Women In Technology Leadership Round Table
Spring '16 Event Summary

E V E N T

Women in Technology Leadership Round Table
June 10th, 2016
UC Berkeley
wit.berkeley.edu

O R G A N I Z E R S

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Gitanjali Swamy

O V E R V I E W

On Friday, June 10th, leading professionals in the field of technology convened at UC Berkeley for the second bi-annual Women in Technology Leadership Round Table. Round table participants included an accomplished group of industry executives, entrepreneurs, professors, and leaders at non-profit organizations. Their aim was to discuss progress made on two initiatives put forth during the first round table event: *facing the data* and *encouraging boldness*. These initiatives are part of the group's larger goal to develop sustainable solutions that will increase the presence of women in the technical workforce.

1 FACING THE DATA

The meeting began with participants sharing experiences in reference to gathering and confronting statistical data on gender diversity. Many noted that the percentage of women in technology drops significantly when considering higher level positions, as well as individuals at the intersection of underrepresented groups, such as women of color. However, several participants had seen improvements within their own companies since the last meeting and offered advice on best practices. Some of these best practices included:

- developing a set of diversity metrics, monitoring them continuously, and tying improved metrics with incentives;

- celebrating and learning from managers with diverse teams;

- reforming the hiring process, both by considering hiring women from outside and by including women in the hiring committee.
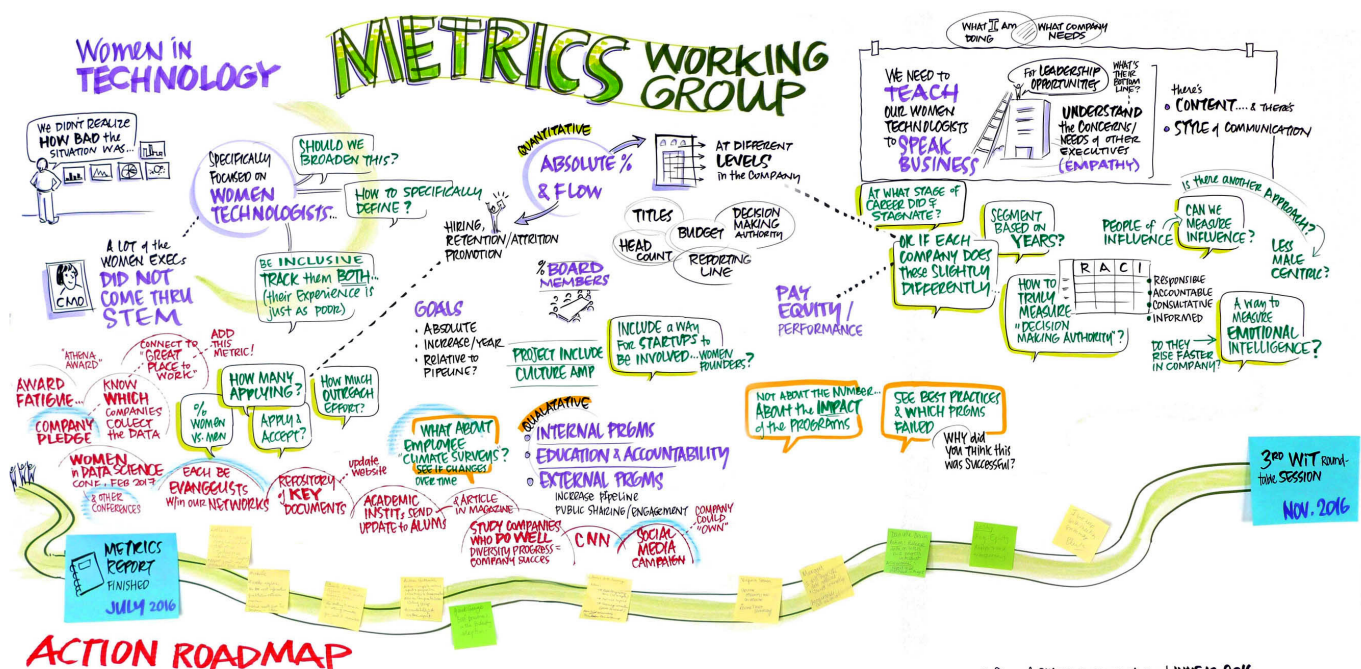

A working group led by Andrea Goldsmith and composed of four industry members (Leslie Slaton Brown, Kristen Johnson, Catherine Li, and Gitanjali Swamy) then presented its proposal for a standard set of metrics to track gender diversity within tech companies. The group agreed that in collecting these metrics it is important to distinguish technical roles from non-technical roles, though ideally both types of positions can be tracked.

Both quantitative and qualitative metrics were discussed at length. The proposed metrics are summarized in Table 1. For the quantitative metrics, it was agreed that companies should release not only the numbers, but also the goals/targets they have for improving these numbers and in what time frame. Qualitative metrics included programs and policies that promote and support women in tech. Ideally companies would list whether or not they have these programs/policies, and would be able to ascertain their effectiveness by tracking the quantitative metrics. Company climate surveys, pay equity, and performance reviews were also discussed as ways to gauge inclusiveness, either qualitatively or quantitatively.
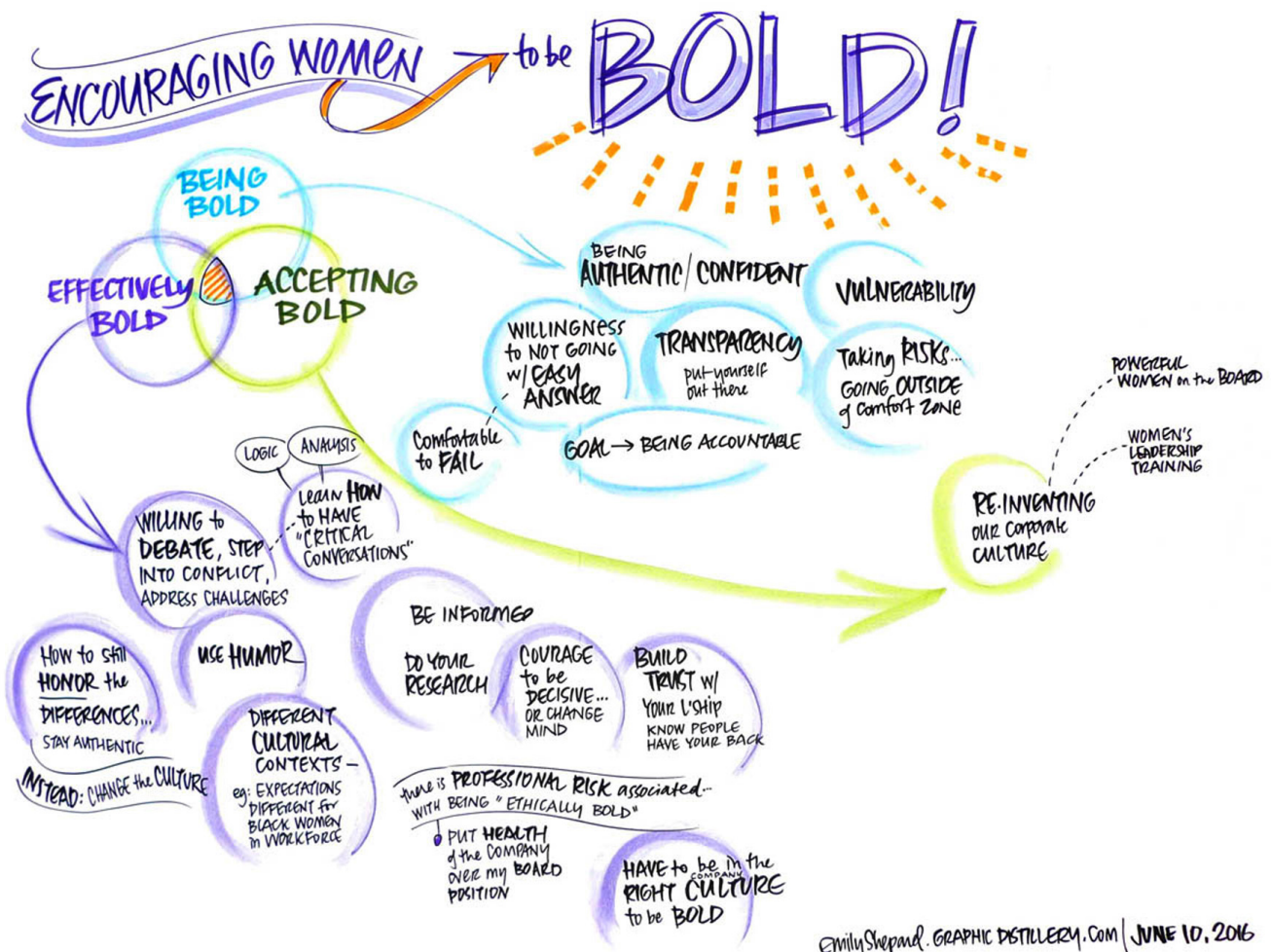
Table 1: Quantitative and Qualitative Diversity Metrics

Quantitative Metrics

Women in the pipeline	% of women at different levels in the company, as well as their respective budgets and the headcount of people who report to them
Hiring, retention, promotion	Hiring rates, average time to promotion, and average company tenure, as well as recruiting efforts and % of women applicants
View from the top	% of women on the board, and whether or not there is a woman founder/co-founder

Qualitative Metrics

- recruitment/retention programs
- leadership development
- sponsorship/mentoring
- unconscious bias training
- accountability for gender diversity
- employee resource groups
- pay equity
- maternity and paternity leave
- flex time
- engagement with organizations that promote women in tech
- consideration of women-led companies in vendor/supplier selection processes
- results of climate surveys

2 ENCOURAGING BOLDNESS

In the afternoon, Gitanjali Swamy initiated a discussion on 'encouraging women to be bold,' which was followed by two parallel breakout sessions. Participants stressed that encouraging boldness is not just about helping women to be effective in speech, choices, and actions, but is also about creating a culture that allows for women to be bold while remaining authentic. It was agreed that there is a need to cultivate communities that are encouraging and receptive to this boldness in women.

ENCOURAGING WOMEN → to be BOLD!

BEING BOLD
EFFECTIVELY BOLD — ACCEPTING BOLD

BEING AUTHENTIC / CONFIDENT
VULNERABILITY
WILLINGNESS to NOT GOING w/ EASY ANSWER
TRANSPARENCY — put yourself out there
Taking RISKS... GOING OUTSIDE of comfort zone
Comfortable to FAIL
GOAL → BEING ACCOUNTABLE

POWERFUL WOMEN on the BOARD
WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP TRAINING
RE-INVENTING our Corporate CULTURE

LOGIC   ANALYSIS
Learn HOW to HAVE "CRITICAL CONVERSATIONS"
WILLING to DEBATE, STEP INTO CONFLICT, ADDRESS CHALLENGES

How to still HONOR the DIFFERENCES... STAY AUTHENTIC
INSTEAD: CHANGE the CULTURE
USE HUMOR
DIFFERENT CULTURAL CONTEXTS — eg: EXPECTATIONS DIFFERENT for BLACK WOMEN in WORKFORCE

BE INFORMED
DO YOUR RESEARCH
COURAGE to be DECISIVE... OR CHANGE MIND
BUILD TRUST w/ YOUR L'SHIP — KNOW PEOPLE HAVE YOUR BACK

There is PROFESSIONAL RISK associated... WITH BEING "ETHICALLY BOLD"
PUT HEALTH of the COMPANY over my BOARD POSITION
HAVE to be in the company RIGHT CULTURE to be BOLD

EmilyShepard.GRAPHIC DISTILLERY.COM | JUNE 10, 2016

The participants then divided into two groups for breakout discussions to address this need. The first breakout group, led by Janet George, discussed best practices in industry for supporting boldness in women. The group discussed key strategies for effective mentoring, training, and sponsorship, as well as qualities of successful women role models and leaders who embody boldness. Full details of this discussion are available in Appendix A.

The second breakout group, led by Belle Wei, discussed best platforms and venues for collaborating with industry to foster boldness in female students. Suggestions included leveraging existing programs sponsored by organizations such as the Association for Computing Machinery and the Anita Borg Institute, as well as reaching out to women's groups within individual companies. Ultimately, the group determined that there is a need for a central repository of resources for students and professors to ensure the successful transition of women from 'campus to career.' Examples of such resources include stories of successful women technologists, strategies for navigating the tech world post-graduation, and links to the aforementioned organizations. The breakout group plans to meet for a more in-depth discussion to flesh out these ideas before the next round table.
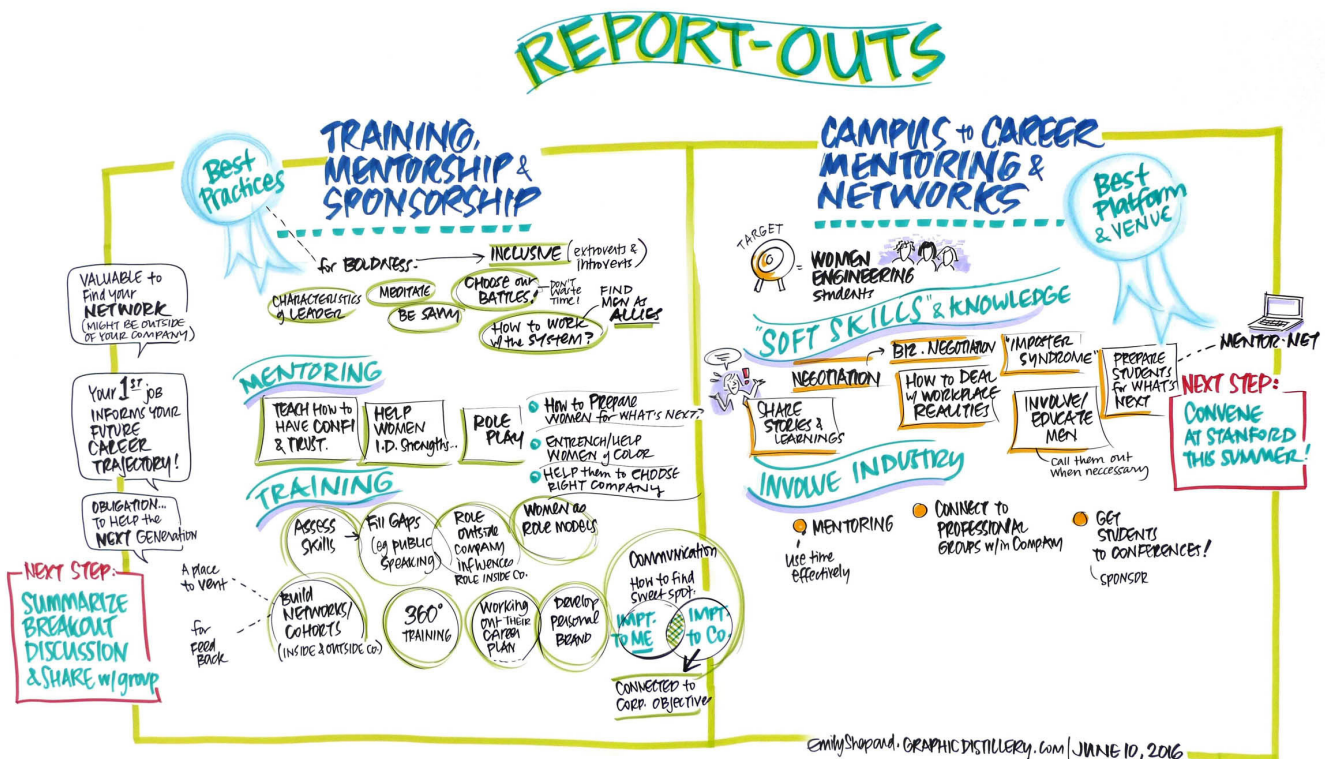
3   CALL TO ACTION: NEXT STEPS

The participants each committed to taking at least one concrete action that emerged from the meeting, and to report on their progress at the next round table in approximately 6 months (November 2016). The working group on diversity metrics aims to release a detailed summary report by the end of July 2016, and the breakout group on 'campus to career' will meet in September 2016 at Stanford University. Additionally, the steering committee will discuss the operating model for the Women in Technology Leadership Round Table, and present its recommendations for sustaining this industry-university initiative at the meeting in November.

Working group members:

- Lesley Slaton Brown, HP Inc.

- Andrea Goldsmith, Stanford University

- Catherine Li, Wells Fargo & Co.

- Gitanjali Swamy, IoTask

Steering committee members:

- Camille Crittenden, UC Berkeley

- Janet George, SanDisk Corp.

- Tsu-Jae King Liu, UC Berkeley

- Gitanjali Swamy, IoTask

- Belle Wei, San José State University

4 APPENDIX A: BEST PRACTICES BREAKOUT SESSION

During the breakout session on best practices for encouraging boldness in industry, the group first discussed how women leaders can embody boldness themselves, and then determined best practices for encouraging boldness in others, including advice on mentoring, training, and sponsorship.

Participants began by sharing what they felt were common qualities of successful women leaders. Several noted, for example, that a leader must understand that boldness comes with a risk of failure. The leader, therefore, must have courage. She must think about what comes next, even when her current idea has not turned out well, and must know when not to spend time altering her own behavior to accommodate others. Practices such as basing goals on quantifiable metrics and arranging pre-meetings to see the spread of ideas between attendees were proposed as practices of effective leaders. The group also discussed the importance of being inclusive to both introverts and extroverts in leadership, and helping to prepare women for IT.

1. MENTORING In terms of best practices for mentoring, participants noted that mentoring relationships require trust, and that confidence in the relationship takes time to build. Several important mentoring tasks were discussed, including helping the mentee to outline a path to success, manage personal balance, and make career choices, as well as helping the mentee to identify her own strengths. Role-playing was proposed as a valuable tool in these mentoring tasks.

2. TRAINING Participants agreed that an ability to speak in public is a critical skill that can be developed with training. Another type of training proposed was for women to use assessment tools to find others with similar skills in their organization. One-on-one coaching was discussed as an extremely helpful type of training for developing the skills needed to move to leadership positions.

In addition to focusing on training within the company, participants felt that women should focus on their reputation outside of their company. Those who are bold tend to have a personal brand, and to be successful it is essential to know what you want and find a path (perhaps not always a straight line) to get there.

3. SPONSORSHIP Finally, the group established that a crucial component of developing a network of women in technology is the cultivation of women role models and sponsors. These individuals are particularly valuable in increasing the presence of women in technology because they are willing to stake their reputation on other women. Women and men leaders alike who help to sponsor other women can significantly boost a woman's career, e.g., by providing access to essential networks, publicizing past achievements, or offering recommendations for future work.