



Episode 1: Introduction to the Females in Tech Show

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Tamara: Welcome to the Females in Tech Show where we help women in tech to live a balanced and purposeful life through a career in information technology.

My name is Tamara and I am the founder of FIIT Collective. In this podcast I'll explore the challenges females face working in a corporate environment and how to overcome them. Beyond technology, I will also dive deep into self-care practices, how they can improve your physical and mental wellbeing and the importance of balancing work and relationships for sustainable and rewarding career.

Joining me in today's episode is my loving partner [Joel Norton](#), Joel has over 30 years' experience in marketing and digital transformation, he is an executive thought leader who is passionate about empowering businesses to deliver customer-centric digital transformation. After 30 years in corporate, he has now branched off to start his own consulting firm, guiding entrepreneurs on the journey from traditional product marketing to data-driven customer-centric marketing.

Joel is a living and breathing example of a female in tech ally, which is why in the first season of the Females in Tech Show he will be joining me in each episode to share his perspective as a male.

In this episode, we cover a quick overview of my career, my definition of a female in tech, what the Females in Tech Show is all about and how it's different from other podcasting shows, who the show is for, and what to expect in season one, and two, who is Joel and why he is on the show, about my business FIIT Collective, how to contribute to FIIT Collective, my thoughts on vulnerability and so much more.

Everything Joel and I talk about in today's episode, you can check out in the show notes at FIITCollective.com/1

Joel: Hello Beautiful

Tamara: Hey Handsome

Joel: How are you?

Tamara: I'm really good, how are you?

Joel: I'm awesome. I was going to compliment you on how amazing you look today because you did look amazing, but we just had an accident. What happened?



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- Tamara: I was eating a delicious falafel wrap from Ruby Lane, one of our favourite cafes in Manly, and the wrap had beetroot in it, and I was wearing a beautiful white dress.
- Joel: Beautiful white linen dress.
- Tamara: I spilt it all over me, of course. So I quickly got changed, and now I am in tracky dacks and a hoodie.
- Joel: You still look amazing.
- Tamara: Aw, thank you.
- Joel: Before we jump into it, what have we been doing this morning?
- Tamara: This morning we met with a [graphic designer](#), so she was amazing. I'm super super excited.
- Joel: Hey [Linda](#), I hope you're listening.
- Tamara: She is going to design the logo for FIIT Collective, the podcast album cover for the Females in Tech Show, and also a downloadable. I'm so excited to release the downloadable. It's going to be epic.
- Joel: First of a few we hope. So, let's get started.
- Tamara: Okay.
- Joel: I was going to ask what you had for breakfast but you've told us what you had for lunch, so that's probably enough. How are the nerves?
- Tamara: They're OK. Few sweaty, sweaty palms.
- Joel: That's okay, that's to be expected. So let's jump into it. Why don't we start with telling us, or telling me a bit of an [overview about your background](#).
- Tamara: Awesome. So I am a female in tech. I currently work for Salesforce and I've been working for them for almost two years now. But I've been in the tech industry for over three years. Prior to that I was in recruitment and studied business management and accounting at university. So a bit of a roller coaster to land my dream job. But I got there in the end.



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Joel: It hasn't been a straight line, has it?

Tamara: Absolutely not.

Joel: And successful careers often aren't. So, you went from accounting.

Tamara: Yes.

Joel: To recruitment.

Tamara: Yes.

Joel: And then into technology.

Tamara: Yeah.

Joel: Tell us a little bit about that journey.

Tamara: I studied business management and accounting because it was a broad degree, and I didn't want to narrow myself into something like studying law, where I thought once you study law you have to be a lawyer. But turns out there's a lot of people who study law and don't end up being a lawyer. So, yeah, a bit of a false misconception there.

I studied business management and accounting because they were subjects that I was passionate about, and ended up studying part time and working part time as a tax accountant whilst managing four other jobs. I thought I wanted to be a tax accountant but soon realized after two and a half degrees, years, I didn't like it at all.

It wasn't aligned with my purpose. It wasn't aligned with my personality. So I was a little bit lost in what to do. Ended up starting a recruitment firm in Melbourne that specialised in Salesforce recruitment and I got-over hearing how cool everyone's job was and took a day off work, and did what I knew best and called a lot of customers who had Salesforce.

All of the partners said I was a junior and I didn't know anything but I had a lot of enthusiasm and passion about the product. And if they could give me a chance, I'll prove myself, a I ended up working for a Salesforce partner, and now I'm working for Salesforce.



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Joel: Fantastic. And so, what is it about technology?

You realised that accounting wasn't the right fit for you, and then you did recruitment, and I know you did recruitment really as a stepping-stone. It was a deliberate, it was a purposeful decision to go into recruitment to get a better idea of other industries. But it didn't take very long for you to work out technology.

What is it about technology that excites you?

Tamara: Well, I wasn't really given the opportunity when I was at school, although I did excel in computing and won multiple awards. So I think in the back of my mind, I always knew that I loved technology.

I remember when the first Apple Mac came out, it was a big square box and my parents had one and I was just on it non-stop and helping them fix their computer issues and problems. So, I've always been into technology, but why I am so passionate about it now is because it really excites me.

I love thinking outside of the box. I love problem solving. And I get to do that every single day, and think of innovative solutions. My role is a campaign manager but I have submitted one patent, about to be two. I get to do lots in my role, with regards to creative thinking and innovative solutions.

Technology is the way of the future. In five, ten years' time, every single role will have some sort of technology aspect to it. So it's about embracing that and jumping in. And getting yourself familiar with all the different technologies that are out there.

Joel: You talk about technology but you're not suggesting that everyone is a coder for instance, and has to know code or be a developer. You look at it much broader than that.

Tamara: Absolutely. I think there is this misconception that to work in tech you have to be wearing a hoodie and be in a dark room.

Joel: Even though you are wearing a hoodie right now.

Tamara: Yes, I do have two screens on my table and yes, I do know how to code but that's a really big stereotype.



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So technology, or having a career in tech, you can be a project manager, you can be a business analyst, you can be a salesperson. They all have some sort of understanding of technology and the way that the projects run and how the software works. So it's such a broad skillset. And it's not just the developer when I talk about women in tech.

Joel: Yeah, there are so many varied roles, functions. It's like any other business where, you need different functions in order to bring something to market. Technology obviously is growing and expanding, whether it's hardware such as phones and laptops, or software, more and more businesses are shifting to the cloud and having cloud based solutions.

It just continues to grow and grow and grow. So it is quite broad and it is expanding. So that's really exciting.

So you're very passionate about technology. What is it about technology and females?

Tamara: I briefly mentioned it before, but I was never really given the opportunity when I was a little girl at school. However males were given that opportunity, and sometimes I look back and wish that I was also given the same opportunity. But look, I love where I am today and I wouldn't be where I am if it weren't for that path that I took.

So with females in tech, I feel like we, as a generalisation, females are a little bit standoffish when it comes to technology. We are scared to learn it, but we're also scared to enter into the industry because it is so male dominated.

I just know females, with the collective of males, are very strong in the tech industry and it really diversifies the thinking and innovative solutions. I mentioned before that in 5 to 10 years' time, most of the roles will have some tech influence in it, so females need to start getting familiar with it.

Joel: Yeah. Embracing it.

Tamara: Exactly.

Joel: And so let's talk a bit about the show. What is the Females in Tech Show?

Tamara: The Females in Tech Show is essentially a podcast show where we will talk about the challenges that females face on a day to day basis, whether that is at work, or in their personal life, and how



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to overcome those challenges. Also tips on how to accelerate your career whilst managing your personal life, and self-care and things like that.

So we'll be covering topics in technology but also in wellness - so meditation, exercise, your female cycles. As well as balance - so looking at the relationships that you have inside and outside of work and how to optimise them and not leave them behind when you're so focused on your career.

Joel: Yep. It's really important that you have that balanced view with life because you're going to be much more focused and productive if you've got those other areas covered, and you'll be able to, as you say, accelerate your career.

Tamara: Absolutely. I personally don't believe if you neglect your health and wellness and your mind and your body and your soul, you can't accelerate your career. You need to address them all, and be full within yourself and be overflowing so you can bump up that career.

Joel: Yeah. So whilst it is the Females in Tech Show, it is a lot more than tech really. Absolutely.

Would you say that's a key difference between this show and other shows that people might be listening to?

Tamara: Yeah, so I think a lot of the podcasting shows that I've heard in the "female in tech" category, they're amazing, but they do focus just on tech. And I want to focus on all areas of your life, but also the collective part, is doing it with males.

Having a male ally like yourself and male listeners who can hear the challenges that females face, learn from them and use that information to support females in tech, and have that network of males and females to really build a more diverse and equality based industry.

Joel: Yup. Now who's the show for? In marketing teams we talk about an avatar, so who do you think would benefit from listening to the show?

Tamara: Any female in tech. Again, that's not a coder, that is project managers, business analysts, sales people who specialise in tech, campaign managers, anyone who has some sort of aspect of tech in their career. Also male allies. So I mentioned before, men who want to support women in tech.

It could be anyone from university studying computer science to someone who is halfway through



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their career, or someone who's looking for a transition from a non-tech related career to a tech-related career, to someone who is close to retirement.

Joel: Yep. And I know we have lots of plans for the show, don't we, lots to cover. And I know that you're really keen to have guest speakers on. So whether that's authors, or interviewing people that have already achieved a lot in their career and understanding more about their career journey, and other things.

At the moment we're calling this season one, and season one is going to be me interviewing you, or us having a bit of a chat to get things kick-started. Why are we doing that?

Tamara: One, I'm having you in the first season because you have been my number one supporter, both in my career but also starting FIIT Collective and this podcasting show, the Females in Tech Show. So I definitely want you standing by my side whilst I get used to the sound of my voice, and getting comfortable in front of the mic.

I also want you on this show because of that male ally aspect, that is hugely important to me. I cringe when I hear "female leaders of tomorrow". It's not about that. We should be looking at male leaders and female leaders as the same, and males are part of the picture. So you are leading by example, by other men listening to this show and hearing your thoughts and opinions of the females in tech and the challenges that they face.

Joel: Well, I hope I can add some value to the conversation, but I think probably just to get the podcast started, we thought it might be a good idea for us to do it as a bit of an interview style. It's always a bit harder talking to yourself. And hopefully we can have a bit of fun along the way.

So if season one, that's what we're going to do. And then as we progressed, hopefully you can have other people on the show and I know we've got so much to cover, so really excited.

Tamara: Yeah, me too. And I just want to mention the purpose of that season two is to inspire and educate women in tech to live a more purposeful career in life.

So having anyone on the show who is an expert in a particular field that will help women in tech. That could be CV writing, and salary negotiation. It could be someone from the health industry like meditation, anything that's going to improve the lives of females in tech, and anything that's going to help the male allies, help make a more diverse tech industry.



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Joel: And that leads into FIIT Collective because before this show, before the Females in Tech Show, you actually started with your brand, FIIT Collective.

So, what is FIIT? What does it stand for?

Tamara: FIIT Collective stands for females in information technology. So there's two "i's" in FIIT.

And I love the word FIIT because it reminds me of strong and empowered women, and it also addresses the health and wellness and balance side of your career in tech.

But then there's the collective side, which is talking about the males and females in the tech industry. So, in terms of a female aspect, that's women supporting other women, but in terms of males, it's males and females working together to make a more diverse industry.

Joel: And why is that important to you? Why is FIIT Collective and this whole thing so important to you? Because I know how passionate you are about it.

Tamara: Yeah, it's hugely important to me for a few reasons.

When I first entered into the tech industry, I was on the hunt to find other female leaders who were in the tech industry and I really struggled to one, find that, but also struggled to see their story and hear about the challenges they'd faced.

Everything I read was all roses and butterflies and rainbows, and everything seemed so easy. And that was not relatable at all because it was a hard transition from accounting to recruitment to tech, and not knowing how to code and having to learn that by myself. So I didn't find the stories relatable.

And the conferences and meetups that I'd been to were great, they're amazing but you don't always have time to go to them. So, I started the platform to share that side of the story. So those authentic stories about the challenges females face.

It's also really important to me on the collective aspect for women to support women because there's nothing more powerful than having a group of women brainstorm ideas off one another and have that strong, powerful feeling. I don't know if you've ever felt it Joel, but it's pretty amazing when women work together and really support one another. It's like when you meet up with a girlfriend and you leave after having coffee together and you're feeling super excited and



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super inspired and it's just a feeling that I honestly don't get anywhere else. So, it's about having that support network for women and not backstabbing one another.

Joel: Let's just explore that a little bit too.

In Australia we've got the tall poppy syndrome, but outside of that I suppose it's human nature for a lot of people. When somebody is successful, or they're being recognized for things, to try and knock them down. So there's a bit of jealousy there or not wanting somebody else to get ahead of them, or a feeling of scarcity, if they get a promotion or they get ahead, then I'm not going to get that.

I know that's something you've experienced at work, and generally in life, as many people have. So let's talk about that, as this is a really important piece for you, that females do support one another.

Tamara: Yeah, it's really important for me. Like you said, Joel, I've personally experienced it when a female's gossiped or backstabbed me to get a level up and it's definitely not nice feeling. And I really don't want any female to go through that.

And there is this stereotype, particularly in a male's world, where they think that that's all females do. And that's why we haven't gotten to the top, because we backstab one another and gossip. And that's not okay. I think it's really important we transform that perception.

I mean, it doesn't happen all the time, and I hope it rarely happens. And I hope the listeners who are hearing this right now, they haven't experienced it, but the reality is, it does sometimes happen and it's about supporting one another.

If I support another woman, accelerating their career, that is the most thrilling feeling for me. And I know that they will support me when that time comes. And it's about being that collective, and really sharing the love and sharing our knowledge. Because if we don't do that, then I think we're screwed.

I think with males we will brainstorm and use that diverse, innovative thinking to create a better tomorrow.

Joel: Well I know personally how much you do support other women at work and people that you know. The number of people that have contacted you, asking "how do I crack into technology", and the calls, or the coffees and meetings that you've had with people, helping them, giving them a bit of a



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path to help them get into technology.

And also the people that are already there. How do they learn a new aspect of it, or how do they go for promotion?

So I know personally how much you invest time and energy into that and how inspired you get from that. So, it's awesome to see.

Tamara: And I get a lot of benefit out of it too. It's not just that person cracking into the tech industry, or learning a new part of the platform. If I have to teach someone a new part of the platform, that means I need to be an expert in it, and they're going to ask me questions that I may not know the answer to.

So, it gives me the opportunity to learn, and it's building a lot of leadership characteristics that I wouldn't have had if I didn't share my knowledge with them.

Joel: Which is fantastic. And yeah, really looking forward to you leading the way and being the example with that and seeing the wonderful work that you do.

I think we've covered it, but maybe just to reiterate, what your mission is for FIIT Collective.

Tamara: It's for all women or females in tech to live a more purposeful career and life.

Being in a career that inspires you, but also sorting out your personal life and addressing those areas like your mental, and physical wellbeing, as well as the relationships that you have inside and outside of work. So it's that holistic picture.

Joel: So there are three areas for FIIT Collective that focus on. Do you want to talk a little more about the three areas. So, the first one was around technology.

Tamara: So that's all your career in tech. How do we accelerate that whilst also maintaining that feeling of inspiration and motivation to succeed?

We all know, or the people that have a career in tech currently know, that it is really rewarding, but it's also quite challenging. So how do we overcome those challenges? So tips in how to overcome them, but also tips in how to accelerate your career.



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Joel: And that includes some of your recruiter background, it's not just about the technology piece, it's around career progression. So whether that's getting a promotion, or how to negotiate a salary increase and things like that, which is broader than technology, but obviously plays a part in technology.

Now the second area is wellness. What's covered under that?

Tamara: That's all about optimizing your physical and mental wellbeing, which is critical to having or living a more purposeful and fulfilling life. So it's about addressing your mind, your body and your spirit to be able to stay more productive, more motivated and focused.

Joel: Right. So, you think that's going to help my career in tech?

Tamara: Yeah, absolutely. I mean with wellness you're talking about things like meditation and physical exercise, and how meditating and physical exercise improves your productivity. And without doing those two things, your productivity's going to drop and you're not going to have those happy endorphins.

It's also addressing things like the female cycle, and what to exercise during what period of the cycle. And when to rest, which is what I'm slowly learning to do.

Joel: I am really excited about that as well. So one of our product ideas we've got relates to the female cycle, and understanding that because I think it's really important for both females and men to understand that.

As a leader or an executive, a male executive, understanding the female cycle, and when employees are at their best and at their optimum, and the times when they're not, and being able to support that because females have so much to offer, the workforce generally, but also in technology.

So how do we get the best out of them? You are a Type A "go, go, go, go, go, go, go" personality, so getting you to slow down when you are that time of the month and being kind to yourself, is really important.

Tamara: Yeah. I think for too long, the cycle has been a taboo topic and as females we've just neglected it completely and acted like all the males in the room, and just thought we need to charge through



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our menstrual cycle when the reality is we're doing more damage, and we're not unleashing the full creative power by having that connection with your cycle.

Joel: Now, the other thing, obviously that you just spoke about also was just food and exercise and things like that because I suppose another stereotype for technology is, apart from the hoodies, is that everyone's doing all-nighters, drinking cans of red bull or monster cans or whatever else it might be. High sugar energy drinks to keep them, eyes wide open, and and coding. But that's also detrimental.

Tamara: Absolutely. I mean, I've even experienced a few changes in my body since working in tech. It's what happens when you have a desk job and when you work in a big tech company and they have a kitchen full of snacks. It's so easy to go into the kitchen and eat a chocolate bar or sit down on your bottom all day. I've got tendinitis in my hamstring from sitting on my bottom all day. So Jac, if you're listening, thanks for helping me with that.

Ultimately there is a huge, huge factor into food and what works for your body. So what works for mine doesn't necessarily work for Joel's. And it's about learning what does work for your body, and what gives you the most amount of energy so you can ultimately accelerate your career, and be full of energy for when you come home to your kids and family.

Joel: So making sure we're fuelling our body the right way, and moving it the right way so that we are as productive as we can be.

Now the third area is balance. Tell us a bit about balance.

Tamara: Mm, I love balance. So this is all about self-care and relationships. I personally believe they are key ingredients of achieving a balanced and rewarding career. You can't possibly be 100% go, go, go if you aren't full within yourself. So, it's all about filling up that self-love bucket, being overflowing and being able to share that love with your partner, with your kids, or using that love into the work that you're doing. So in order to be the best version of yourself, you have to fill up yourself first.

Joel: And I know we're going to be covering self-love in one of the next few episodes. But just to explore that a little bit more. What exactly is self-love, what does that mean?

Tamara: I guess I've learnt the hard way. I've had shingles, I've had glandular fever, I've been in hospital multiple times with random viruses attacking my body because I haven't practiced self-care or self-love. And that's because I am that Type A personality and I am go, go, go all the time, and I don't



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know how to rest. So, self-care is so important.

I used to think of it as a taboo or a selfish weird thing that girls do, or just an excuse to have a facial or get a massage. But as soon as I overcame that inner critic thought and I started practicing it and saw some really amazing results. I was a lot nicer to be around.

But it's not a once-off task that you need to do. It's ongoing. You need to be doing it daily or weekly. I probably need to be doing it more often. We all do. So it's things that make you feel full. So personally for me that's getting outside and having my skin in the sun, or reading an inspiring book, or doing a home facial or giving myself a love massage. It's taking that time for me to make me feel beautiful on the inside and the outside.

Joel: And other things too, like having a tech-free holiday, which we wrote about our amazing trip to the Grampians at Easter. So things like that. And again, I think it's also another episode that's going to be coming up. So whilst you're an advocate for technology, it's also making sure that you get away from technology.

Tamara: Oh, absolutely. It's so, so important. Not only because of the blue light, but just to walk away from your computer. I do that every single day. When I'm at work, I take a walk outside. It's so good for the mind. It's so good for the body. It's so good for the spirit. And yeah, definitely something that we should be doing more often.

Joel: Well it sounds like there's lots to talk about. So I think that's it. Probably before we finish. Obviously you talked about collective being many voices and including both males and females, but also covering the different areas of technology, wellness and balance. So if I'm a personal trainer or I do meditation or whatever and I'd love to contribute to FIIT Collective, how do I do that?

Tamara: I'll definitely put the link in the show notes, but there is a form on the FIIT Collective website that anyone who is an expert in a certain field, or has a story to share, or a topic to talk about that's going to help the lives of women in tech. You can fill out that form and that gets sent directly to me and I will share with you, a checklist to ensure that you are sharing the challenges and being vulnerable in the post, and being authentic. I'll put the link in the show notes and you can follow that link to submit the form.

Joel: Now you've just touched on something which we haven't talked about. Which is being vulnerable, which is also something I know is really important to you. So what do you mean by that? Exactly?



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Tamara: When I was researching other women in tech, or female leaders, I found that a big piece of their stories that was missing was the challenges they faced and being vulnerable. And it's really scary to do that because a lot of people think if you share your failures or be vulnerable in front of people, it's going to be seen as a weakness when in reality it makes the story so much more relatable.

So that's a huge, huge piece for not only the blog posts and articles, but also within this podcasting show, is to share that vulnerability, to inspire other women who might be going through a similar challenge. It may not even be similar. It may just be a challenge that they're facing and they read about another woman who's overcome a challenge and it brings that inspiration and ultimately helps the female or male to not quit and keep going.

Joel: And obviously you'll learn so much out of that as well. Whether you're the person, or whether you're listening to that story. I think there's a lot of value in doing that. It's just about being comfortable being uncomfortable.

Tamara: Absolutely. Nothing good happens inside of the comfort zone.

Joel: So, thank you very much. How do you feel about your first episode?

Tamara: Great! Should we record another?

Joel: I don't know.

Tamara: No, we will give it a rest. But it's been awesome being on this show and thank you for interviewing me.

Joel: That's all right. I'm really looking forward to it. Like I keep saying you've got so much to share. I know how passionate you are about it and I'm really looking forward to working with you more and helping you bring your idea to the world. Because I know you're really passionate about serving others. So well done for your first episode.

Tamara: Thank you.

Tamara: Thank you for joining me today. If you'd like more information about today's show, you can read my show notes and any relevant links at fiitcollective.com/1.

I am so grateful for this opportunity to serve the females in tech community and hope you find the



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information helpful and inspiring. My goal is to inspire you to reach your goals and provide you with the practical tips on how to be the best version of yourself.

If you did enjoy the show, then I'd like to ask the three things in return so that I can inspire more career motivated women and male allies. One, please subscribe to the podcast in your favourite podcast app to ensure you don't miss an episode. Two, share the episode with any friends or colleagues that might benefit from the content I'm sharing. And three, please leave your review in iTunes or in your favourite podcast app and tell me what you love, but also where I can improve. I am here to serve you and I welcome your feedback.