



**Kayleigh Bateman 0:00**

Hello, everyone. Thanks for tuning in again. I am Kayleigh Bateman, the Content Director at SheCanCode and today we are asking, are women over mentored and under sponsored, and why we need a balance of both. Both mentorship and sponsorship can be valuable in different ways, complementing each other for a well-rounded professional development experience. But what if you're being over mentored and under sponsored as a woman in tech? Now I've got three amazing guests from Capco with me today who are all principal consultants at Capco. I've got Winter Baker, Emma Cudal, and Varenya Prasad, all from Capco, and all here to share their own experiences of both mentorship and sponsorship, and why it's important to have a good balance throughout your career. Welcome, everyone. Thank you so much for joining me today. Thank you for taking the time out to have a chat with SheCanCode today, we're going to get started with a bit of background to set the scene about each of you. So can we start with Emma, let's start with yourself, please.

**Emma Cudal 1:06**

Yep, so I am a principal consultant in Capco data practice in the UK. So based in London, and I've spent the last few years kind of working with clients across state and technology spaces, kind of helping them design and implement data strategies and data management frameworks. A little bit about myself, I kind of started off my career in financial services, but more in that kind of investment banking space. So, after doing my degree in economics, I kind of moved into middle office and back-office functions of investment banks. And it was actually through working with some Capco teams in those banks that I kind of found out a bit more about consultancy. So I moved into Capco not originally working data in tech, purely kind of business consulting, it was actually about seven years ago that I started on a data management office project setting up for a kind of a global bank that I got involved in pretty much not really looked back since I've redefined myself kind of a female lead in the data strategy and advisory space. And help clients with a range of projects across kind of data lineage controls, data quality framework, setting up Tom's data governance and policy.

**Kayleigh Bateman 2:23**

Amazing, it sounds like you have a very busy day, Emma. We're going to go into that in a little bit a little bit more in a second. Winter, yourself?

**Winter Baker 2:32**

Hello, I am a feminine leaning genderqueer individual I use they them pronouns. And pretty much throughout my childhood, I was a little bit too smart for my own good, I read everything instantly decided that that is what I wanted to do with my life. Until one summer, my last year of high school I got really bored. My brother had just moved out, he enlisted in the Army. And my dad had just

wrapped up his master's program in the software development and board with nothing to do that summer. I picked up application-based object-oriented programming for a modern interface, Visual Basic 2000. As you do, and it's the first time I ever really heard of the concept of coding and software development. And frankly, it was love at first sight, I immediately pivoted my life goals there started looking for a university that had really high computer science programs, got my bachelor's degree and been doing this ever since. into consulting, I actually initially landed in consulting under some DOD, US Department of Défense subcontractors. So that's kind of a pseudo consultancy. And I kind of liked the model. And I've just been in consulting for software development ever since.

**Kayleigh Bateman 3:55**

Amazing. It is something that we'd love to hear on here, all of your different stories and all of the different ways that people make it into tech. So, love that. Varenya, yourself. Have you read that book?

**Varenya Prasad 4:12**

As Emma and Winter's state, there's a lot of commonalities I could find from both of them in terms of their own experiences. So, I actually got into tech in I'd say, school itself, like high school. So, it's developing and studying that. And I do have, again, a bachelor's and a master's in in software or computer science and then like specialization in database management. If you worked in a theme gig like few years ago now at this point, but basically, I think, my route into consulting afforded by fluke, so there's the quintessential software development path where you always imagine yourself being a software developer during one of the main processes. That was the initial understanding of what, you know, being intact meant. And then through consulting, I've sort of understood that that's not just the only way to be, you know, participating in this space. And that's not the only role that is available for people to play. And so again, for myself, data was always something that was played around with before. And then through consulting was able to figure out what about it made sense to me and what parts of it I wanted to play with. So that's been a good journey. So far, at least that way in terms of what technology is meant for me.

**Kayleigh Bateman 5:35**

Amazing. And you started a quite a traditional computer science background at school. What was that like at school for you? Was, was it one of those stories where you, you know, was suddenly yourself and maybe one other girl in the class or what was that? Like?

**Varenya Prasad 5:51**

Yeah, it was me and two other girls in the class. I was the only major while the other girl, thankfully, was that she was there. She was that minor. Yes. It was very, very, you know, male dominated industry, for sure. And classrooms are always I was always the sort of the child out no matter what I did.

**Kayleigh Bateman 6:10**

Yeah. Yeah. Luckily, females aren't making it through to the tech industry, though. So yeah. I hear that often, though, that you're normally outnumbered on computer science courses.

**Varenya Prasad 6:22**

Definitely. Yeah, there was a change, I think in terms of even those numbers sort of started to change from undergrad to brown. But still the, you know, the majority was still it was still heavily male dominated as classroom.

**Kayleigh Bateman 6:35**

Yeah, yeah. And we have lots to talk about today. And we're going to talk a little bit about sponsorship and mentorship. So, we're going to kick off with just kind of the difference between sponsorship and mentorship at any of our listeners who are tuning in and thinking on Earth is the difference between the two anyway. Emma, can we kick off with you? Can you maybe give us a brief definition of you know, what, what is the difference between sponsorship and mentorship?

**Emma Cudal 7:07**

And suppose my kind of view on this is, you know, a mentor, that is someone that provides guidance and advice, someone that you get to, you know, have a key impact on your career, but through providing good insights and helping you navigate maybe difficult situations or challenges that you have in your career. Whereas I think a sponsor is very much someone who potentially is more senior to you, but someone that can really like advocate for you, and actually not just help guide and steer you through opportunities but help actually create those opportunities for you in your career.

**Kayleigh Bateman 7:46**

Yes, and sometimes just being that voice in the room, you don't even need to be present for a sponsor. Just to kind of advocate for you when you're when you're not in that room is super helpful. Winter is that kind of your experience of sponsorship and mentorship.

**Winter Baker 8:06**

Yeah, I would mostly agree, I think I worded it a little differently, kind of based on skill sets, I kind of imagined a mentor as being someone who is there to help you close the gaps and learn where you can be doing better, where you can pick up more skills, whereas a sponsor is there to push the envelope on what you already excel at.

**Kayleigh Bateman 8:28**

Yes, yes, that that is a good definition, actually, between the two, I think people, we want to start off a bit on this podcast, people do get confused between the two. And I think they think that sometimes they can be the same thing. But they are absolutely different and different people that you need to try and find as part of your career. And Varenya, you yourself, would you agree?

**Varenya Prasad 8:52**

Oh, yeah, definitely, with both of them. The part about advocacy was sort of interesting to me, because I agree that a sponsor is definitely someone that steps in for you, when you're not in the room. Many agree that there is a component of sort of that seniority and the mentorship that comes from being, you know, the role that they play as a sponsor. But I've also found that, at least in, you know, the industry that we work in the seniority of it helps in terms of pushing for angles, but advocacy, or like people, you know, advocating for you can come essentially from any level, it's just the, you know, sort of the power and the force behind it and how far it goes.

**Kayleigh Bateman 9:37**

Yeah. And on that note, for now, I want you to ask all of you a little bit about the main benefits of both sponsors and mentors, because you just mentioned they're brand new about advocacy, which is so important because the main benefits of sponsors and mentors are a hugely different because the sponsor could dip in every now and then an hour advocate for you, whereas a mentor, you know, it's more of an ongoing relationship where you kind of, you know, meet whether it's for coffee or, you know, some time to share advice, isn't it? Do you think that there are, there are different main benefits to each of them. And both equally important?

**Varenya Prasad 10:20**

Yeah, at least for myself, I'd say, I found mentors to like the mentorship relationship to be a little less formal. So, I'm able to sort of tap into their, their mindset or, you know, their advice as and when needed. Obviously, there is an acronym that you need to follow. But for the most part, I found that people are very willing to, you know, hope you work through whatever you're trying to resolve at the moment with the sponsor, again, perhaps because of the seniority that they, you know, the role that they are in a little bit more cautious about reaching out to them to how often I reach out to them, right. And maybe it's one of those things where I reach out to sponsors, specifically, when I'm looking for their specific view on what I'm trying to live with the issue that I'm going for that moment. So that where they there is a difference in the way I interact with them. But that also, I think, depends on the kind of sponsor or mentor that you find it if you find it, you know, like, I have been fortunate enough to have a sponsor that, you know, sort of plays the mentorship on the sponsor role. But that's because they do, they are just inherently vested in a day-to-day basis and my development.

**Kayleigh Bateman 11:35**

Yeah, that's quite lucky to find.

**Varenya Prasad 11:38**

Extremely fortunate.

**Kayleigh Bateman 11:40**

Winter, would you agree on what Varenya was saying that she was saying about the way that you interact with those people is so different, because a mental can be less, less formal? And for some people that would just, you know, that's sometimes a better relationship for you. If it's less formal that person is, you know, not a senior, then surely, you're more comfortable. And you might take more from it, you know, the way that you interact with that person, he's very different.

**Winter Baker 12:08**

Yeah, it definitely is. And I find maybe this is from being significantly more on the digital side of things myself, I find, oddly enough, most times, my most powerful sponsors have been our clients, I get kind of more from the client's leadership, than from like leadership within my own team structure. Because you know, when you're in consulting, it's, you know, client is the ultimate, the ultimate person you're trying to work for, you're trying to make happy. So, when they're happy, everyone's happy. So definitely, it's a very different relationship with a client than it is with within your own team.

**Kayleigh Bateman 12:46**

Yeah, I hadn't even thought of that. Because you're right, a sponsor can be internal or external. And I've heard that as well, we've, we've mentors, because, you know, people seem to think I'll go looking for a mentor within my company. And actually, it's sometimes beneficial to have mentors, in all areas of your career, because somebody internally might give you different advice than somebody that was externally. And I hadn't even thought about those responses. Yeah, that it'd been a client. Emma yourself, have you? Do you have any sponsors that are clients, or it's quite an interesting one,

**Emma Cudal 13:24**

I think my response was probably be more internal, but it's still incredibly important to build that relationship with your clients where, you know, they are able to provide that that feedback, they are you able to really demonstrate your kind of your business value for the client and have that recognized. And I think when it is recognized, and when you are advocated through that route, it can also have a really positive impact on probably how you're viewed internally as well. So really open up some of the doors that way too. And I think a sponsorship can sometimes be that kind of almost like reciprocal relationship where it's kind of almost works both ways. You get sponsored, but also you have to be able to kind of provide that value back to your sponsor to get them invested and advocate for you. Whereas Yeah, mentorship could be that bit more, less formal, and maybe someone your kind of like trust or a bit more invested in.

**Kayleigh Bateman 14:20**

Yes, I agree in that. Finding someone within your company sometimes can, can be easier, especially if there's a mentor program and you can join up in the end. Some companies do like matchmaking of mentors, sometimes sponsors can be harder to find that's something that you'll miss. She said, it's more of an investment. You have to almost work throughout your career as well to gain the trust of somebody and like you said, it works both ways. They advocate for you; you might advocate back at some point. But I suppose, as well on that note, Emma, is that I wanted to ask you why do you think women are over mentored and unresponsive? I think perhaps that's one of the reasons, you know, a lot of companies make it easier to have a mentoring program. But sponsors might be quite hard to find, especially somebody's very senior. That can be quite hard to find.

**Emma Cudal 15:13**

Yeah, definitely. And I've actually been working as kind of the, the lead for the DNI team within the data practice in the UK, for the last kind of 12 months. And I think that's something that we're really trying to focus on, as well as how do we support kind of women to brew through the mid-levels into the leadership positions. And one of the things that have been set up with the Women's Health Care Network is a mentorship scheme for women at that kind of level. But it is also recognizing, yes, we need to be able to help provide them with that mentorship, that guidance, that support in how to properly advocate for themselves in their career and progress. But we also need that sponsorship and support from kind of the leadership team to help provide those opportunities and create space for these women to be able to progress in that way and actually leverage what they're able to get from their mentoring relationships.

**Kayleigh Bateman 16:09**

Yes, yes, I love it. And I hear that often, so that everything trickles down from the top and everything needs to trickle down from leadership. So yes, if a company is, you know, creating a culture of, you know, where women feel like they can be supported that that has to come from the top through sponsorship as well. It's not kind of a, a, we're just on here, we have the expression, somebody told me once start a Slack channel, and it solves everybody's problems, you know, you can't just start a Slack channel about supporting women in technology and expect all of your problems to be solved. They say with mentorship, your kind of can't solve that problem with just mentorship, you have to have sponsorship from your leadership team as well. So, it's quite a challenge for some companies. Winter. What about yourself? Why do you think women are over mentored and under sponsored?

**Winter Baker 17:04**

So, this is actually the question, I think I might have overthought. And I did really dig into this because it ends up hitting a lot of my backgrounds in communication. I did some studying on Linguistic anthropology, and at least in the US, especially where we still have a lot of kind of like culturally coded language patterns. One of the things that I have found working in my professional career in the States has been that there's kind of this cultural communication barrier between the typically feminine coded professionals and masculine coded professionals were kind of just the nuances of in traditionally feminine communication styles are seen as being trepidatious, or

uninsured of their own skill sets. And typically, viewed from the flip side of the coin, you know, they're not as self-assured or confident in their own abilities. So, it's kind of that almost social stigma that I feel is working against us.

**Kayleigh Bateman 18:08**

Yes, I've heard that often. You're correct. I think we do hear that often that ladies perhaps are not self-assured, or they I've heard on this podcast, often how many times we've heard about women that don't apply for a job because they don't think they tick all the boxes, or they need somebody to encourage them to go for the role or manager or a sponsor or a mentor that encourages them to go for that position. So, you're absolutely right. I think sometimes that does work against us. And perhaps that's why women do end up being over mentored under sponsored. Because that's what we're shooting for Varenya? Would you agree with that as to why women are over mentored and under sponsored sometimes?

**Varenya Prasad 18:56**

Yeah, completely. I think just generally mentorship is easier to find and sponsorship. But then on top of that, I think perhaps the way women approach that or approach just being in the workplace is different than how men would do. And then I think it's culturally viewed, or the way men approach it with the competence and the attitude they bring to it is always just treated as the better way to do it. And so, I think, women then it becomes a cycle where they step back further.

**Kayleigh Bateman 19:31**

Yes, completely agree. And you just said there, you know, mentors can be easier to find. We ask each of you a little bit about your own experiences and you know, have you found mentors easier to find and have you ever had a sponsor Varenya and I know you said you've got that all rolled into one person. What were your experiences before finding that that gem of a person?

**Varenya Prasad 20:01**

I think, in my personal mentors are easier to find than sponsors. And first of all, they're hard to find people that you can trust and rely on his experience that you can sort of blindly take, in some ways, it's hard to find, right. So, you do have to sort of find the right person to fill in those roles as well. But having said that, I think, generally people, it's easier for people to talk through their experiences will give, what worked, what didn't work. And then, you know, I think lending, listening years easier, and most people would be more than happy to do that, because they themselves have probably received it in the past or they've children understand, you know, what, what it means for them. I think the delineation and sort of translating that person into a sponsor, that I think goes back to what Mr. was saying before is it is a reciprocal relationship they have, especially if they're in a senior position, for them to advocate for you, they need to actually believe in you as well, they need to see that you will step in to do what's needed and do it in a way that, you know, make sense to them helps their life as well. So, in some ways, it is a reciprocal relationship, that you have to sort of build with them.

**Kayleigh Bateman 21:16**

Yes, you're right, because a mentor role, a lot of people might feel quite comfortable stepping into a mentor role, and as you said, offering advice actually advocating for somebody and their skills, that that's quite that's, that's quite a different role to take on as a sponsor, rather than a mentor. I agree there. Me yourself, what was your experience been like in in finding mentors and sponsors?

**Emma Cudal 21:45**

Yeah, I think I think whatever is probably more junior levels of sponsorship probably came from more direct managers, people who did want to, you know, see you progress in your career you're doing, you're doing well, you kind of deserve to have those right opportunities. Whereas I think as I've kind of developed in my career, it's been a bit more, I've had to be more conscious about trying to find people to sponsor and have those kinds of quite direct conversations about what I'm looking for, and what I can kind of bring in terms of value and what I need back. And I think that that's definitely, you know, as I've grown and felt more confident to be able to do that probably widened the scope of who I can speak to about being a sponsor. Whereas Yeah, from a mentorship perspective, it definitely has been just people that I've, I've worked well with, or kind of admired, or being able to build quite a good working relationship with that then have kind of developed into more that kind of guidance and support role.

**Kayleigh Bateman 22:46**

Yes. And you say, growing throughout your career, I suppose as well, what you what you require in a mentor and a sponsor, sponsor, when you're quite early in your career is very different as you grow anyway. And also, as we picked up on here, as far as having the confidence to ask somebody, when you're very early on in your career, when you probably really do have a mentor as well, you don't you don't have that confidence to reach out to somebody and say, you know, Hey, would you be my mentor? Or, you know, could you advocate for me? Your kind of You don't you don't have that early on in your career? Do you have to wait a few jobs to even have the competence really,

**Emma Cudal 23:27**

even to understand the importance of it, and actually what value it can bring and how much it can help you?

**Varenya Prasad 23:37**

And also, just what to ask, because as you're growing, you don't really know what you need to.

**Kayleigh Bateman 23:42**

Exactly. You just kind of you're just grateful that you've got a job at that point, you know, you're just graduating a kind of job. Yeah, let alone knowing where you want to go next, or who to ask to how to



progress in your career. Yes, definitely agree. When so what has been your experience of finding mentors and sponsors?

**Winter Baker 24:04**

So, I feel I agree that mentors are definitely easier to come by. I feel like I've taken mentorship from everything, most people that I've worked with to some degree. At least when you're in the more technical digital space, they feel like there's always something you can learn from everybody you work with. And so that's always really nice to be able to be part of that kind of culture where everyone is teaching everyone. As for sponsors, I would say I've probably actually only had one sponsor, in my professional career. And one of the things that I've kind of noticed and made note is like, all of the people that I might have thought have been my sponsor at one point that really necessarily weren't at the end of the day. All ended up being my male professional leaders. And the one sponsor I do have is the female professional leader out of my office. And, you know, yeah, there's the gender discrepancy there. But it really highlighted for me one thing, which is, you're only going to have an effective sponsor, if you both want the same thing. Yes, if your professional targets are different, then you're not going to see the value in each other.

**Kayleigh Bateman 25:24**

Yes, definitely. And finding somebody that you've aligned with on that can be quite a challenge, obviously, as you said, it can be more challenging to find a sponsor than a mentor. I love that. And you said, just taking something from everybody that you work with as well. And just having that mindset, I suppose and being in that, that learning mindset, which, as you mentioned, when you go into your first job, you're not or you're not thinking that way, you're not sure what to ask from a mentor. And you're probably not thinking I need to take everything I can, from the people that I learned from, it's just been frightening to the World at Work can be quite frightening. We've spoken a little bit about the differences between the two. And but how can people go about getting a sponsor or a mentor we've mentioned, you know, about people that you work with? line managers? Should you approach mentors and sponsors differently and as easy just as easy as shooting somebody a message on LinkedIn, for instance? Emma, what do you think? How can people go about that? That topic? Take it just don't go up somebody at a networking event after one drink and say, will you be my mentor?

**Emma Cudal 26:43**

No, but I do think that actually, those sorts of kind of networking events can open other doors and avenues to expanding your network and meeting some inspirational people that you think might actually be really good people to become your mentors, or maybe eventually, your sponsor. So, as you said, I think it definitely can be within your own work environment might be direct team, it might be one of your clients. But it could be someone that you have met through your networking event as well. And I think your new mentor relationships can probably develop maybe a little bit more naturally, it could be just touching base, going for a coffee, having a zoom chat, and then seeing how that kind of develops from there. Whereas I think from a sponsorship perspective, it is probably identifying someone that as you said, does have similar kind of goals and targets or values as yourself similar kind of career alignment or objectives, that you're able to both kind of bring some value to

that partnership. And I think that probably can be quite a bit more challenging. I think I've been in positions before where I thought someone was being my sponsor, and then probably transpired that maybe it wasn't maybe needed to be more kind of formalized, or, you know, we do actually have more of a direct conversation about it. Whereas a deferred that's not always necessary or required when it comes to a mentor.

**Kayleigh Bateman 28:15**

Yes, with a mentor. It can be easier, I think, because you hear mental programs, it can be easier to, you know, matchmake, with people, whether that's in your company, or externally. But we have a sponsor, it's kind of I had a lady on here who said to me, it's the that that voice, who advocates for you when you're not in the room. So, which is you know, lovely way of putting it there. They're there when you're not in the room. So, asking somebody to be your sponsor upfront can be quite strange, like, hey, you know, she's just like throwing my name. When I'm not in that meeting. You know, it's kind of strange to say, so yeah, it's more built on a relationship and whether that person trusts you, you're working towards the same goals, obviously. Whereas Yeah, mentorship can be informed more in that way of, hey, do you want to grab a coffee? And then that kind of turns into a monthly coffee, or whatever that may be? So, your mentor, mentors tend to be easier to find Varenya you yourself How do you think people can go about getting a sponsor and or a mentor?

**Varenya Prasad 29:28**

I think the suggestion you had in terms of, you know, reaching out to people and being at networking events, etc, to find you can find mentors that way, and you can have conversations and informal chats with them. That I think makes sense to me from a, you know, just exploring your own horizons, right, like in terms of what is available or not, and then maybe things that you come across as a result of speaking to people. In my personal experience, I've found that mentorship perhaps can be approached that way but sponsorship, at least for me personally has come in slowly. It hasn't been something that I've been able to, you know, reach out to someone necessarily say, hey, what about the chief here? Could you do this for me, it's usually come in a little bit more slowly, because it's usually been a spin at a point where I've had interactions over months or years, etc. And then I'm in a position to be able to get that or have that sort of conversation with them. Because by then you've built that symbiotic relationship where they know what you need. And, you know, you have the courage, the discipline and determination to ask and you know, what you want to ask for as well. So, I think I found that this person, you know, getting to that point takes a little bit of time.

**Kayleigh Bateman 31:30**

Yes, it's definitely a slow burner. Finding, finding a sponsor, and I find is what people put on their CVs. You know, they mentor people, they mentor young people, for instance, within their company, he doesn't tend to see people saying, I sponsor so and so, or I go out of my way to try and, you know, advocate for young people. And it's not really something people tend to say, but they will put on their CV, you know, I have mentored young people, I have several mentees, for instance. So yeah, you're definitely right. They are they should be approached differently when trying to find both, but both obviously equally important.

Winter yourself, how do you think people can go about finding a Sponsor and a Mentor.

**Winter Baker 32:20**

So, I think everything that's already been said about finding mentors are spot on. It really is kind of the quote unquote, easier. And it I feel like it's something you can actually go and pursue if you take the time and the effort.

In my experience, what I found is that sponsors tend to come to you. And that is kind of the difficult part is to be able to actually get a sponsor. And to do it effectively. The best thing that I feel like you can do that's inside your control, is just to be open about who you are.

Like, I kind of phrase it as a, this is what I have done. This is why I think it's important. And this is where I want to take it. And if you were super open about that and always talking about it, then the person who agrees with you is going to come to you.

**Kayleigh Bateman 33:13**

Yes, yes, I love that they do come to you nursing as well. Knowing that as well, as you climb through the leadership ranks, as well as because it's something to remember when you look back as well. And think, you know, I wish I had had had a sponsor, and somebody had come to me and advocated for me when I was, you know, more junior in my career. And so hopefully, you know, as more as more people go through their careers, they remember to look back and think you know what, I can be a sponsor for somebody. And if I do align with somebody on certain business goals, I need to go and approach somebody, you are right, the sponsor does just come to come to you, after you've obviously made that connection.

**Emma Cudal 34:01**

So, I think that's why having conversations like this is so important as well, because it's really bringing visibility to that and allowing people to recognize how can they actually be a mentor? How can they be a sponsor for other people?

**Kayleigh Bateman 34:14**

And have they ever thought about that?

**Emma Cudal 34:16**

Yeah, exactly. And what opportunities do they have in their own role, you know, at whatever level they're at, to be able to have that impact for someone else's career as well?

**Kayleigh Bateman 34:26**

Yes, because it's great. It's great for both people's especially mentorship, if you want to add that to your CV, or you want to add that, you know, that is something that you do that is extra, then I've had conversations on here from people that are part of mint, they are mentors, and I've had mentees and the benefits that both bring anyway because you learn from both of them from both of those experiences as well. So, you're right. And I just think sometimes just taking a step back and thinking can I be a mentor to somebody, or could I also really be a sponsor to someone, perhaps something that not everybody has thought about throughout their careers. So, yeah, hopefully, you never know this conversation might spark some inspiration in people.

And I wanted to ask you all a little bit about, do you think having a sponsor increases your visibility at work?

**Varenya Prasad 35:25**

Varenya, can we start with you on that, obviously, you know, it is super important to be visible at work, too. Choosing to have a sponsor really helps with that.

Yeah, for her incredibly, I think that because he that comes in from behind closed doors, when you're not part of the room, that's basically someone representing you when they don't have to, I think that speaks so highly of, you know, what you can, what kind of qualities and skills that you can bring to the table. If someone can do that, when they're not, under the gun that really speaks really helps you to case what kind of like what level of skill and ability you bring to the table for sure.

I think also, going back to what you that we were just talking about in terms of, you know, having those mentoring mentorship conversations, the other aspect of it is I don't know when the switch clicks in terms of becoming a sponsor. So it's also one of those things that you continue those conversations and on point, I think you do need to have that thought about what you want to drive out of it, but also just maintaining what you've built, because I did not start by where I've planted finances where I've built mentorship relationships, and not necessarily invest as much as I would like to, and therefore perhaps lost, you know, someone that would have been a sponsor otherwise to

**Kayleigh Bateman 36:48**

Yes, I love them. But that you just said the when, when the switch is flipped, and you're right, you'd kind of it's almost for a sponsor sometimes isn't something that is formally discussed either, is this kind of, you know, the switch is flicked and somebody is a sponsor, for you. So, yeah, I think approaching both very differently. Both are very different, and both need to be approached differently.

Winter yourself, do you think having a sponsor increases your visibility at work?

**Winter Baker 37:27**

It absolutely does. And the importance is, there aren't enough words to really emphasize how important it is. And no, I do want to be fair and coffee out there as it was my own personal experience of having only worked in the States. And I've only work in consulting.

But I found without a sponsor, it is practically impossible to actually move through your company professionally. And to actually get to your professional targets.

**Kayleigh Bateman 37:58**

Yes, definitely. I think that depends on the company as well, doesn't it? I mean, I suppose if you're at a startup, there are less people. So, you tend to have more contact with your leadership team, for instance, rather than a big company? Kind of depends, doesn't it? Whether or not your leadership team are accessible? First of all?

**Winter Baker 38:20**

It depends. So, I in consulting, I've worked at, you know, large global corporations like Capco, but I first started at a small software shop of 60 people.

And even there, I found kind of the same thing of without having that sponsor there. Nobody really pays you any attention.

**Kayleigh Bateman 38:43**

Yes, yes. So important to find one to, to have that visibility and Emma yourself if you felt the same way with a sponsor can really help you to be visible at work.

**Emma Cudal 38:55**

Yeah, absolutely. I think it's partly being more visible. I think there are obviously ways that you can make yourself visible and put yourself in in those positions. But I think it's also being recognized by kind of the leadership team for the work that you're doing for the value that you're adding and being able to build up that kind of that reputation or that brand, I think without someone to support advocate that and even if it's more of kind of, you know, in agreement with someone else's perception, but having those voices in the room to be able to provide that backing for you. I think that's invaluable. I don't think without that sort of sponsorship or recognition that you can progress in the same way.

**Kayleigh Bateman 39:43**

Yes, and without always, I mean, it is important to advocate for yourself always. But it's having that extra person having somebody else to do it instead of you always feeling like you have to be the voice of I'm doing this, and this was a great project because I was on it. It comes off as arrogance, having a sponsor that can advocate for you. And when you're not in the room, obviously will really improve your visibility within the company and just let the leadership team know that you are on the map and doing great things throughout the company. And regardless of the company size, as well, as you were saying Winter, it can be the same whether you're a big company or a small company. And we are almost out of time, everybody. So, wanting to ask you. One final question. Do you have any final advice for our listeners who are thinking about either getting a mentor or a sponsor? Or perhaps already doing that themselves or considering becoming one themselves? Varenya, Should we start with you?

**Varenya Prasad 40:50**

I think this will vary depending on where you are in your career, I'd say especially if you're starting new, in invest in yourself to take the time to have that informal coffee or lunch with seniors or your team in your farm, it might be a little bit intimidating to start off. But ultimately, I think that's the starting point where you're signalling that you're looking for guidance and advice, and it will open up your eyes in terms of you know, just what are the sort of roles opportunities that are available to you what sort of topics you should be looking at, and start from there. I think whether or not you get a mentor out of it, or a sponsor out of it, you'll learn something out of variable, the relationship there. And that will, if you start putting in the work will slowly lead to you finding those mentors and sponsors.

**Kayleigh Bateman 41:46**

Yes, naming, as you said, they're just making the time to have a coffee or making the time to reach out to leadership and saying, you know, hey, can we have a discussion about something? I think that really shows them that you're very invested in that company, you know, you, you're not that person that is thinking, oh, I'll just jump around from company to company. If you're reaching out and asking for help, then it sounds like you are heavily invested in, you know, the company's goal and what they want to do, and you want to know more? Surely, they can only work in your favour.

**Varenya Prasad 42:19**

Yeah, and I think that is that sort of proactive approach also opens lets them know what you're looking for in terms of the next role that you want to do. Right. So that helps with that helps them in terms of the kind of advice you receive. But also, if they start to think about sponsoring you, they know what to sponsor you for as well.

**Kayleigh Bateman 42:39**

Yes, because they're not mind reader's thing that, you know, they could sponsor you in a completely different direction, anything, that's not what I want you to do, actually, you're pushing me in the wrong direction. So, you're right, even just having an open conversation with the leadership team

about what you want to do next, at least they know whether or not they're going in the right direction is great, great advice. Winter yourself any final advice for our listeners?

**Winter Baker 43:08**

Yeah, so I would say for mentorship, the biggest thing is allowed yourself to make mistakes. That is, I say this, especially to newer people coming in, and especially new people coming into technical fields, like software, like even financial domain and technologies, there's kind of this, you know, really expectation to, to get it right the first time and to do the best you can and, you know, you're worried about making that good impression. But, you know, generally you're going to find people, humans are really quite helpful. They really want to see everyone do well together. So, if you will allow yourself to make visible mistakes and not try to like to hide them or solve them on your own. You're going to get the help that you need. And that's going to go into a mentorship and that's going to be someone you can learn from and, and do better with

**Kayleigh Bateman 44:06**

just being honest about yourself. And yeah, I love that.

**Winter Baker 44:10**

Yeah, for sponsorship says is almost non advice because it's just so difficult. And it's something I'm still even trying to learn today. But the most powerful tool you will ever have been learn how to manage up. It's the hardest thing you will ever have to learn how to do and it's the most valuable.

**Kayleigh Bateman 44:33**

Yes, yes. I love that advice. Because it's something that we don't we don't think of day to day. And I think it is one of those things once you move throughout your career that it starts to dawn on you. You do need to think about managing up as you as you say it's great advice. Emma yourself any final advice for our listeners?

**Unknown Speaker 44:58**

I think Varenya and Winter sort of touched on some really good points there. But I think kind of to echo, Varenya, it's, as well as making the time to start building those relationships take time to kind of reflect on your own career and how things are going and what you're looking for what maybe you're enjoying what maybe you're missing, and what you need more support on. thing, it's very easy, especially in our career in consulting, to get you know, very just into all your delivery work your client priorities and trying to deliver service to everyone else. But I think it's really important to make time, make sure you're taking time to reflect on your own career growth, and looking for that support that you need to help to help grow that and to see how that kind of mentor and sponsor relationships can support you. So, I think I've seen a lot of people doing really well, but not

necessarily making the most of the kind of opportunities that they are and kind of stunting their growth and progression a bit there.

**Kayleigh Bateman 46:03**

Yes, I think as well, that can, being in the right company can really help with that some companies are really good at encouraging you to think outside of your day job. And thinking, you know, what takes some time just to think about what you would like to do, and how you would like to progress outside of, as you said, all of those daily things that you do, and you just get wrapped up in client work.

You reach the end of the year, and you think, maybe I haven't really moved forward. I know I did a lot but maybe I didn't move forward very much in my career. So yeah, that's great advice to just remember to take the time. And to think you know, what, what would I like next, whether that's finding a mentor, or a sponsor or becoming one yourself, whatever it may be.

That is a lovely note to end on. Because we are already out of time, everybody. Thank you so much for joining me today. It's been so interesting to hear about the differences between sponsorship mentorship and how women are over mentored and under sponsored. So, thank you so much everyone for joining me. And to all of our listeners. Thank you so much for listening in. As always, thank you for joining us, and we hope to see you again next time.