



# The Executive Ready *Self-Assessment.*

A workbook for women in tech navigating the path from high-performing manager to the C-Suite.

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## ■ HOW TO USE THIS WORKBOOK

# Honest answers, not impressive ones.

This workbook is a private mirror. It is most useful when you complete it in one sitting, alone, before you talk to anyone about it. Three exercises and a roadmap, in this order: a pitfalls audit (diagnose), action prompts (commit), a capabilities scorecard (assess), and a twelve-month roadmap (plan).

*The work that got you here will not get you there. The path to the C-Suite is not a longer version of the climb you have already made — it is a different climb entirely.*

DOINA POPA

## ■ EXERCISE ONE · THE PITFALLS AUDIT

## Which patterns are *quietly costing you*?

Five patterns derail more women in tech than any external bias does. Mark each one honestly. The pattern you most want to skip is usually the one most worth examining.

- 01 **The safe-executor trap.** I have made myself irreplaceable in my current role. I know it is a strength — and I quietly suspect it is also a ceiling.  YES  NO
- 02 **Mentors instead of sponsors.** I collect advice generously. I am uncomfortable asking someone to put their reputation behind mine.  YES  NO
- 03 **The glue work tax.** I take on culture, onboarding, committee, and team-health work that nobody else does — and that nobody promotes for.  YES  NO
- 04 **Waiting to feel ready.** I am waiting for a clear signal that I am ready. I would apply once I tick every box, and not a moment sooner.  YES  NO
- 05 **Expertise without constituency.** I have built deep expertise. I have not built a public surface, a named audience, or a reputation that travels ahead of me.  YES  NO

## ■ EXERCISE TWO · ACTION PROMPTS

## From pattern to *specific move*.

For each pitfall above, write a specific, verifiable move. Be concrete enough that someone else could check, in three months, whether you did it.

**01 On the safe-executor trap.** Name one piece of your current role that someone else could be trained to do. Who could do it, and what is the first step to handing it off?

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**02 On mentors vs sponsors.** Name two leaders, two levels above you, who could be sponsors. For one of them: what is a specific ask you could make this quarter?

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**03 On the glue work tax.** Name one piece of glue work you will stop, hand off, or actively make visible this month. Who needs to know that you do it?

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**04 On waiting to feel ready.** What is the smallest move you could make this week that would signal you are ready for the next role? Tell one person about it.

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**05 On expertise without constituency.** Pick one platform — LinkedIn post, internal newsletter, public talk, podcast. Commit to one piece of public visibility this quarter. What is the topic?

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## ■ EXERCISE THREE · THE CAPABILITIES SCORECARD

# Rate yourself 1–10 on each.

*Where would a leader two levels above you rate you?*

**Strategic narrative** — translating work into business terms.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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**Financial fluency** — P&L, capital, cost-of-capital.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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**Executive communication** — decision-first, composure under challenge.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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**Sponsorship architecture** — building and maintaining advocates two levels above you.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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**Public-facing presence** — reputation that travels ahead of you.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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**Composure under ambiguity** — deciding with incomplete information.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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**REFLECT:** For the lowest score, what is one move you could make this quarter to raise it by two points?

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## ■ YOUR TWELVE-MONTH ROADMAP

# Three phases. *Not aspirations — commitments.*

Write one specific commitment in each block. The rule: it must be specific enough that someone else could verify, in twelve months, whether you did it.

### MONTHS 0–3 · AUDIT & ASSERT

1

#### By month 3, I will have...

*Examples: Mapped my sponsors and named the gap. Told three people the role I want next. Asked one leader two levels above for an honest readiness assessment.*

### MONTHS 3–9 · BUILD THE SURFACE

2

#### By month 9, I will have...

*Examples: Taken one P&L conversation. Spoken at one external event. Earned one named sponsor two levels above me.*

### MONTHS 9–12 · CLAIM THE SEAT

3

#### By month 12, I will have...

*Examples: Positioned for the role before it is open. Made my candidacy visible to two levels above. Become the obvious choice — not the surprise candidate.*

### TWO WAYS TO GO FURTHER

## Take it from *here.*

If your roadmap feels honest but the route isn't yet clear, two paths to keep momentum:

**Sign up for a Clarity Session** — A paid 60-minute working session with Doina — diagnose where you are, name the blockers, and design the first move. €336 net + applicable VAT. Fee credits in full to any InnoTrue programme.

→ [INNOTRUE.COM/CLARITY](https://innotrue.com/clarity)

**Join the Earned My Seat cohort waitlist** — A small group of women in tech leadership, by application. Leave your details and we'll let you know when applications for the next cohort open. No obligation, easy to unsubscribe.

→ [INNOTRUE.COM/EARNED-MY-SEAT#INTEREST-LIST](https://innotrue.com/earned-my-seat#interest-list)