Free to make your mark

Udeti

Progress has no gender

Contents

Introduction

After several McKinsey and HBR reports have time and again confirmed that diversity is a business imperative, we stand today; amidst a rousing acceptance of diversity being an organization-wide responsibility.

However, there are particularly hard challenges to beat. They are in the form of biases that have seeped into organizational practices, culture and processes. They are not present only in our minds. An example is the lack of clarity or transparency in hiring and employee review processes.

ThoughtWorks is committed to battling such colossal roadblocks. We want to make an extraordinary impact on the world and, we want to do that through our culture and technology excellence. One of the key tenets of that ambitious goal is fostering a thriving community of diverse and passionate technologists.

Over the years, our commitment to this cause has helped us recognize that diversity cannot be an end goal in itself. Diversity without inclusion is intent without action. In order to highlight just how pertinent and valuable a thoughtful diversity and inclusion program can be, ThoughtWorks has put together this eBook, Udeti: Progress has no gender.

This eBook chronicles empowering stories from women who are following their passion in technology. With this eBook, we want to draw attention to the potential of close collaboration with leadership on inclusive programs. We want to illustrate how consistent feedback loops and open conversations have ensured policies, opportunities and a work environment that make every ThoughtWorker feel valued, safe and fulfilled in their respective career goals.

Through this eBook, we want to leave you with the message, "you are always welcome here." And, this is not just policy. This is practice.

Sudhir Tiwari
Managing Director
ThoughtWorks India

About Udeti

ThoughtWorks encourages women to grow their technical careers through several campaigns and initiatives.

- #TalkTechToHer aims to elevate the conversation around careers in tech for women with more than 6 years of experience in the industry.

- The Vapasi program launched under the umbrella of #TalkTechToHer is a technical bootcamp that addresses the very specific gender gap within the senior technologist community. Vapasi also enables experienced women technologists who are on a career break to return to work.

- Our global Women in Leadership Development (WiLD) program helps sustain a pipeline of potential women leaders.

Drawing from our continuously evolving journey as a diverse and inclusive organization, we present the eBook, Udeti: Progress has no gender.

Free to make your mark

ThoughtWorks® /careers
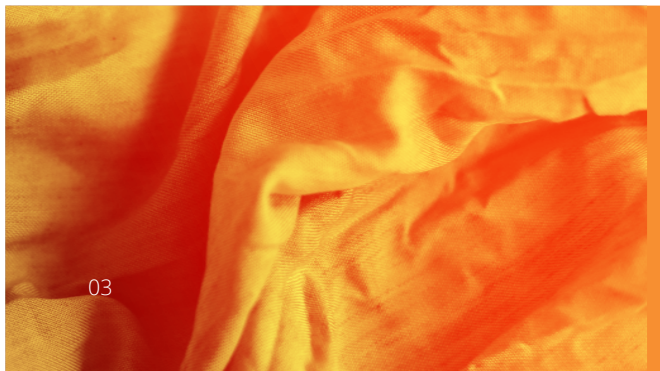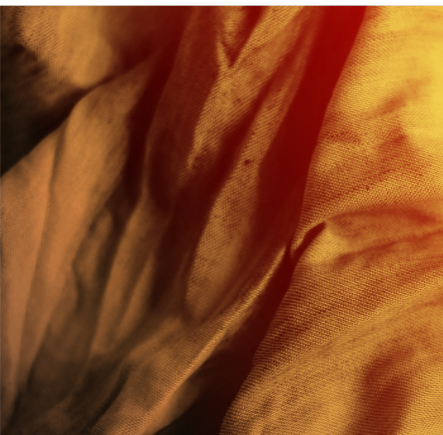
She held on like a champion

Arti Pande, Lead Developer

Life is like a rollercoaster ride with its ups and downs. Aarti has seen both sides and held on like a champion. This is her story.

Welcome back

I have always enjoyed working in technical roles because they let me apply logic while also exploring my creative side. In 2010, I had to undergo surgery and needed to take an extended leave of six months. I was asked to take the time I needed and return in better health. It wasn't until 2015 that I finally returned. And though it had been over 4 years, it felt as though I had never left.

With you through thick and thin

The supportive environment that ThoughtWorks intentionally cultivates made it possible for me to continue doing the work that I love. Shortly after my return, my son took ill and I was forced to take another leave of absence. The situation at home weighed on me and prevented me from giving my all at work. I probably would've left ThoughtWorks in 2016 if it wasn't for Gunjan Shukla, my co-worker and also chief of staff to our MD's office at that time. She set apart time to follow up with me on a frequent basis and would say, "Arti, I'm

calling to catch up with you, this is not a meeting. I'd like to understand your situation and keep track of your progress." She was truly a pillar of strength in my hour of need.

People. Passion. Processes.

What I really love about ThoughtWorks is that it doesn't have a defined hierarchical structure. There is a culture of continuous feedback here, which adds an element of transparency and eliminates inhibitions in a consistent manner. This approach has also helped me rediscover and redefine myself along the way. I have genuine respect for how the company prioritizes equality, justice, and its contribution to society.

People, passion, and processes are the three foundational blocks of the organization. I feel ThoughtWorks' success lies within how it places its technologists above everything else.

"The company and its people have a common passion and commitment to technology."

"Better representation is a huge business objective for us at ThoughtWorks. We are trying to achieve this by hiring more women to technical roles, by creating mechanisms that ensure women technologists have ample growth and networking opportunities, and by crafting policies and measures that make it easier for women to return to technical roles after a break. Apart from this, it's important to recognize where we have gotten to today by celebrating women technologists who are thriving role models for the next generation and adopting a no-tolerance policy towards gender bias."

Chirag Doshi *- Head of Learning & Development, ThoughtWorks India*

She has no regrets about her choices

Balvinder Khurana, Technology Principal and Lead Consultant

Balvinder has been working in the IT industry for 12 years and ThoughtWorks is her third organization. She enjoys being treated as a unique, equal individual. See how she overcame a few major challenges and has no regrets with her choices.

Merit matters!

At ThoughtWorks I am respected for the technical skills that I bring to the table. Here people are assigned to projects purely on the basis of their technical capabilities. This instills faith in me that regardless of gender, only merit, skill, and aptitude can help one navigate the career labyrinth.

Unique problems, unique solutions

ThoughtWorks, carefully considers and addresses our individual concerns and issues. During my first pregnancy, I faced several medical complications but had no intention of quitting. I got in touch with my team and office leads to explore options that would let me stay on, and together, we came up with a creative solution that allowed me to work efficiently, and in comfort.

Attitude of gratitude

My professional growth at ThoughtWorks is all thanks to the amazing opportunities on both the managerial and pure tech front. I'm a little overwhelmed by the sheer number of people who have been indispensable to some of the best decisions of my career. Apart from the support from office leadership, my teammates also made the effort to tailor their schedules to my convenience when things got tough.

ThoughtWorks fosters an experimentative and 'don't knock it till you try it' spirit. When considering my last role change, I was unsure of handling the additional demands of work coupled with the responsibilities of being a mother. I knew my colleagues had my back, however, and I took on the new challenge of being an Office Technology Principal and I haven't looked back since.

"I take pride in the fact that I'm not here as a diversity hire or to fulfill a specific quota."

"I make it a point to first listen and listen well. Not all women colleagues need support, and those who do have very unique needs. I emphasize on this reassuring and important message to the team that I work with - some things are just hard and not harder for women."

Bharani Subramaniam *- Market Tech Principal, ThoughtWorks*

She isn't afraid to follow her dreams

Devangana Khokhar, Lead Data Scientist

Devangana is a Data Scientist who has been working at ThoughtWorks for six and a half years. She isn't afraid to follow her dreams. Find out how she pursued her passion and accomplished her goals.

How it all began

Fainting at the sight of a lab specimen was all it took to dissuade me from pursuing my dream of being a doctor. Little did I know that opting for a course in Theoretical Computer Science would kindle my love for technology and change my life forever.

It wasn't long before I realised that Computer Sciences transcend the boundaries of an academic field. Technology, as a disruptor, has an impact across industries and has given me the opportunity to converse with people from all walks of life. It's been an incredible journey at ThoughtWorks and I'm here to stay.

ThoughtWorks - A great place for techies

As a graduate entering the corporate sector, I was given the opportunity to experiment with various roles and domains at ThoughtWorks and this helped me build a strong foundation in technology. I got to work with inspiring professionals who are

passionate about technology

Some of the other things that make ThoughtWorks a great place to work are the freedom that we have to pursue interests and hone skills outside the purview of our jobs. I also love that we run initiatives like #TalkTechToHer that recognize the power of diversity in the tech industry.

Do. Don't stop at dreaming!

Writing a eeBook was the first thing I wanted to check off of my bucket list and ThoughtWorks gave me the flexibility, and time that I needed. The time I spent juggling writing and project work proved to be one of the most challenging times in my life. What I have accomplished, wouldn't have been possible without the encouragement and regular reality checks from my fellow ThoughtWorkers.

"I don't believe in 'Dare to dream' or 'Dream to do' but rather, 'Dare to do!'"

Gunjan Shukla

Practice Head - Engineering for Research

Starts career as a Developer

2002

Joins ThoughtWorks as a Business Analyst

2008

Fosters an environment of learning and mentoring and changed the way she looked at work

"My first review meeting at ThoughtWorks was a turning point that changed the way I looked at work. My manager asked me to think about whether the time I spent away from my family was truly worth it. That's when I realised that just being paid for the work I do wasn't good enough - the commitment, quality and effort had to be worth my time."

Is blessed with a baby girl and gets back to work as a program BA for a UK Client

2009

Provides flexbile work options with freedom to define work hours

Transitions to the role of People Champion and builds the Ops team from scratch

2012

Allows her the freedom to define the new role, set expectations and boundaries

"If anybody asks me why I've been with ThoughtWorks for so long, the answer's always the same - the people."

Gets nominated for a focused Leadership Development program

2013

Enables her to participate in the global WILD (Women in Leadership Development) program - a first of its kind

Becomes the GM of ThoughtWorks Pune. Her role influence extends to talent onboarding, employee reviews and feedback, community building and more
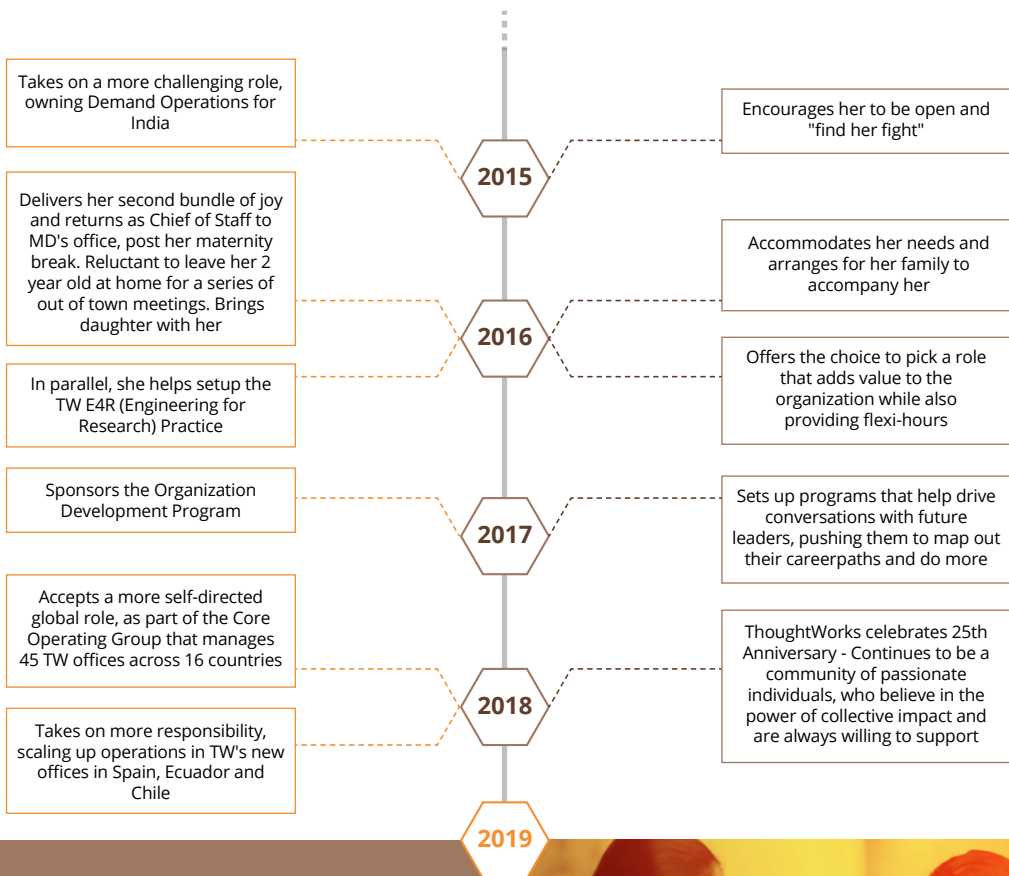
Creates a 2 in a box model (pairing with another TWer), providing the flexibility she needed to navigate the new role and nurture her child, simultaneously

2015

Takes on a more challenging role, owning Demand Operations for India

Encourages her to be open and "find her fight"

2016

Delivers her second bundle of joy and returns as Chief of Staff to MD's office, post her maternity break. Reluctant to leave her 2 year old at home for a series of out of town meetings. Brings daughter with her

Accommodates her needs and arranges for her family to accompany her

In parallel, she helps setup the TW E4R (Engineering for Research) Practice

Offers the choice to pick a role that adds value to the organization while also providing flexi-hours

2017

Sponsors the Organization Development Program

Sets up programs that help drive conversations with future leaders, pushing them to map out their careerpaths and do more

2018

Accepts a more self-directed global role, as part of the Core Operating Group that manages 45 TW offices across 16 countries

ThoughtWorks celebrates 25th Anniversary - Continues to be a community of passionate individuals, who believe in the power of collective impact and are always willing to support

Takes on more responsibility, scaling up operations in TW's new offices in Spain, Ecuador and Chile

2019

"If I can make an impact individually, I can make it a 1000 times over at ThoughtWorks."

"If you don't have confidence in yourself, take the confidence I have in you and run with that."

Sameer Soman - *MD, ThoughtWorks India*

She rose through the ranks and continues to do so

Harinee Muralinath, Security Practice Lead

Harinee joined ThoughtWorks in 2009 as a postgraduate after receiving her MBA degree. She's always had a thirst for knowledge and a willingness to shatter the glass ceiling. Check out how she rose through the ranks and continues to do so.

Hello, Corporate world!

During my college placement phase, I remember the ThoughtWorks interview. Every round was a challenge, pushing me to think and really apply myself. I always left each interview session with more knowledge than when I walked in. Over several rounds, I started to recognize the ways in which ThoughtWorks was different.

So, when I received the offer letter, I knew it was a big deal. On my first project, my team included seven other quality analysts. While this was an unusual composition of technologists, it gave me the opportunity to learn. And, as the new kid on the block, everyone took it upon themselves to mentor me.

Bring it on! Mentor me!

There have been several ThoughtWorkers who have enriched my career growth. Every day has been a learning experience, where I was either improving my technical skills or mastering the nuances of

thinking from a new technical perspective. The incredible support of colleagues like Subhrajit Roy, a Senior Developer on the same team, plus my hard work, have made braving steep learning curves possible.

Yes! to new experiences

I was offered a project lead role in spite of having only two years of experience. One of my tasks was to build an automation framework for a complex project - a first for me. I remember working with Jaydeep Chakrabarty, a QA on the same account, but on a different project. We worked together on building the framework every day. Some days, we would get so engrossed in the work, we wouldn't even realize it was 3 AM! And, we would be back to work at 7 AM because we just could not wait to see the finished product. I picked up a lot from this experience. It didn't take me long to become a project lead drafting automation strategies for clients. And today, I lead application security practices at Thoughtworks India's.

I gradually learned to break my problems down to a molecular level and arrive at a holistic solution.

"Learning is recognizing when you're heading towards failure, identifying the issue at the earliest, and converting it into a victory."
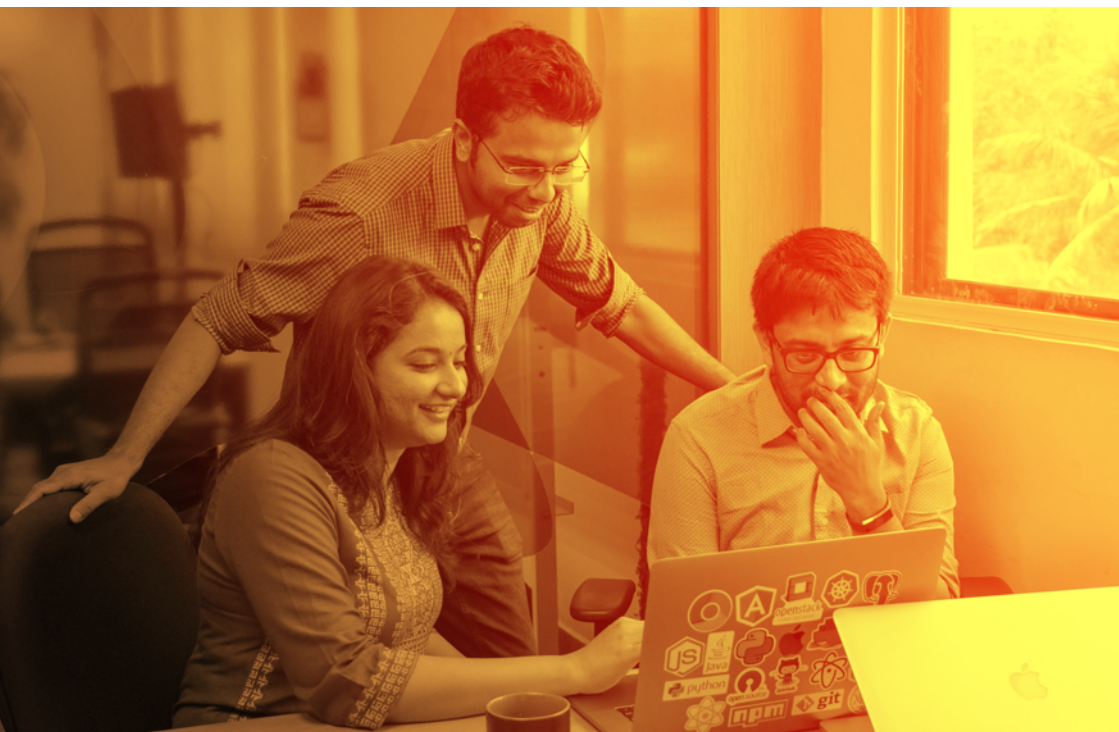
"I don't consciously view colleagues as different based on gender. The only time I think I am made aware of it is when a colleague, who most times happens to be a woman, would like to work from home. And, in most cases, she is trying to balance work with being a parent. As a husband of a working professional, I am very aware of the challenges faced by my colleagues who are women. And, it only makes me more sensitive and attentive to work-related concerns that they might bring up with me."

Subhrajit Roy *- Principal Consultant, ThoughtWorks*

She had her fair share of hurdles but she didn't give up

Jaya Singla, Project Manager

Jaya Singla joined the ThoughtWorks family as a graduate. It's been 11 years since then, and to this day ThoughtWorks is the only place she has worked. Take a look at what's kept her coming back every day.

Equal opportunities

It's true, I've never experienced gender bias at ThoughtWorks. If you are fit for the role, you're considered for it. It's really that simple. Although the inclusive culture ensures equal opportunities for all, I always have the choice to accept or reject them.

Embracing motherhood!

My eleven-year journey came with its fair share of hurdles but I simply wasn't ready to leave ThoughtWorks! Soon after marriage, my husband and I were apart for over 15 months because we lived and worked in different cities. At the time, ThoughtWorks didn't have an office in North India. Following the announcement of a new Pune office, I wrote to the Managing Director asking if there were plans for another office in Gurgaon. He reassured me that the expansion was ongoing and ensured a smooth transition during my transfer.

Down the line, when I was pregnant, I suggested that our office house

a kid's room so that mothers returning from a maternity break could bring their babies back to work with them. My colleagues and I set up the kid's room and now many working mothers bring their kids to the office. Whether it was soothing my sometimes cranky child or keeping him engaged while I was busy, someone was always willing to step in. Although things have not always been easy, having the support and understanding of ThoughtWorkers lent me comfort and a sense of belonging.

Advocate for ThoughtWorks

I constantly find myself talking to my friends and family about the interesting policies and practices at ThoughtWorks; from the hivemind and the openness, listening to differing opinions and the lack of hierarchy.

"The culture of support at ThoughtWorks is what helps me strike and maintain a proper work-life balance."

"Whichever project I have been a part of, I only try to work towards being a part of a team. A team needs everything starting from having fun together, respecting each other's opinion, working together towards one goal, making everyone around comfortable, and taking them along as you grow. It never mattered to me if it was of a particular gender. Everyone was, and should be, equal.

I learnt most on a team where the experience range was between 0-13 years. I picked up a lot of hard and soft skills. I learnt, mentored, and paired with everyone on the team. Someone taught me about delivery, someone about core technical skills, someone about how to have fun while working. I was the only male member on that team. If I had let the gender ratio affect me, I would have missed out on so many learnings.

It is not about gender, it is about how approachable and open you are to listen."

Jaydeep Chakrabarty - *Lead Quality Analyst, ThoughtWorks*

She doesn't fear failure nor limits herself by self-doubt

Lucy Kurian, Lead Developer

Lucy, inspired by her siblings to enter the IT industry, joined ThoughtWorks as a graduate nine years ago. She joined ThoughtWorks as a developer and continues to be one because that's where her passion lies.

There's no I, only we

No one pins the blame on you or passes the buck here at ThoughtWorks. We celebrate successes together and accept responsibility and accountability for our shortcomings as a team. This has always given me the confidence to ask questions, experiment with new approaches, explore new techniques and technologies, and obviously learn from my mistakes.

I often tend to underestimate the value I bring to my team. At ThoughtWorks, I am constantly empowered to overcome my doubts. My colleagues and mentors have always taught me by example not to fear failure or be limited by self-doubt because it's often the most powerful way to reinvent yourself.

Power of having women role models and colleagues

To complete my experience as a consultant I pursued a long-term assignment in the UK. I joined a team of eight to ten senior

ThoughtWorkers, and while I never intentionally sought out a team or majority of women teammates, that's what I ended up with. In hindsight, the inherent safety and calm I felt was a unique experience. I chose to open up to my colleagues about some of my personal struggles—especially as a woman technologist—without the fear of being judged. It was a liberating experience. At ThoughtWorks, I get the opportunity to work closely and collaborate with senior and lead women technologists.

Opportunity seldom knocks twice

While considering the role of Office Technology Principal, my insecurities reared their ugly head again, but I decided to have faith and seize the opportunity. In this new role, I was privy to the bigger picture and was invited to contribute and help shape how ThoughtWorkers functioned as a community of technologists and individuals. I experienced rapid growth, working toward goals that pushed my own boundaries and encouraged me to reach outside my comfort zone.

One of the most interesting and challenging aspects of working at ThoughtWorks is the complete lack of a prescribed way of doing things. This gives me the flexibility to define the role I am in and work to the best of my abilities and creativity.

"As a graduate, I was unfamiliar with the corporate world but saw this as an opportunity to learn and evolve."

Namitha Anand

Principal Consultant, ThoughtWorks India

"I choose to spend time at work, away from parenting, as I look forward to the daily challenges and goals that I come across at ThoughtWorks. This choice signifies the value of being a technologist for me - finding meaning in the work that I do for my clients and the intellectual space that I share with my colleagues."

LIFELONG LEARNING

Having been here for 14 years and counting, I've always been encouraged to take on work and roles that stretch my abilities to ideate, allowing me to tread unfamiliar territories and forming new capabilities. Needless to say, I've always had a supportive ecosystem.

I was assigned to my first project when I was an expectant mother. It was naturally understood that I required flexibility and support from my team - remote participation in stand-ups and team meetings. I'm very grateful that I received such backing, without having to ask for it.

TEAMWORK & COLLABORATION

PEOPLE OVER POLICY

At ThoughtWorks, colleagues and leadership trust in every individual's capabilities. I realised this early on when leaders recognised my aptitude for consulting and mentoring. They encouraged me to conduct domain overview sessions for incoming batches of new joinees, even though I came with a different indsutry experience and shorter tenure.

Clients have come to expect holistic conversations with ThoughtWorks while setting up projects and teams. Team members highlight not just their strengths but also constraints that require flexibility and support. This helps create an empathetic and sustainable ecosystem for clients and teams who collaborate as partners, and hold each other accountable. Balance, transparency and trust form the key to bringing different stakeholders - clients, ThoughtWorkers together.

Saptorsi Hore (senior leader, TWI) has been my mentor and played a very important role in shaping my career by helping me build my domain knowledge. He would encourage me to level-up in client management and become comfortable with having my own style of leadership and goal-setting. Balancing career decisions with trade-offs was something that I learnt from him.

I have always received constructive feedback without ever feeling belittled. The culture of continuous feedback is inherent in the organization and helps us in all aspects of work.

STRONG ROLE MODELS

Sameer Deans (senior leader, TW-Oz), helped me believe in myself. He helped me recognize that in becoming a leader, one has to go through different experiences to be aware of strengths and limitations. While changing decisions, revising project plans, going back to clients with fresh proposals are core to being agile, he demonstrated that being a leader also meant figuring out when to be assertive, and when to be the strong, quiet leader in the background supporting the team.

TW has been a place where you will find strength and support in the form of multiple mentors and colleagues.

"Even in organisations like ThoughtWorks, there are challenging moments when your capability and experience is questioned. This could happen for genuine reasons or misinformed perceptions that lead to insensitivite or discriminatory behaviour.

A week into my role as General Manager for ThoughtWorks Bengaluru, one of my colleagues made a comment about my fitment for the role, including my new duties and mannerisms. This moment did create a brief phase of low self-esteem in me.

But, I was not overcome by the negative phase as I received immense encouragement and support from senior leaders and mentors like Deepa Deo, Sapto and Sameer Deans.

What was a joyous moment for me was when the same colleague got in touch to congratulate me on my work and efforts, stating that I was a good choice of for the role."

ThoughtWorks is the place where your goals evolve and take new forms. There are no dull moments on this journey, where everyday is packed with new experiences and learnings. I feel like anything is possible here.

Never in these 14 years have I experienced a compulsion to be anybody other than myself.

**BRINGING YOUR
WHOLE SELF TO WORK**

She looks forward to the possibilities that lie ahead

Shilpa Goley, Lead Software Developer

Shilpa worked with ThoughtWorks as a developer for ten years before she recently took up the Tech Lead role. The giving nature of both the company and her colleagues are what she treasures the most.

Work in progress

I'm not lying when I say it's been the amazing ThoughtWorkers who have taught me practically everything I know. My coworkers continue to teach me something new even today.

My team leads and colleagues taught me that it is important to push the envelope and learn new things. I could always count on them to be approachable and give me honest feedback. Receiving criticism can be a hard pill to swallow but over the years I've learned to take it in my stride. I'm still a work in progress and have grown to realize that feedback acts as a roadmap for growth.

Idiosyncratic, yet equal

I love the fact that my ideas and opinions are respected and valued. This is what fascinated me when I first joined this company: the flat hierarchy. Whether you're a senior leader, intern or anyone in between, we all sit and work together as a team of equals.

At ThoughtWorks, flexibility is very important because we value a meaningful work-life balance. Leadership never takes a one-size-fits-all approach to address employees' concerns.

Overcoming hurdles

I once had to travel to London for a long-term project but due to my son's poor health and an untimely family emergency, I was forced to cut the trip short. A single conversation where I articulated my worries was all it took. ThoughtWorks heard me out and I had the return tickets, in hand, within a day's time.

"With ten years under my belt and an unquenchable thirst for knowledge, I look forward to the possibilities that lie ahead at ThoughtWorks."

Her love for technology has remained constant

Smita Bhat, Developer and Capability Lead

From Bangalore to Goa to Pune, Smita has had to uproot her life quite a few times. One thing that hasn't changed is Smita's love for technology and ThoughtWorks.

Not your problem, it's our problem

My time as a developer at ThoughtWorks proved to be both demanding and liberating. I left ThoughtWorks to see what the larger world of technology had to offer. I gradually realized that no matter how unique one's career graph turned out to be, ThoughtWorks ensured one felt valued, which is why I eventually returned.

ThoughtWorks lives by agile principles. Apart from the conventional meaning of that term, it also means that there is a quick understanding of one's situation and ThoughtWorks works hard to accommodate employees so they are their happiest and most productive selves at work. It was, and always will be, a place where women technologists can thrive. The gender-neutral attitude and challenging work are a few of the things that make this place distinctive.

Professional, not rigid

ThoughtWorks runs a returnee program for women called Vapasi, aimed at helping women get their career back on track after a break.

ThoughtWorks asks women to pursue careers without having to compromise on personal goals and desires.

It gives women like me the freedom and exposure to explore career options and find our fit. ThoughtWorks' appreciation for originality has made it my safe place where I'm comfortable when expressing myself.

ThoughtWorkers inspire me

Respect, regardless of differences in opinion, is valued at Thought-Works. I have learned the importance of building consensus while working within a team. I've seen senior leaders invest many hours discussing perspectives and understanding other points of view. This has opened my eyes to the value of connecting with people, listening to them and respecting their opinions.

"At work, I'm a technologist. I'm not defined by my gender. I am not a woman technologist."

She overcame her anxiety and fear of failure

Vanya Seth, Technology Principal

Vanya believes that joining ThoughtWorks was one of her best decisions in her life. Take a look at how she overcame her anxiety and fear of failure.

ThoughtWorks, my future?

ThoughtWorks is a talented and passionate technologist's playground. All of us are given equal opportunities to capitalize on and hone our skills. I was initially overwhelmed when I joined ThoughtWorks and questioned my knowledge and constantly compared myself to others. It was how the leadership team regularly discussed my role and future with the company that made me feel treasured.

As a first-time tech lead, my fellow ThoughtWorkers always took the time to guide me and helped me build my consulting and client servicing skills. Also, I began to look at things more positively; I was surrounded by driven employees and used that to motivate me to work harder on my technical skills. Even today, I take inspiration from those around me to become more involved in the evolution of ThoughtWorks.

Learn and grow

When I decided to take on the challenge of being a manager, I left my comfort zone with nothing but uncertainty ahead. I was leading a team of five and this was more responsibility than I was used to. There were times when I thought I couldn't handle the pressure but every hurdle that I crossed made me a little stronger and wiser. The role allowed me to test and groom myself into a leader with influence, which paved the path to my next role of an Office Technology Principal.

Positivity is contagious

Balancing motherhood and a full-time job can be more than a little tricky. ThoughtWorks is sensitive to its employees' professional and personal commitments. I was moved by this approach and it has shown in my commitment at work. Although I have the option of flexi-hours, maintaining a proper work-life balance continues to be an everyday challenge. It feels great to be part of a positive environment, and be constantly surrounded by interesting, kind, and supportive people who are doing their best to contribute to both the company and the community.

"ThoughtWorks is like an orchestra with a myriad of instruments being played simultaneously to create a beautiful harmony. "

Conclusion

In spite of gender diversity's researched-and-confirmed business benefits, the tech industry continues to have a glaringly huge gender gap, especially at the mid and senior levels, meaning businesses have yet to harness the full potential of diversity.

Diversity is a fundamental pillar alongside technical and delivery excellence on which our company has been built and evolves.

I have interacted with all of the women whose stories are featured in this eBook and I'd like to use our collective experiences to leave you with a few ideas on collaboratively working towards a truly inclusive IT industry -

- *Diversity and Inclusion cannot be an HR or leadership team's initiative alone. They should be part of the overall business strategy and cut across all key functions, from people initiatives and programs to demand and sales to infrastructure and policies.*

- *The one-size-fits-all approach does not work. Intersectionality and its impact on an individual cannot be ignored. A sincere inclusion strategy will keep in mind, the intersections and differences of gender, race, age, class, ability, etc.*

- *Men should co-own the gender inclusion agenda. Men hold more seats of power and need to be inclusive in thought and action in order to take a sustainable holistic approach to diversity in the workplace.*

"I wish I was able to...say we've solved the gender gap. Though things are much better than they were years ago, we know that's not the case."

Rebecca Parsons *- Chief Technology Officer, ThoughtWorks*

- *Gender is not binary and neither are businesses. We have an active LGBTQI support community in ThoughtWorks' MITRA Collective. Events, Pride marches, roadshows, and movie screenings are some of the initiatives that encourage exploratory discussions on gender inclusion.*

- *Engage with dissent: a culture that encourages open conversations, healthy debate, and questioning leadership's decisions will lend itself to be trusted and help cultivate safe, effective work spaces for all.*

- *Invest in growing your next level of leaders by taking a more structured approach to choosing an inclusive set of candidates for your leadership development and mentorship programs.*

- *Policies should be gender neutral: work-from-home, leave, access to childcare facilities and other flexible, gender neutral work policies when gender neutral, reinstate the fact that a family's primary caregivers needn't be women alone.*

- *This generation of women technologists has a big calling ahead of them when it comes to being visible, active and engaging role models and mentors for the next generation of women technologists*

The realization is that Inclusion is not a state but a journey and there's a long way to go. It's also critical that organisationz invest in building a 'Culture of Belonging'. We understand that this is a journey of learning, unlearning, experimenting and iterating as a collective.

Tina Vinod
Head of Diversity & Inclusivity
ThoughtWorks India

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