

2016 WOMEN IN

# TECH NOLOGY

CAREER  
ASPIRATIONS,  
STRATEGIES,  
AND SUPPORT



**HARVEY  
NASH**

The Power of Talent

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WITH

**ARA**  
ATTRACT RETAIN ADVANCE



- // What is the landscape for women in technology today?
- // Where are women in IT excelling, and where are they struggling?
- // How can employers help?

These are questions we set out to explore in Harvey Nash's inaugural Women in Technology survey. One purpose was simply to report on the state of affairs of women working in IT. But more importantly, we wanted to open up a dialogue on workforce issues, from career interests and advancement opportunities to compensation and work/life balance.

To take a deeper dive on this vital topic, we partnered with ARA, an organization whose goal is to help businesses increase the numbers and the influence of women working and advancing in technology and leadership roles while also helping women navigate IT career paths and challenges.

Harvey Nash is a strategic sponsor of ARA. This resulting report underscores ARA's mission to Attract, Retain and Advance women in technology and Harvey Nash's commitment to provide opportunities for women in IT to learn, collaborate, and accelerate their careers.

Based on responses from more than 600 online survey participants, this synopsis represents a diverse cross section of the IT workforce. With the help of both female and male tech industry insiders, we sought to gauge differences in opinions and experiences across several topics:

1

### WHAT TO EXPECT

What aspects of working in technology do employees find most rewarding and most challenging?

2

### CAREER ASPIRATIONS

How does a career in IT take shape and progress in light of personal and professional pressures?

3

### SUCCESS FACTORS

What tactics and corporate programs will help women best meet their career goals?

**We believe that the  
2016 Women in Technology  
Survey Report speaks to  
the resilience of women in  
technology and the powerful  
value of a diverse workplace.  
We hope you think so too.**

**BOB MIANO**

PRESIDENT & CEO  
HARVEY NASH USAPAC

**LESLIE VICKREY**

CO-FOUNDER  
ARA

WHAT TO

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FROM YOUR  
TECHNOLOGY  
CAREER

What aspects of a technology career are most rewarding?

How does your day-to-day work align with your interests?

What workplace challenges and obstacles do you face?

# Love a good challenge? / You're in the right career.

Women and men alike gravitate towards challenging IT work—that ranks at the top of the list of rewarding technology job traits (mentioned by 59%). Not far behind for both groups is the opportunity to be creative and innovative (47%). However, when it comes to pay-related rewards, the similarities between men and women unravel. About half as many women as men identify benefits and company perks as a draw, and only two thirds as many highlight good compensation as a rewarding aspect.

While the desire for challenging and innovative work stays constant throughout the careers of women in technology, senior-level professionals place a higher value on compensation and benefits than their junior counterparts. On the other hand, these early career women tend to appreciate variety of work more (56% junior vs. 42% senior); followed by work that's fun (40% vs. 24%); and being part of an inclusive and diverse team (22% vs. 8%).

# What aspects of working in technology do you find rewarding?



# Interest vs. reality. / Everyday life as a woman in IT.

About one-third of women list overall management (34%) and project management (28%) as a core component of their current work duties. Since these were also two of the highest ranked areas of interest, many of our respondents seem to enjoy the work they're doing on a day-to-day basis. That's positive news.

Technology careers demand innovation, though, and it's clear these pacesetters desire opportunities to evolve their skillsets. Some

notable gaps exist between actual job duties and interests. Only 10% of women indicate their work currently involves creating, designing, and inventing. The number who want to tackle that type of work? More than three times that figure (32%). Similarly, just 12% say they are actively coding, whereas 21% express interest in programming.



# Which area of technology work interests you the most?

## INTEREST

32% CREATING/INVENTING

27% BUSINESS

23% DESIGNING

22% CODING/DEVELOPING/PROGRAMMING

15% DIGITAL



## REALITY

12% BUSINESS

12% CODING/DEVELOPING/PROGRAMMING

10% CREATING/INVENTING

7% DESIGNING

6% DIGITAL

# No shortage of IT job challenges. / But women struggle more to advance.

Long hours, high pressure, poor work/life balance: sound familiar? These job challenges impact men and women at fairly consistent levels. Among both populations, the number one obstacle is keeping up with necessary job skills—although 10% more men than women view it as a stumbling block.

Ask about opportunities for advancement though, and you uncover a vastly different

story. More than a third (37%) of women list lack of opportunities to make career gains as a challenge, compared to just one-fifth (20%) of men. The more tenure a woman has in IT, the more likely she is to list that as a major challenge. In another telling statistic, close to a third (29%) of women experience an unwelcoming work environment, compared to only 7% of men.

**What is the greatest challenge for you when it comes to working in technology?**



CAREER

# AS PIR AT ION S

When did you first become interested in a career in technology?

How will family responsibilities impact your career trajectory?

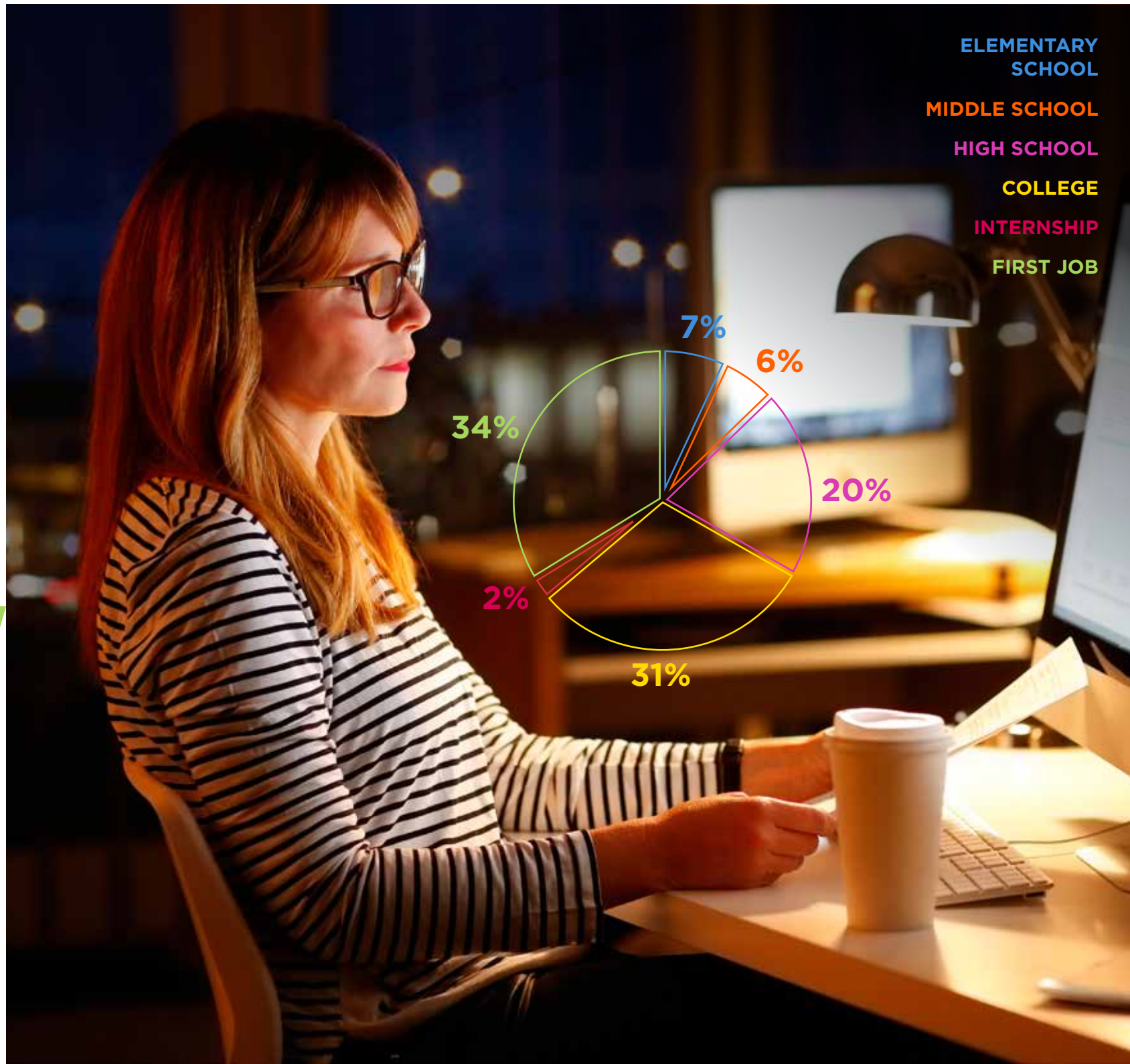
What are the reasons you might look for a new job?

# Off to a good start. / Where IT career interest begins.

Looking at when an interest in a career in technology first emerged, women are late bloomers compared to their male counterparts. There are relatively few early adopters among the women in our survey—only 7% got intrigued in elementary school, compared to 22% of men. While the figures are fairly consistent for emerging interest in high school, most of these women in IT identified their future career path in college (31%) or at their first job (34%)—some by accident and some by choice.

Among more recent entrants into the IT job market, the timing of initial interest trends earlier. By the time these junior professionals entered the workforce, they were more likely to be fully invested in a technology career. That speaks to the rise of technology education and the power of early outreach to young women.

**When did you first become interested in a career in technology?**



# Balancing family and career. / A work in progress.

Men and women alike struggle with the demands of balancing a challenging IT career with family responsibilities. Women are slightly more likely to indicate that outside responsibilities have slowed or stalled their career advancement (30% vs. 25%), but there's no doubt everyone is feeling the pressure.

While 28% of respondents say those responsibilities make them more efficient and driven to succeed, personal anecdotes reveal the complexity behind the data. One

woman indicated, "I am having to make more 'adjustments' either at work or in my personal life to balance my ambition with my personal responsibilities." But we also hear the same story from men: "I put my family before the company in which I work. This has slowed my professional progress."

**What effect do you believe family responsibilities have had/will have on your career?**





# Should I stay or should I go?

## / Why women in tech walk away.

Not surprisingly, both men and women rank better compensation and more opportunity for advancement as top reasons to pursue a new job. But the number one reason women in IT left their last job may shock you: an unsupportive work environment. Almost 40% of women listed that as a factor, compared to 27% of men. Add in the 23% of women who report unfair treatment, and you see a problematic pattern emerge.

Men are significantly more likely to have left for a more personally rewarding position than women (27% vs. 15%). Taken as a whole, the data suggest that women in technology leave their jobs to escape negative situations, whereas men tend to leave to pursue positive opportunities.

# What made you leave your last technology job?

## TOP 5 REASONS **MEN**

1. MORE SALARY/COMPENSATION
2. NO OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADVANCEMENT
3. BETTER WORK/LIFE BALANCE
4. MORE PERSONALLY REWARDING
5. UNSUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT

## TOP 5 REASONS **WOMEN**

1. UNSUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT
2. NO OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADVANCEMENT
3. MORE SALARY/COMPENSATION
4. UNFAIR TREATMENT
5. BETTER WORK/LIFE BALANCE



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FACTORS

**What is the best strategy  
for a woman to advance  
in IT?**

**Do you participate in formal  
programs that promote  
women in technology?**

# Been there, done that. / Be confident, but be prepared.

Men and women agree: confidence counts. Being confident is the most common piece of advice respondents gave to women looking to advance their IT career. Down the line, men and women are extremely consistent in how they ranked helpful advice, from following your passion to not getting discouraged at stumbling blocks.

A closer examination reveals some key differences. Women place far more emphasis than men on clearly defining what you want and asking for it (57% vs. 45%). They also assign more value to showing work metrics and ROI (30% vs. 20%). These practical suggestions outweighed others to work harder and establish better work/life balance.

What is the best way for a woman to advance in her own career?



# Out of sight, out of mind? / Scarcity of formal support programs.

Surprisingly few survey respondents report the existence of formal programs to support women in technology. Only 22% say their firms have those in place, even though the majority work at large companies (52% at firms with more than 1,000 employees). Here's an interesting tidbit though—nearly half (48%) of men say their firm does have support programs, compared to just 18% of women.

Mentorships—both formal and informal—are relatively common but are more heavily utilized by men. Almost two-thirds (64%) of men in our survey have worked with a mentor, compared to 53% of women. Generally, men derived more value from those relationships: 34% found them to be extremely helpful, whereas 26% of women felt that way.

**Does your company have any formal programs within your business to promote women in technology roles?**





**Clearly, women in IT experience ups and downs as they set out to create viable and rewarding careers in technology. Every day brings small victories and frustrating challenges.**



## REWARDS /

There are clear bright spots in the tech career landscape. Women in IT love the pursuit of meaningful work and the opportunity to innovate. Plus, nearly 25% of women just starting out in the profession have aspirations to become Chief Technology Officer and 41% would love to start their own firm. /

## CHALLENGES /

But there are also serious environmental hurdles. An unwelcoming work environment and lack of advancement opportunities create stress and undermine hard work. Companies have been slow to respond with programs that specifically and aggressively help women navigate their tech career options. /

## OPPORTUNITIES /

At Harvey Nash and ARA, we echo the 2016 Women in Technology survey respondents' advice for women in IT to be confident, be passionate, and be prepared. By sharing the experiences and opinions of these enterprising professionals, we hope to promote the unique perspectives and future successes of women in IT. /

## ABOUT THE SURVEY

Sponsored by Harvey Nash in partnership with ARA, the 2016 Women in Technology Survey utilizes data from an online survey of individuals working in the technology field. Results are based on 602 anonymous responses from both men and women fielded from July 31 through September 16, 2016.



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