



Jessica Wright

Technical Account Manager, Beauty and Personal Care
USA

Inspiring the Next Generation of Women in STEM

What are you most proud of achieving in your career thus far?

When working in research and development, I created a kid's toothpaste. My son uses it, and it makes me smile every time I see him brush his teeth!

Who is a woman who inspires you and why?

My mom. She had a successful career when I was growing up while managing our family flawlessly. I want my husband and son to be proud of me like I was, and am, of my mom!

What did you want to be when you grew up? Are there any parallels to the work you do now?

I wanted to work in a science field, initially a pharmacist, so I could talk to and help people. With a chemistry degree, I found that I could also do that by formulating products to help people, which is what I do now with our research and development groups.

What three characteristics do you think are most important for women in STEM to have and why?

1. Confidence – Own who you are, your vision and your ideas and work toward them. STEM is all about being creative.
2. Communication – A good communicator—and listener—is vital in this industry to facilitate collaboration. And speak up with your ideas.
3. Don't take things personally – Not every idea or formulation will work. Learn from it and use the feedback to grow and make something even better.

How are you working to inspire the next generation of women in STEM?

I did not have mentors or the opportunity to learn about STEM industry opportunities, so I pay it forward by mentoring inner-city students to share my job experience and what is out there.

What advice would you give to the next generation of women in STEM?

You can do anything you want when you put your mind to it: there are no limits. Keep pushing to find the next great invention or formulation.

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