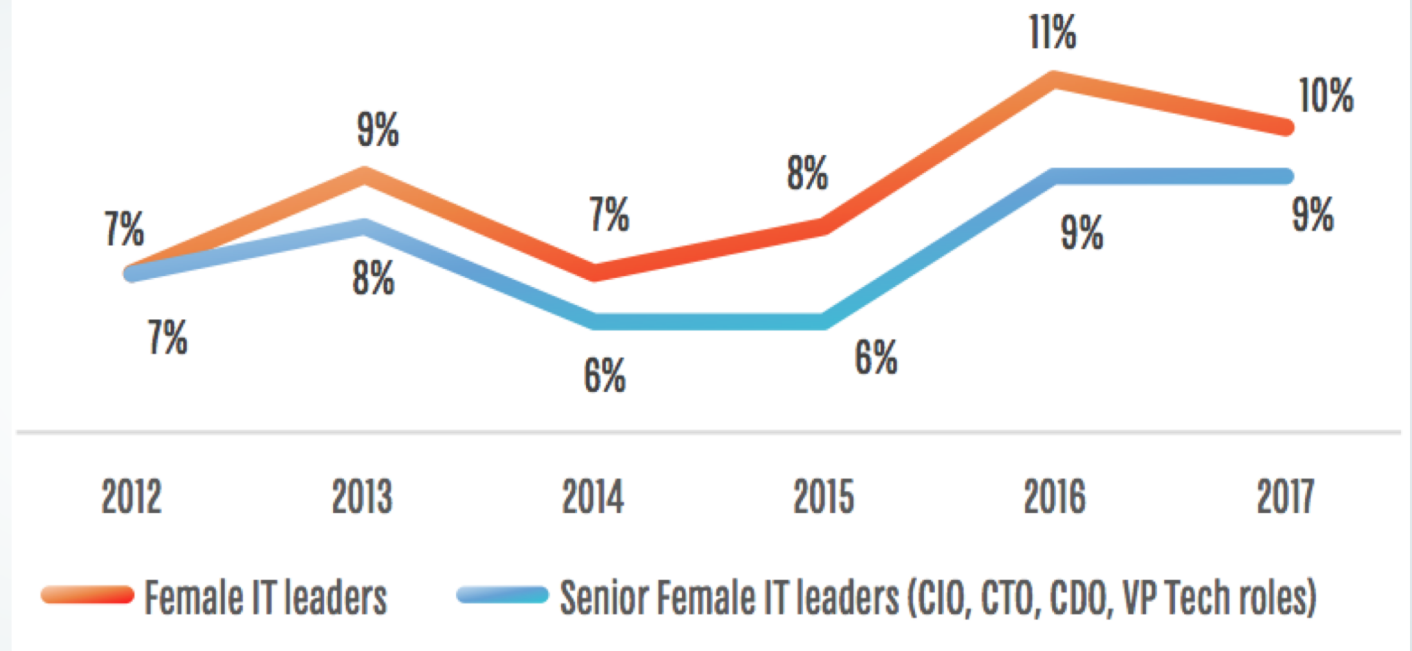
- We say we want the University of Illinois to be *Altogether Extraordinary*
 - Gender diversity can help better reach a more diverse students, faculty and staff.
 - Gender-diverse companies are 15 percent more likely to outperform non-gender-diverse companies.¹
- To achieve greater diversity of thought and innovation.

¹ Hunt, Vivian, et al. "Why Diversity Matters." McKinsey & Company, 2 Feb. 2015, www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/organization/our-insights/why-diversity-matters.

Why We Need Male Allies

- Things aren't changing fast enough.
- The conversation is everywhere, but the change is not.

Growth of women in IT leadership roles is slow



Ally

- One whose personal commitment to dismantling oppression is reflected in a willingness to educate oneself about the oppression, challenge one's own prejudices, **learn and practice** the skills of anti-oppression, interrupt oppressive remarks, behaviors, policies and institutional structures. (*Cultural Bridges, 1995*)

No More Allies

Mia McKenzie

"Ally" cannot be a label that someone stamps onto you—or, god forbid, that you stamp on to yourself—so you can then go around claiming it as some kind of identity. It's not an identity. It's a practice. It's an active thing that must be done over and over again, in the largest and smallest ways, every day.

Advocate

An advocate is a person who represents and works with a person or group of people who may need support and encouragement to exercise their rights, in order to ensure that their rights are upheld.

Be an Ally not a Knight in Shining Armor

- It's not about being rescued or saved
- An ally wants to implement systematic change rather than fixing a particular situation
- An ally wants to change the culture not "save the day"

She wasn't looking
for a knight.
She was looking
for a sword.

-Atticus

Allies vs Knight Example

- You notice a woman getting interrupted in a meeting
 - Knight - “I think Patricia had a good idea”, summarizes idea
 - Ally - “Let’s get back to Patricia’s idea”, suggests implementing a no interruptions rule

Learning is a Process



- Sincerely Apologize
- Don't get defensive
 - If you offended someone, they were offended
- Ask "Can you help me understand out how I could have handled that better?"
- Women aren't off the hook
- "Fail fast" and learn from it

Being the Only One in the Room

- In IT “being the only one” happens to women frequently
- I recommend men try it sometime
- There are advantages



What Can I Do? Listen

- Listen without getting defensive or explaining away behaviors
 - If a female colleague happens to drop a casual comment about difficulties she has faced, mention that you are interested in understanding what she has experienced
- Listen when she says she doesn't feel comfortable talking about it

What Can I Do? Ask

- This may feel awkward
- Examples of how to start this conversation
 - “I attended a talk on being a male ally”
 - “I recently read about the issue”

What Can I Do? Educate

"Being an advocate for women means understanding sexism can (and probably does) look different for each woman." -
Katie Dupere

Sexism takes many different forms

- Harassment
- Exclusion
- Unequal expectations
- And more...

Survival Tips for Women in Tech

- women2.com/2018/09/18/survival-tips-for-women-in-tech/

What Can I Do? Remember

- Not all women want to be an advocate for diversity
 - Burn out
 - They may have had a negative experiences from past participation in diversity efforts
 - Concerned about the perception that they did not succeed on their own merits

What Can I Do? Speak Up

- Find other like-minded men and get them involved
 - It doesn't have to be formal
 - If you notice there are no women, point it out
 - Tell them about what you are doing as an ally
- Talk to management
 - Tell your management, HR, anyone who will listen that diversity is important to you and good for the organization
- Point out non-inclusive behavior
 - Hold others accountable for inappropriate jokes/behavior. Even when there are no women around

How Can I Help?

- Be friendly, welcoming, make an extra effort to ensure everyone is included
- Get to know the women you work with and try to understand their experiences *(we might be wary)*
- Be a Mentor

Let's Role Play/Discuss

- Let's discuss as a group what to do if you see inappropriate behavior
 - You notice women being interrupted
 - You notice women being excluded
 - You see someone being harassed

THANK YOU

**BREAKING
BARRIERS**
SPRING 2019



Resources

- Hunt, Vivian, et al. **“Why Diversity Matters.”** McKinsey & Company, 2 Feb. 2015, www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/organization/our-insights/why-diversity-matters.
- **Mia McMenzie** <http://www.blackgirldangerous.com/>
- **Making Tech Survivable what Men Can Do**
<https://women2.com/2018/09/13/making-tech-survivable-what-can-men-do/>
- **Better Allies**
 - Twitter - [@betterallies](https://twitter.com/betterallies)
 - 5 Ally Actions Weekly Newsletter - tinyletter.com/MaleAllies