



ICT Executive Profile

Based on feedback from the annual survey around having access to more senior women as role models, each month we have an executive profile compiled from 7 questions posed to key executive women in the ICT industry

Maggie Alexander



In FITT's Silver Anniversary year we will intersperse our exec profiles with long standing FITT committee members over the years. We will kick-start with Maggie Alexander, one of FITT's founding members who won AIIA IAwards, ICT woman of the year last year!

What is your current role and what is your scope?

I am a Business Process Improvement Consultant. I work with large or small organisations to help make them more successful by changing their people, processes and technology.

I analyse business problems and recommend solutions but I like to work with the business to

actually deliver the solutions too. So I usually end up managing a project or program of work such as a software implementation and testing or change management involving communication and training. I really like being involved end-to-end and working in a team.

These days I only work a few days a week and only for clients on my doorstep. I live near North Ryde so for the past 7 years I have worked exclusively for clients in the Macquarie Business Park and surrounds so I don't waste time commuting to work.

What attracted you to a career in ICT?

Initially I was a teacher who was interested in communication. I wanted to work with organisations that were implementing new computer technologies that needed someone to help with internal communications and staff development. I was lucky enough to be asked to work on the first computer implementation at TAFE NSW in 1980 and that got me into ICT.

Tell us about the highpoints and lowpoints of your career?

I loved working for Digital Equipment Corporation in the 1980s & 90s. The company was then the second largest computer company in the world and I was able to travel the globe with it. I had many different roles and learnt so much. I enjoyed being one of the most senior women in the Australian company. Helping to start up FITT was a highlight of this time. Winning the NSW ICT Woman of the Year Award in 2013 for my contribution to women in ICT has topped it off.

When I started my own consulting business up 18 years ago, I was able to draw on all of my business experience and make it available to others. That was, and still is, very rewarding.

The lowest point in my career was when I went to work for Deloitte Consulting in their SAP practice, after 11 years with Digital. I hated it there but I did learn the consulting business and it provided me with the impetus to start up my own.



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What does work life balance mean to you?

The first book my husband ever gave me, one month after we met, was "Meditations For Women Who Do Too Much" by Anne Wilson Schaef. I did not know I was one of those women who did too much until then. I had to learn to balance my life better, which my husband helped me do by luring me away to do interesting things outside work. I probably still work too much but I don't burn myself out anymore.

NB: As appeared on FITT e-newsletter January 2014 and also features on the website.

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What attracted and kept you in the ICT industry throughout your career?

ICT is a dynamic industry - there are so many opportunities. Even when the industry has been through downturns, there have always been jobs for people who deliver on their promises and are team workers. Through FITT and my work I have met many great people who have inspired me, hired me and kept me in the industry.

What ambitions personal or professional do you still want to achieve?

I really want to use my skills to help other people less fortunate than I am. I have joined Rotary, the international professional organisation that helps the community, and can now see myself realising this ambition. I am applying my leadership and project management skills and knowledge to Rotary fundraising projects. Between Rotary and the Bill and Belinda Gates Foundation, polio has almost been eradicated from our world. That's doing a lot of good in my book.

What's the one piece of advice you'd give to yourself starting out on your career?

I would say "When you finish a task, pat yourself on the back and take a well-deserved break, instead of looking for the next task. "Being project less and being worthless are not synonymous." (From Meditations for Women Who Do Too Much).



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