



How GE is Bridging the Tech Skills Gap



PARTNER PROFILE

Millie Dresselhaus, have you heard of her? She's a celebrity in her own right. In 2014, President Barack Obama honored her with the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest honor bestowed on a civilian in the United States¹. In 1990, Dresselhaus was the first woman to win the National Medal of Science in Engineering². At Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), where she taught for 50 years, she was the first female professor of physics and

electrical engineering³. Her list of accomplishments goes on, as does her legacy of encouraging other women to consider careers in science and technology⁴.

With Dresselhaus as the inspiration, General Electric (GE) made a public commitment to having 20,000 women in technical roles at the company by 2020⁴. GE announced its commitment in a breathtaking Super Bowl ad featuring Dresselhaus.

So how does GE plan to reach the 20,000 milestone? In March, GE Digital Learning and Technology Leader Sara Ley joined DeVry University at the SXSWedu Conference (see [page 4](#)) to offer insight into how GE is addressing the tech skills gap issue in its workforce.

GE'S NEW MODEL

Speaking to the topic of "The Tech Skills Gap: What Can Educators & Employers Do," Ley stressed the

importance of keeping up with the pace of technology. The seismic shift in needed tech skill sets today versus five years ago has created a skills gap at all levels in GE. According to new research by the Career Advisory Board, GE isn't alone. This research found that nearly half the nation's current employees aren't keeping up with the evolving skills required in their fields⁵.

"Business leaders now have to come to the table with tech skills, and IT staff need to develop more of a business acumen," said Ley. "Ten years ago it was a very different conversation. [Then,] IT was just trying to understand processes, trying to help solve problems for business leaders. Now, it's important for leaders to understand applied tech skills so they can talk about customer outcomes, and how data and technology can change the face of business. We had to ask, 'How do we address the tech skills gap?' The answer: Through partnerships and by leveraging educational resources offered by various organizations."

especially when it's not possible to look around the corner to see what skill set should be anticipated," said Ley at SXSWedu, in response to how employees can take charge of their own skills acquisition. "With BrilliantYOU, employees can review what they've accomplished over the year to get a much more realistic picture of their growth and development, and it helps us better support the educational needs of employees."

GE'S MODEL FOR PARTNERSHIPS

For GE, partnerships extend beyond providing an educational learning platform for employees. To fulfill its 20,000 by 2020 commitment, GE partners with several universities known for their technology programming, including Georgia Tech and MIT, to offer an elementary summer camp for girls.

Last fall, GE partnered with DeVry University as a preferred education provider to offer professional development seminars and courses through BrilliantYOU. The partnership also enables

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With more than \$1 billion invested in employee development worldwide every year, GE continues to reimagine and enhance the learning opportunities it provides to employees. To keep employees ready to meet the daily and future demands of doing business in a global economy, GE built its own learning experience platform, BrilliantYOU. The platform is designed to advance learning and development of more than 307,000 employees worldwide. It offers hundreds of free resources – including webinars, massive open online courses (MOOCs), videos and best-selling books from various educational partners – to help connect employees to some of the world's best learning opportunities.

"BrilliantYOU also helps employees recognize opportunities and brings learning resources to them that might be the right fit at the right time,

eligible full-time GE employees to earn a certificate, or an associate, bachelor's or master's degree, at DeVry at no cost through the GE/DeVry University Exclusive Grant. GE employees can attend any DeVry University location or online to hone the skills needed by their employer without a financial obligation.

"GE and DeVry share a vision for preparing our diverse workforce to compete in today's global economy by ensuring a comprehensive education, one rooted in understanding technology's growing role in all of modern business," said Ley. "A leader in technology-based training and education, DeVry sets the industry standard for skills gap training, and we're proud to partner with such a forward-thinking educational institution."

A strong advocate for women pursuing tech-focused careers, former MIT Professor Millie Dresselhaus received the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2014.