

Article

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IWD - Keira Hall

Keira is a Senior Technology Consultant within the Technology Solutions team, and was named Insider Media North East's 2022 Young Digital and Tech Professional of the Year.



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As part of International Women's Day 2023, we're sharing insights from our team about their experiences, their role models and their goals for inspiring others as, or about, women in tech and business.

How did you become a woman in tech?

I did Psychology, Biology and Maths at A level and hated every minute of it. My school said do something academic, you'd be wasted in IT. I dropped Biology and psychology, did an extra year at 6th form, and finished with an A* and an A in ICT and Business Studies!

I came from a council estate background with a young mother, and I was the first person in my family to go to university. Growing up, people would always look at us on parents evenings and I could feel them thinking: "is that her mother?!". We always laughed about it.

The day I graduated, mum bought me a card which read 'You got there, we proved them wrong!'; safe to say there was a whole load of tears on graduation day!

I did a placement year with Waterstons as part of my university studies and was thrilled to be asked back when I graduated. Having that experience showed me what I wanted to pursue, and that Tech Solutions was where I wanted to be.

What are the challenges that you have faced, and how have you overcome them?

Being a young female in tech hasn't been, and still isn't, easy; people perceive you a certain way and you have to work much harder to prove yourself. This does decline with time and experience but having a good support group around you really helps overcome this, especially if you have amazing colleagues who know you and are willing to support you through.

People think you come from a privileged background when you get to a certain point in your career, never forget where you come from and always look out for others.

How do you feel empowered as a woman in tech?

Covid has had a huge part to play in empowering woman in tech; the restrictions of home working due to family commitments affected men and woman alike, highlighting that regardless of gender the same challenges apply.

Waterstons as an employer has helped with the empowerment of young females; we are encouraged to find our voice and stand up for ourselves in different situations and difficult conversations.

Who is your female role model?

Adriana Gascoigne is a prime example of a person who is doing so much to empower and encourage young females into tech. She is the founder of Girls in Tech and appears on the Forbes Woman panel a number of times promoting inclusivity and equality.

What would be your advice for the future women in tech?

Don't be afraid to ask for help; people often take value that you are asking for support and that you value their expertise.

Be yourself – don't change just because you are expected to be a certain way. Showing emotion shows you're human just like everyone else.

Get out of your comfort zone – you will never learn doing the same thing day in and day out.

Network – seek out other like-minded individuals and learn from them.

Collaborate with other females within tech and encourage others with similar backgrounds to help spread positivity and empowerment.

Do things in person; face to face is always better. Getting people into a room is more often than not is the biggest challenge!

Work hard and you can get there.

Find out more about Keira [here](#) and [here](#)

Read more IWD stories from our team at the following links.

[Michael Stirrup](#)

[Julie Swinbank](#)

Annabell Frewin-Wood

Clair Hillier

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Claudia Oprya

Rhianne Short

Leanne Cullen

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