



Not For Women Only

Heidi Hahn, Los Alamos National Lab

As my Future Female Leaders in Engineering students are arriving in Los Alamos and the summer professional development program is beginning, the topic of inspiring young women to pursue careers in engineering is on my mind and in my heart. Here are a couple of presentations on that topic that I'm finding useful. I hope you do, too.

Inspiring the next generation of female engineers | Debbie Sterling | TEDxPSU www.youtube.com/watch?v=FEeTLopLkEo

Close your eyes and picture an engineer. You probably weren't envisioning Debbie Sterling. Debbie Sterling is an engineer and founder of GoldieBlox, a toy company out to inspire the next generation of female engineers. She has made it her mission in life to tackle the gender gap in science, technology, engineering and math.

Pushing Boundaries - Women in Engineering | Dawn Bonfield www.youtube.com/watch?v=LKVEtnjGvxw

Follow Dawn Bonfield on her journey looking at some incredible and inspiring stories of female engineers - could the next one be you?

Books recommended by TED speakers.

Inferior: How Science Got Women Wrong — and the New Research That's Rewriting The Story by Angela Saini

I very much appreciated Saini's challenge of popular stereotypes around women in science. From Darwin onwards, male scientists have often brought their own gendered expectations into understanding women. This book challenges many myths, like the idea of the female brain and man as hunter, and pays tribute to the work of female scientists who fight sexism in their fields. — Deeyah Khan

Good Night Stories for Rebel Girls by Elena Favilli and Francesca Cavallo

This is an illustrated children's book by the co-founders of Timbuktu Labs and creators of the first iPad magazine for children. It's packed with 100 bedtime stories about the lives of 100 extraordinary women from the past and the present, illustrated by 60 female artists from all over the world. It is a must-read for all children. For adults, it shows a diverse look at the world, illustrating women as distinguished, accomplished and, most of all, tenacious. — Giorgia Lupi

Lab Girl by Hope Jahren

I read this assuming it was fiction and was utterly amazed to find it was an autobiography. I'd like to recommend this account by a female scientist struggling to start and maintain a scientific career, against odds which seem overwhelming at times. It's very funny, and Jahren's quirky personality shines through her telling of almost unbelievable events, her deep struggles with depression and imposter syndrome and the friends, students and family who support her during her wild journey. Her life is an inspiration to scientists everywhere, and this book is a beautiful and hilarious love letter to science and the natural world. — Natasha Hurley-Walker

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Lessons From Women Scientists

Amanda Phingbodhipakkiya, TED Resident

Excerpts from IDEAS.TED.COM

Research has found that having a backup plan might actually sabotage your efforts toward Plan A. Before you set up your safety net, read these lessons from women scientists.

Having a backup can alleviate some of the psychological discomfort associated with uncertainty and help us feel better about the future. But by and large, having a backup plan comes with a cost—as shown

in these stories from the history of science, matched with the latest research on how our minds work.

- A backup plan can make you less excited about your main plan.
- It could also water down your motivation.
- Another lesson in Plan A thinking: Stay focused on your goal, so you know how best to reach it.
- Before you set out to pursue your goal, remember this: being risky doesn't mean

being reckless.

- Anticipate adjustments to your plan.

These lives of women scientists can provide inspiration for sticking to your Plan A: Nobel prize winner YouYou Tu, nuclear physicist Chien-Shiung Wu, and neurobiologist Rita Levi-Montalcini.

So, the next time you find yourself worried about *not* having a backup plan, ask yourself this: is making a Plan B worth the risk to your Plan A?

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A System Designed by a Fish?

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