



**INTERNATIONAL
WOMEN'S DAY
2025**

Women of Pavilion
Letters to our Younger Selves



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

A Letter from Pavilion

This International Women's Day, the Women of Pavilion reflected on the lessons, challenges, and defining moments that have shaped their careers. Through letters written to their younger selves, they share the advice they wish they had known earlier—the kind of wisdom that comes from taking risks, facing setbacks, and learning to trust themselves along the way.

Their letters also reveal how women are redefining leadership and how we want to show up in the world and to ourselves. They speak to the resilience it takes to keep moving forward after setbacks, the confidence that comes from action rather than perfection, and the vital role of mentorship, community and asking for help when it comes to breaking barriers. Leadership isn't about having all the answers. It's about trusting yourself enough to take the next step, even when the path is uncertain

One theme across all of the letters stands out: authenticity. These powerful letters prove that the most influential leaders are those who lead as themselves. Unapologetically. By embracing their values, challenging outdated expectations, and showing up as they are (vs who others may expect them to be), women aren't just succeeding—they're reshaping leadership itself.

These lessons are more than reflections; they are a testament to what's possible. They remind us that real success isn't measured in titles alone but in the impact we create, the people we uplift, and the legacy we leave for other women in our space.

The Women of Pavilion Community

The Women of Pavilion Community is a dynamic subcommunity dedicated to fostering belonging, knowledge-sharing, and professional growth for women go-to-market leaders. Led by Anne Pao and Lindsay Tjepkema, this group empowers members to break barriers, advocate for themselves authentically, and advance both personally and professionally through curated content, exclusive events, and a supportive network.



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Founder & CEO at Ignite Consulting and Co-Leader of Women of Pavilion Community



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Thank You to our Contributors

A heartfelt thank you to every woman who contributed to this project for sharing the raw experiences and lessons that have shaped your journey.

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Overcoming Self Doubt

One of the biggest hurdles women face in their careers isn't a lack of skill or ambition; it's the quiet, persistent voice of doubt. The belief that they aren't ready, that they haven't earned their seat at the table, that someone else is more qualified. These letters expose the internal battle of self-doubt (often called imposter syndrome...And here's a hot tip:

You're not an imposter. And you don't have a syndrome.

It's completely normal to have doubt, hesitation, and even fear of not being enough when you are striving in a system that wasn't built or designed for you. So let's build a new one.

Maybe "imposter syndrome" is a sign that we are pushing beyond our comfort zones and challenging the very walls of a system not meant to contain us. The real lesson is not about silencing doubt entirely but about refusing to let it dictate our choices. Confidence is not something that is given. It is something built by showing up, speaking up, and taking up space in your own, authentic way.

"Imposter syndrome will creep in, but here's the truth: no one has all the answers, and the people you admire have felt it too."

Natalie Nicole

CEO + Brand Strategist at
Impackedful Creative



"Don't strive for perfection, strive for consistency. Perfection is a lie that will drain you."

Ramona Aubry

Global VP of Sales and
Customer Success, Information
Services at expert.ai



"Your leadership will not come from authority but from a deep-rooted belief that success is not just about profit but people, passion, and purpose."

Rachel Krug

CEO of Virtual Field



"Even the people who seem to have it all together? Yep, they're winging it too."

Anna Niles

Senior Product Marketing
Manager at G2



Resilience & Perseverance

Every journey comes with obstacles. The difference between those who succeed and those who don't isn't luck or talent; it's the determination to keep going when things get difficult. These letters are filled with stories of setbacks, failures, and unexpected challenges. They reveal the moments when plans unraveled, doors closed, and doubt crept in. But more importantly, they highlight what came next: the decision to persevere.

Resilience isn't about avoiding failure. It's about learning from it, adapting, and moving forward anyway. These stories remind us that growth happens in the struggle and that confidence is built not in moments of ease, but in the ability to rise after every fall. The path forward is often challenging, but those who persist are paving the way for a more inclusive, resilient, and forward-thinking workplace—one where setbacks are seen as stepping stones, where failure fuels growth, and where perseverance redefines success.

"It will be the moment you start using your voice to change things for the women who come after you. Through the hard times, remember: you can do hard things."

Krissy Manzano

CEO & Co-Founder at Blueprint



"That grit, that resilience, that unshakable belief in your own ability to learn will be the very thing that builds your company, shapes your leadership, and inspires the people around you."

Jessie Shipman

CEO & Founder at Fluincy



"You will make mistakes, say the wrong thing, lose things you thought you couldn't live without. But failure won't define you—how you rise after will. Failure will teach you resilience, humility, and grace. It will show you that your worth isn't in being perfect; it's in how you learn, adapt, and keep going."

Kathleen Booth

SVP of Marketing and Growth at Pavilion



"You've grown up with a strong belief in always giving your best effort, that hard work is more important than smarts, and that perseverance, tenacity, and accountability make anything possible."

Anne Pao

Founder & CEO at Ignite Consulting



Confidence & Self-Belief

Confidence is often seen as something you either have or you don't, but these letters tell a different story. Many women in their letters recall moments when they hesitated, questioned their worth, or held back, convinced they needed more experience, knowledge, or certainty before stepping up. Over time, they realized that confidence isn't something you wait for. It grows through action.

Trusting yourself doesn't mean eliminating doubt. It means acknowledging its presence and moving forward anyway. The women who shared their stories didn't always feel ready, but they learned that speaking up, taking risks, and embracing challenges is what prepares you. The more you trust yourself, the more that trust turns into confidence. And the more you push beyond your comfort zone, the stronger that confidence becomes.

"You'll never feel 100% ready for the big opportunities, but take them anyway, because confidence isn't about knowing everything—it's about trusting yourself to figure it out."

Nida Ateeq

CMO and Founder
at Anagar Media



"You will not get the job, be passed up for promotions, excluded from decisions, and generally disadvantaged because of who you are. When this happens, never forget that your biggest supporter is YOU."

Mar Brandt

Founder, Fractional CRO, &
Executive Consultant at The
Rise8 Group



"My advice for you is this. Go first. Say the thing. Take the opportunity. No one is going to tap you on the shoulder and tell you it is your turn. It already is."

Emma Lo

Customer Success Operations
and Strategy Manager at Noibu



"So, keep going. Keep pushing boundaries. Keep believing in yourself, even when it feels impossible. Because the story you are writing is one of strength, reinvention, and fearless transformation."

Randi Deckard

SVP of Growth at BESLER



Mentorship & Support Systems

"No [wo]man is an island." John Donne's words hold weight when considering the role of mentorship and support systems in a career. Success is rarely a solo effort. While hard work, perseverance, and self-trust are crucial, these letters make one thing clear: the guidance of mentors, the encouragement of peers, and the strength of a supportive community are just as essential.

The right support doesn't just open doors. It gives you the confidence to walk through them. Learning from those who have navigated similar challenges accelerates growth, builds resilience, and reminds us that we don't have to figure everything out alone. But mentorship isn't just about receiving guidance; it's about passing it on. True leadership isn't measured by individual success but by the impact we have on others. When we invest in strong support systems, we don't just advance our own careers. We create opportunities for those who follow.

"Find a mentor who inspires you, someone who is where you want to be."

Cassandra Saikkonen

Founder, Fractional Sales
Director at CSG Advisory



"Your value isn't in how many crises you can handle by yourself – it's in how well you can help others succeed together."

Joelle Kaufman

CRO Whisperer at GTMFlow



"Lean into curiosity—ask the questions, seek out mentors, and never stop learning."

Keshia Tutag

Global VP, Mid-Market
Sales at GitHub



"Seek mentorship even earlier. Acknowledging the gap between where you are and where you want to be is one of your biggest strengths."

Ashley Stamps-Lafont

VP of Customer Success
at The Success Rx



Authenticity & Staying True to Oneself

Authenticity isn't just a personal value. It's a leadership strength. Across all these letters, it stood out as the most defining theme. Women reflected on the pressure to conform, the moments they felt the need to shrink themselves to meet expectations, and the pivotal points when they chose instead to lead as their full, unapologetic selves.

Staying true to yourself takes courage. It means letting go of outdated ideas of leadership, like the belief that authority requires dominance, that confidence means never showing doubt, or that success is purely individual. Instead, it's about recognizing that empathy, integrity, and individuality are not weaknesses, but powerful assets. The strongest leaders aren't those who mold themselves to fit in—they are the ones who stand firm in who they are and redefine leadership in the process.

"Trying to be perfect got you really far in life, but ultimately, embracing your flaws is what will help you embrace authenticity and feel so much more confident and at ease. Self-doubt is a natural human experience, but you don't have to indulge it."

Lauren Magistro

VP of Customer Success and Leadership Coach



"Keep embracing what makes you different, even when it feels challenging to be "the only one" in a space. By doing so, you're paving the way for more women and underrepresented folks to join you on this path."

Sarah E. Brown

VP of Marketing at ServiceRocket



"If you remember nothing else, remember this: if you are true to yourself, and do what is best for you in that moment, you will be a huge success."

Kimberly Kelly

EVP, Managing Director Client Services Americas at AMS



"Most importantly, don't believe the lie that you need to become someone else to be successful. You don't need to dim your light or reshape your strengths to fit into someone else's mold. The world needs YOU—bold, audacious, and unfiltered. Other women, other creatives, other parents, and other kind and ambitious people need to see you as an example of what success can look like when you refuse to conform."

Lindsay Tjepkema

CEO & Founder at Human Brands Win





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Doubt, setbacks, and the pressure to conform are struggles that all professionals encounter throughout their careers, regardless of gender. Career paths are rarely smooth, and no one is immune to imposter syndrome, moments of uncertainty, or the fear of failure. Yet these letters prove that success is not about having all the answers. It is about perseverance, self-belief, and the willingness to take up space, even in the face of doubt.

Leadership is evolving. It is no longer defined by rigid authority, unshakable confidence, or a singular mold. The most impactful leaders, regardless of background, are those who embrace authenticity, uplift others, and create spaces where people feel seen, valued, and empowered to do their best work.

Let these letters be a reminder that you belong in every room you step into. Keep going. Keep leading. And above all, keep showing up as yourself.

Want to dive deeper?

Explore the stories that shaped this piece and hear directly from the women who shared their journeys.



[Read the letters](#)



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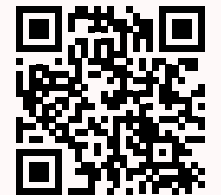
The Women of Pavilion Community exists to foster belonging, share knowledge, break barriers, drive personal and professional growth, and inspire authentic self-advocacy. **If you haven't already, you're invited to join!**



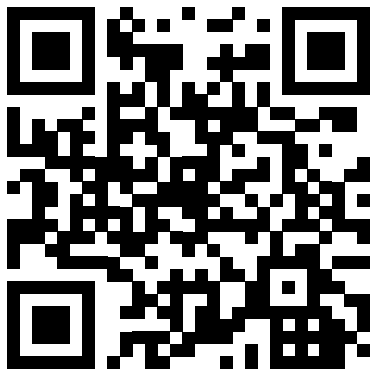
Join the Women of Pavilion

Unlock your potential with mentorship.

Mentors are 6x more likely to be promoted, and mentees see a 5x promotion rate compared to those without mentorship (Wharton). Pavilion's mentorship program is inclusive, welcoming professionals from all backgrounds and experiences.



Apply to be a mentor



Explore membership

Not a member?

Pavilion is the world's #1 private community for GTM leaders to connect, learn, and grow in their GTM roles.

Our global community unites over 10,000 Managers, Directors, VPs, C-suites, and CEOs committed to advancing their careers and driving success in B2B Tech.

Whether you're seeking mentorship, career support, or looking to stay ahead of industry trends, the Pavilion community is here to support your journey. Join the ranks of other sales, marketing, customer success, and revenue operation leaders.