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**NEVERTHELESS, SHE PERSISTED:  
True Stories Of Women Leaders In Tech**

By Pratima Rao Gluckman  
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**WOMEN LEADERS IN TECH**

**Overcoming Gender Bias To Succeed In High-Tech Industry**

At a time when diversity is being championed from boardrooms down to managerial ranks, the high-tech industry is still rife with gender bias. To succeed in high tech, women need to possess not only outstanding technical and leadership abilities, but also the will to overcome adversity.

In **NEVERTHELESS, SHE PERSISTED: True Stories Of Women Leaders In Tech**, software engineer Pratima Rao Gluckman tells the stories of 19 women who overcame formidable odds to succeed in a male-dominated culture. The stories are a testament to persistence, whether undergoing a grueling education or going back to ask for a promotion after being rejected. Each story brings insight into career trajectories and highlights the importance of speaking up for oneself and having faith in one's accomplishments.

While some talented women in high-tech have been promoted based on their merits, they

are the exception. Too often, hard work and accomplishments don't result in promotions, strategic projects, and raises. Even if a woman succeeds in shattering the glass ceiling, she still faces the prospect of the glass cliff, where women are given tougher and almost impossible jobs more often than men. "Gender bias is a fact of life, and in Silicon Valley meritocracy is a myth that hides gender bias," says Gluckman.

A recurring theme in **NEVERTHELESS, SHE PERSISTED** is how women have to overcome the stereotype that men possess innate leadership ability whereas women do not. As the stories illustrate, women shouldn't have to prove that they can be as assertive and aggressive as men in order to be effective leaders. "The biggest hurdle for myself, and for many other women as well, is that I don't naturally possess the personality traits that are valued in the world of tech," says Jennifer Anderson, an executive at VMware, and one of the women profiled in the book. "The industry values people who are assertive and aggressive."

This doesn't mean that women should refrain from being assertive. However, it does mean that they must be prepared to deal with being labeled as 'pushy' or 'aggressive'. Serial entrepreneur Pam Kostka, another of the women profiled in the book, says: "I won't apologize for being a woman. I tend to have a direct communication style, which is penalized in women. Women are supposed to be more empathetic in their style, but I am more direct and logical. Maybe I am that way because I had to be, in order to get my voice heard."

The women profiled in the book offer career-building advice on how to:

**Manage one's personal brand while moving up the leadership ranks**

**Overcome feelings of inadequacy by building confidence in one's own abilities**

**Find mentors to coach and guide with career advice, and provide perspective**

**Find sponsors – senior-level people in an organization with the reputation and credentials to recommend promotions**

Interspersed throughout the book are Gluckman's observations on the challenges of being a woman in high-tech, drawn from her own career:

**Branding** It's important for women to manage their reputation and communicate their achievements, knowledge, and passion.

**Speaking up** Women shouldn't be afraid to self-advocate aggressively in order to be fairly rewarded.

**Education** It's important for women to learn the fundamentals of programming at an early age.

**Impostor syndrome** High-achieving women often have difficulty internalizing their accomplishments and fear being exposed as a fraud.

**The glass cliff** Women in leadership roles are often only given an opportunity during a crisis, when the chances of failure are high.

**Sponsors** It's important for a woman to have someone who is willing to advocate for her, and has the power to recommend her for promotions, putting her or his reputation behind her.

The stories of the women in **NEVERTHELESS, SHE PERSISTED** will inspire women who are considering careers in high-tech, those already working in the field to overcome the obstacles of gender bias and achieve their true leadership potential, and C-suite leaders who need to recognize that gender bias is still a real issue.

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### **About The Author**

**Pratima Rao Gluckman** knew she wanted to be an engineer from a young age. She attained a master's degree in computer science (University of Texas at Arlington), a master's degree in chemistry, and bachelor's degree in instrumentation engineering (BITS Plain India). Currently, in her field of enterprise software, she is Engineering Leader at VMware and manages a team of engineers. During her time in the industry, she has grown aware of the gender bias and related impostor's syndrome that makes it challenging for women – including herself – to achieve their desired potential. Gluckman is striving to make meaningful changes in the tech world so that more women can enter careers as engineers and thrive to become effective leaders in their organizations.

For more information, please visit [www.PratimaGluckman.com](http://www.PratimaGluckman.com).