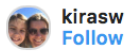


How Being a Mom Helped This Inspiring Tech CEO Succeed

Krista Gray • Aug 12, 2017

Whether you're a tired new mom who's learning how to put yourself first while preparing to head back to work or someone who's in love with your career and beginning to consider the idea of having kids, it's perfectly normal to experience fears about how you'll manage work and family. From finding balance to making sure everyone and everything is taken care of, doing it all can seem totally impossible. We talked to Kira Wampler, the CEO at Art.com, who filled us in on how raising two kids has actually helped her succeed as a woman in tech. She also gave us five great tips any new mom is sure to appreciate.



"When I first became a mom to my daughter 11 years ago, my biggest fear was, 'How will I make it all work?' My life already seemed full, rewarding, and very busy," Wampler tells us. "One of the things that surprised me the most when I returned to work (after my daughter was born) was the logistics of it all — being a nursing and working mom." Now a mother of two, Wampler's impressive career spans more than 20 years in marketing and product experience at companies such as Lyft (where she was most recently the Chief Marketing Officer), Trulia, Lytro, and Intuit.

She tells us that slaying long, meeting-filled work weeks while pumping and nursing wasn't easy. "I'll never forget my first day back to work; I had planned my day to handle both pumping and back-to-back meetings, and it all hinged on pumping as soon as I got to the office. But just as I walked up to the 'moms' room, another new mom was reaching for the door," Wampler shares. "We looked at each other, and she said, 'I don't mind if you don't mind,' so we pumped back-to-back! It's amazing what we'll do to support our children and each other."

3 WAYS MOTHERHOOD CAN HELP YOUR CAREER

Wampler is quick to credit motherhood with helping her career, sharing three main areas where she's noticed its impact over the years:

- 1. It teaches you about patience.** "I've never been a very patient person," Wampler admits, "but am 100 times more so now that I'm parent." She affirms that she's learned that it's okay to be impatient with *things* like unnecessary processes and poor customer experiences, but that it's not effective to be impatient with *people.* "Whether it's your kids or your team, patience is a critical skill to help people grow and deliver their best," she wisely says. "This growth in my patience level is absolutely a reason why I'm a CEO today."
- 2. It helps you learn how to prioritize.** "Ruthless prioritization is my superpower! Being a parent gave me that, because you simply don't have time for the unimportant stuff. People ask me all the time how I can do it all. I don't do it all — I only do what's important."
- 3. It reminds you to be a good example.** Wampler tells us that serving as a good example for her kids is super important to her. "*The New York Times* recently ran a [story](#) asking why more women aren't CEOs, and my kids couldn't believe there was a story like that to tell when I showed them. Because they've seen what is possible, they're engaged in the world in a really exciting way. This is the kind of example that I can set for them with my career, my marriage, and our family." Talk about a great reason to get up and crush it every day!



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WAMPLER'S 5 TIPS FOR NEW MOMS

1. Give yourself a visual reminder that it's okay. "When I went back to work after my daughter Sophie was born, one of my colleagues and dearest friends gave me a magic wand. I have a typical Type-A personality, which meant I could be super hard on myself (and that can only get worse when you layer on a marriage and children). With the reminder of the wand, and the occasional wave of it when necessary, I have permission for things not to matter so much. My magic wand is still in my office, on my desk at [Art.com](https://www.art.com)." We love it!

2. Your baby hasn't read the book. "When my daughter was a baby, she had colic. I read everything I could about what to do to help her, but nothing worked. A nurse gave me some great advice: 'Your baby hasn't read the book.'" Wampler points out that everyone will offer you guidance, but it's ultimately up to you to find what works best for your family. "Eventually I figured out that dancing to very loud hip-hop music helped when Sophie was colicky, which definitely wasn't in any of the books!"

3. Give your kids a tech diet. "I believe that the role of tech is to make our lives more convenient, not to make our kids more convenient," Wampler asserts. "My kids are limited to 20 minutes of screen time a day (with the exception of schoolwork). We've been strict on screen time from the beginning, and I can see the difference it makes now that they are getting older. When we're together as a family, we're talking to each other, including long dinners in nice restaurants."

4. Make technology work for you. "To the degree that tech can take logistics stress off your plate, use it," Wampler encourages. "I'm a big believer in the power of Google Calendar." To use it effectively, Wampler explains, she and her husband regularly sync up for the week ahead to eliminate the stress that comes from not knowing what each person will do and when things are scheduled for. Good communication is key too, of course.

5. Embrace the chaos. "It sounds cliché, but time flies," Wampler reminds us. "The days of being a new mom are so vivid in my mind. I can still tell you exactly what those days were like. When you're exhausted and working really hard both at work and at home, you can lose the joy fast and forget that's the whole point of having a family. Enjoying your family is so important, especially when they're little. It goes by really quickly, so embrace and enjoy it."

Which career women and mothers inspire you? Tell us about them [@BritandCo](#) on Twitter.

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