

Tarika Barrett

CEO, Girls Who Code

You Cannot Be What You Cannot See. Dr. Tarika Barrett, CEO of Girls Who Code, is on a mission to close the gender gap in tech and change the image of what a computer programmer looks like. Her first step on this ambitious mission is to empower the young women — especially those from minority backgrounds — to feel like they belong.

In this talk, Dr. Barrett shines the light on the transformative power of learning spaces where women can collaborate to problem-solve, innovate, and envision themselves as leaders and, more importantly, equals in their fields. Speaking with a palpable passion, she inspires individuals to dream big and let go of their fears while emphasizing the importance of mentorship and outlining ways that organizations can advance their cultures to be more supportive of women, amplify their voices, and tear down systemic roadblocks that women so often encounter in the workplace.

Leading Through Challenging Times. Congratulations and well wishes came pouring in when Dr. Tarika Barrett was announced the successor to Girls Who Code founder Reshma Saujani as the international non-profit organization's CEO. But with those congratulations came questions of, "Why now? Why lead a non-profit through a pandemic?"

Dr. Barrett asked herself a different question: "Why not now?" Seeing the disproportionate effect the pandemic has had on Girls Who Code alumni and women in general, Dr. Barrett knew that taking the reins as CEO offered the perfect opportunity to continue carrying out the mission of building up women and minorities that are often left behind or systemically locked out from access to opportunities. In this eye-opening talk, she shares real-life examples of how leaders can unite and engage their teams during challenging periods — such as a global pandemic — and best practices for pivoting your business when faced with disruption.

Cracking the Code to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Dr. Tarika Barrett's primary key to advancing organizations' through DEI initiatives is to first acknowledge where we are with women and people of color in the workplace and where we need to be. With a focus on compensation, promotions, work from home policies, family leave policies, and flexibility for employees, Dr. Barrett discusses the cultural issues and systemic barriers in the workplace that inhibit achievement for women and minority groups, while providing a framework for organizations to create more diverse, equitable, and inclusive environments that spark real change and real results.

Reprogramming Education. According to Dr. Tarika Barrett, there are points in the educational pipeline that need to be reprogrammed. This is supported by the fact that women make up only 25% of the tech workforce, a statistic that decreases to 18% for women of color. And for these women in tech, 50% of them leave the industry by the age of 35 due to the lack of systems in place to support them and ensure their inclusion.

In this talk, Dr. Barrett shares how inequity and lack of representation for women and minorities begins early in their education — long before they ever make it to the workplace. She'll discuss the current pipeline problem and provide her insights and best practices for reprogramming education to elevate women and minorities in every field and champion the viewpoints and contributions they bring to organizations.

A New Framework for Non-Profit Management. In leading Girls Who Code, a non-profit that aims to disrupt the tech industry at an ambitious rate, Dr. Tarika Barrett has adopted a new-age approach to non-profit leadership to match her vision for the organization. Speaking with warmth and enthusiasm that draws audiences in, she shares modern methods for non-profit management, as well as actionable steps for leaders in every industry who wish to successfully adapt her approach to their own organizations.