



LEARNIT – WOMEN IN IT



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Background

- 1. What is/was your parent's or other important family member's vocation? How many brothers/sisters do you have? Are they older/younger than you?**

My father is a pediatrician and children's neuropsychiatrist. My mother was an air hostess in her younger years and then a housewife. I have a younger brother who is a lawyer.

- 2. Where did you spend most of your time when growing up? What kind of area was this – city, town, rural, etc?**

I have always lived in Rome.

- 3. How did you spend your leisure time?**

Reading and playing.



- 4. Did your parents or other important persons express an opinion about how a good/perfect girl has to be (clever, sweet, wild, pretty, shy, etc...)?**

No, they taught me to be a 'good' person, honest, wise and respectful to everybody, regardless of my gender.

- 5. What gender was your closest friend when growing up? Did this person/ these people express opinions about how a cool/perfect girl has to be?**

Females when I was a child, then both genders. All my friends agreed with me on the fact that a woman has to be independent in life and have the same opportunities as any man.

- 6. What kind of occupational careers did your friends take?**

A lot of friends of mine became lawyers or engineers, others followed various professional careers. Almost all of them are graduated.

- 7. Did you have role models you wanted to follow? If so who were they and what were their characteristics that you wanted to follow?**

Since I was a child I wanted to be a doctor like my father. I wanted to be of help to other people. I liked his wisdom and his capability to understand people and their problems.

Actual vocational situation

1. What are your earliest memories on deciding about the job you now have?

Actually, I never decided, it just happened! As a matter of fact, I graduated in literature.

2. Who or what were the initial triggers?

I had a lot of friends studying engineering. Through them I started to work, while I was still studying, for one of the departments of the engineering faculty, translating and editing essays for international congresses and meetings. With them I had my first approach with computers and technical stuff.



3. How did the decision evolve?

One day a friend asked me if I could be interested in a little work for Ericsson Telecommunications, just for a couple of weeks... and this was ten years ago!

4. What aspects of ICT do you find particularly appealing?

The opportunity to take part to the creation of something that could be of some help in making for example easier a complex job or else.

5. Do you work in a team or alone?

Mostly in teams.

6. What do you do in your job?

I have been doing different roles in these years. Today, I am a functional analyst. I have been a system engineer and a project manager / director.

7. What does one of your typical work-days look like?

It depends on the phase of the project I'm working on. It could be a moment of study for a new product, with meetings and confrontations with the commitments or with the technicians, or the preparation of the specification documentation or else the check of the implementation released, to verify that the initial requirements have been completely fulfilled.

8. What aspects of your job do you like the most and the least?

I like the team work, when the different kinds of roles and personalities positively interacts together to obtain the best possible results. I don't like when there is negative competition among colleagues or discrimination against women.

Supporting/Impeding factors

1. Could you please describe your vocational career?

Actually, I wanted to be a doctor. For various personal reasons I made instead different choices.

2. What factors and people supported you in your career choice and development?

My family and my friends always supported me and tried to help me in my decisions.

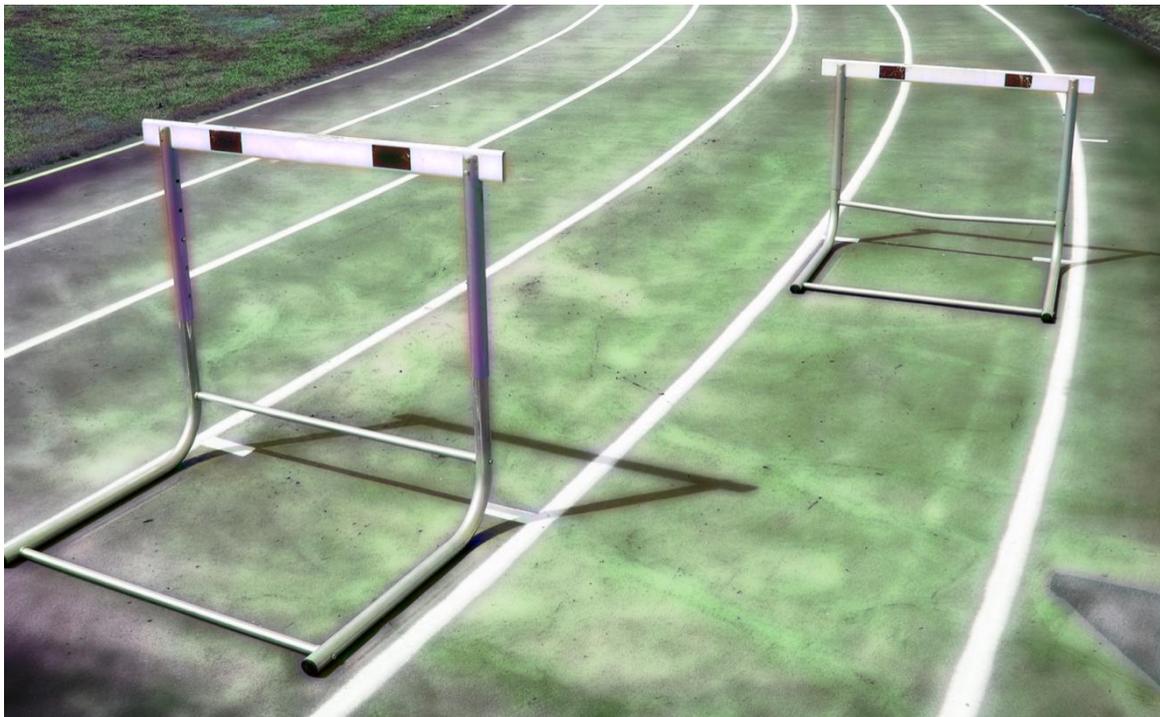
3. What factors and people hindered you in your career choice and development? How did you overcome them?

Unfortunately, very often I found on my way persons who tried to take advantage on me and my abilities for their personal interests. I also had problems with colleagues that tried to discriminate me as a woman, considering women to not be good at this kind of work.

The only way to overcome this situation has been to keep calm, to show my professionalism and my good results... and sometimes doing my best to change teams!

4. Why did you choose this job/these jobs?

As I said before I didn't actually choose this job!



The private person

1. How do you spend your time off?

With friends, reading, going to the cinema or theatre.

2. Do you have children? If so what gender/age?

No.

3. Is your spare time influenced by your job? If so how?

No.

4. What are your main interests besides your job? Do you have any hobbies?

Culture. I write plays and movies reviews for an on-line magazine.

5. In brief, how would you describe yourself as a person? Serious, thoughtful, friendly?

I think to be a person with quite solid principles (sometimes too solid), honest, always interested in learning (whatever), capable to listen to my neighbour and ready to help and cooperate with others.



Advice for others

1. Would you encourage other women to work as IT specialists? Why? How would you encourage them?

Absolutely. Even if this world is still very 'masculine'.

I believe that women are particularly inclined for this kind of work, as it requires accuracy, consistency and the right dose of fantasy and creativity. It is wrong to think that some kind of activities are just for males or for tomboys, this is a concept that men have been cultivating to keep women far from their territory!

The truth is, and they fear that, that very often women are really much better in this kind of work than men. And not only as technicians. Women give their best when they hold executive responsibilities, as proved also by recent studies.

Women usually have a better relation with their subordinates and the ability to obtain better results from their teams in a shorter time. It seems that one of the reasons for this could be their capability to listen to people and to consider their opinion, instead of simply taking and communicating decisions.

On the other side it is a mistake to try to behave 'like a man' to obtain success. Just be yourself, open your eyes and ears and take the right decision listening to your heart and brain!



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