Twitter Thread by Vaidehi Joshi



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women of twitter: raise your hand if you've ever discovered that a male colleague with the same (or less!) years of experience and same job title as you was actually making more money?

i'll go first: ■■■■■

i'll never forget the feelings i experience when i found this out. initially, i felt shock, followed immediately by self-loathing—it seemed like the company had gotten me "on the cheap" and it made me feel incredibly like i had been incredibly stupid to not negotiate for more.

that quickly evolved into rage: how did they think it was okay to meet his negotiation demands when he was hired but not think to look at the other people at the same level and wonder if their compensation should be raised to match his, too?

i had always thought that i had always been an excellent performer at every company and role that i've held, so finding this news out felt a bit humiliating; i had to fight feelings of self-doubt and push myself to remember that i am stellar and deserved better—i deserved equity.

this is the moment in my career where i fully realized that i had to be own fiercest advocate. that was the moment that i decided to never assume that the company would see your worth—instead, it was always going to be on me to MAKE them to see it, or to go somewhere that would.

since then, i've become so much more comfortable with saying it like it is, and calling a spade a spade when i need to. but i wish i hadn't needed to experience that moment to get there.

i know that plenty of folks aren't assertive and firm by nature, and it's so sad to me that my only advice to them is that they have to learn to become comfortable with being that.

this is exactly why it falls on leadership at every company and organization to foster equity through explicit pay transparency.

i can tell you from personal experience that it is truly a shitty and demoralizing feeling to find out that your company doesn't financially value you the same as a man who has the same (or a lower) title than you.

it makes you realize that as much as our society claims to have moved forward, ultimately we really haven't progressed nearly as far as we claim.

to be clear, i don't believe that advocating for yourself is the ONLY way to ensure that you are paid fairly—that just happens to be what i have vowed to do for myself because that's the only thing i feel i CAN do in many situations.

i've heard stories of male colleagues sharing salaries and advocating for women on their team, which also seems like a good strategy! i've just never been fortunate enough to have colleagues who proactively did that for me so i've had to be my own advocate ■■■■■

anyways, all of this is to say, none of this should fall on individuals. putting advocacy work on individuals is BY DEFINITION inequitable.

if you are a leader in your company, i urge you to look at how your employees are paid and ask yourself how an employee would feel when she found out she was being paid less than her colleague.

as maya angelou once put it, "people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."