Anita Yan

Information and Program Manager for the Land Tasmania Division,
DPIPWE

As Information and Program Manager for the Land Tasmania Division, I am part of the senior management team and provide oversight of systems or information flows across the department. I also work with the department's information technology (IT) area to deliver any innovation programs. I've been working in the department for 15 or 16 years now, and I've been in my current role for just under 12 months.

The best part about my job is that it's always interesting. In IT, things move so fast that you really have to work on keeping up with the latest trends, and what that means for service delivery. Because the diversity in the program of works, the most challenging part of my job is making sure I'm across where they are all at and what the challenges and issues are – just being prepared and making sure I know what my priorities are for each day.

I spent my first year in the department as a graduate business analyst. Then I got a new manager who said, 'Anita, you need more technical skills'. That really freaked me out because I'd always seen myself in a business-focused role rather than in the technical space, doing actual coding work. But he was really encouraging and

just said, 'You can do it!' That manager paired me up with a senior developer, and it was really that developer, that mentor, who taught me everything I needed to know.

That was probably the best thing anyone has ever done for my career. I think that the technical skill set gave me a really good foundation to build on and is the key to getting me where I am now.

When I was at university, IT was very much split into the business-focused stream and the computer science stream (often seen as the 'geeky' side of IT). I always saw myself going more into the business-focused side of things, but it wasn't until much later that I understood that having a more technical foundation really benefited my career. I think we do need to 'de-geekify' IT to encourage better participation in these more technical fields. For me, it's talking about what technology means for the world, and how that brings about change, benefits, and innovation.

I think I've been really fortunate. Right through my career, I've had really good role models, male and female. I didn't approach my career thinking there were any limitations on what I could achieve.

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