

Driving Women to Automotive: The Leaders of Toyota on Why Mentoring Matters

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The automotive industry is facing once-in-a-century changes. In the years ahead, vehicles that are connected, automated, shared and electrified will radically reshape mobility in ways that will have a profound impact on people and communities across the world. In order to shape future mobility, Toyota relies on talented, creative individuals to drive innovation in every area of the business.

To build an exceptional team, Toyota relies on strong leaders with diverse backgrounds, a wide range of skills and unique ideas. But the automotive industry is still experiencing a major talent gap. For instance, women represent only 27% of the auto manufacturing workforce in the United States, even though they make up almost half of the overall labor force.¹

Research shows that support systems like sponsorship and mentoring play an important role in encouraging women to pursue careers in STEM industries. Not only does mentorship help introduce women to available opportunities, but it also helps retain and develop existing talent. In fact, 76% of women said they would choose to stay in the auto industry if they saw a clear path to their career goals.²

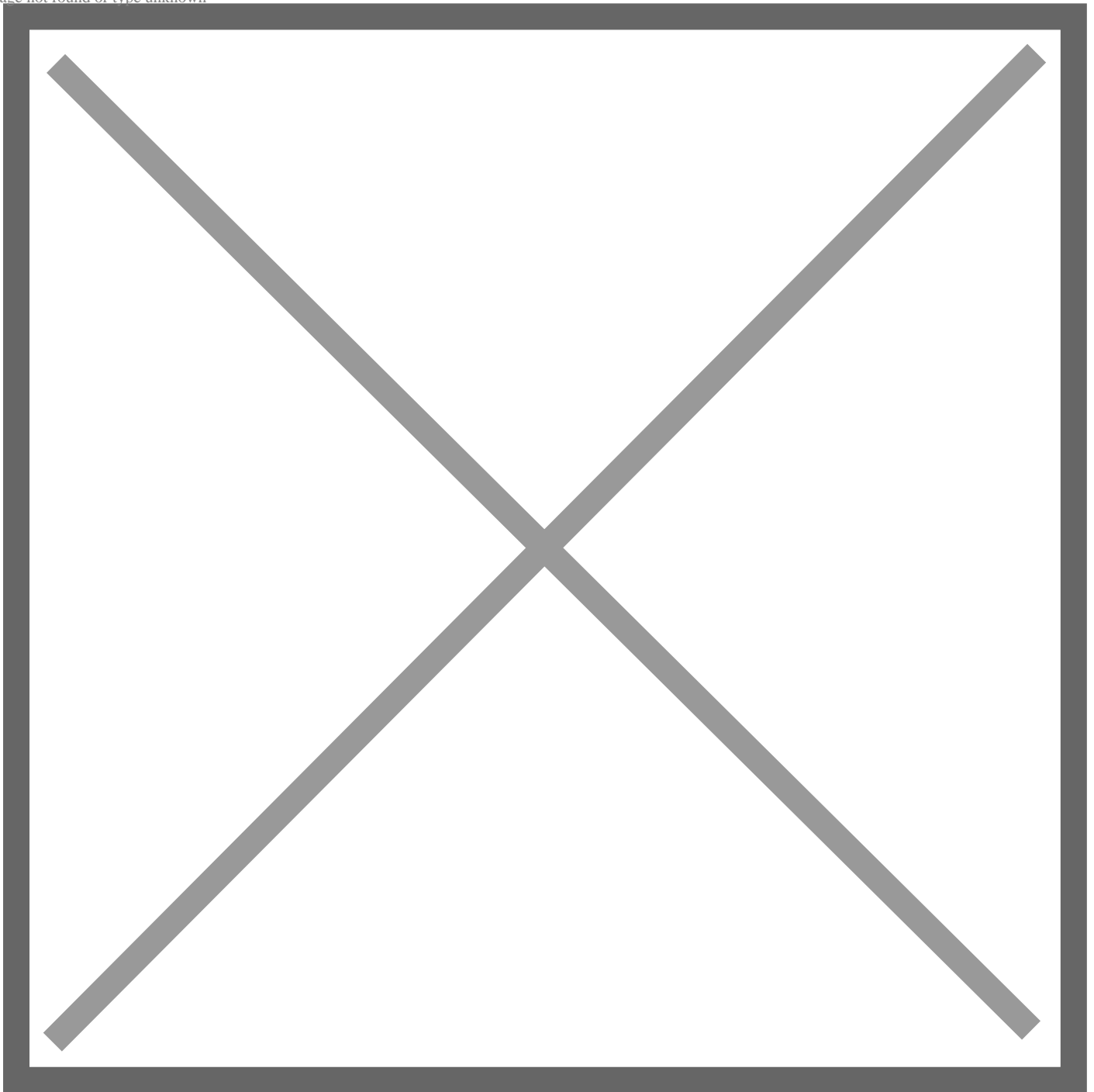
Toyota believes that cultivating a culture that reflects, empowers and respects the diversity of its employees provides a more diverse and inclusive workplace that drives innovation and relevancy. That's why women leaders of Toyota are dedicated to championing diversity, inclusion and growth in the automotive industry. Active involvement in training programs, school visits, participation in employee resource groups, and serving as sponsors and mentors are just some of the ways these executives are working to attract more women to careers in automotive.

While reaching gender equity in automotive is a collective effort, female leaders in the industry can make a big impact just by sharing their experiences. In celebration of International Women's Day, we asked some of Toyota's leaders about their careers, experiences with mentorship and the importance of closing the talent gap in the automotive industry.

Leah Curry

President, Toyota Motor Manufacturing, Indiana

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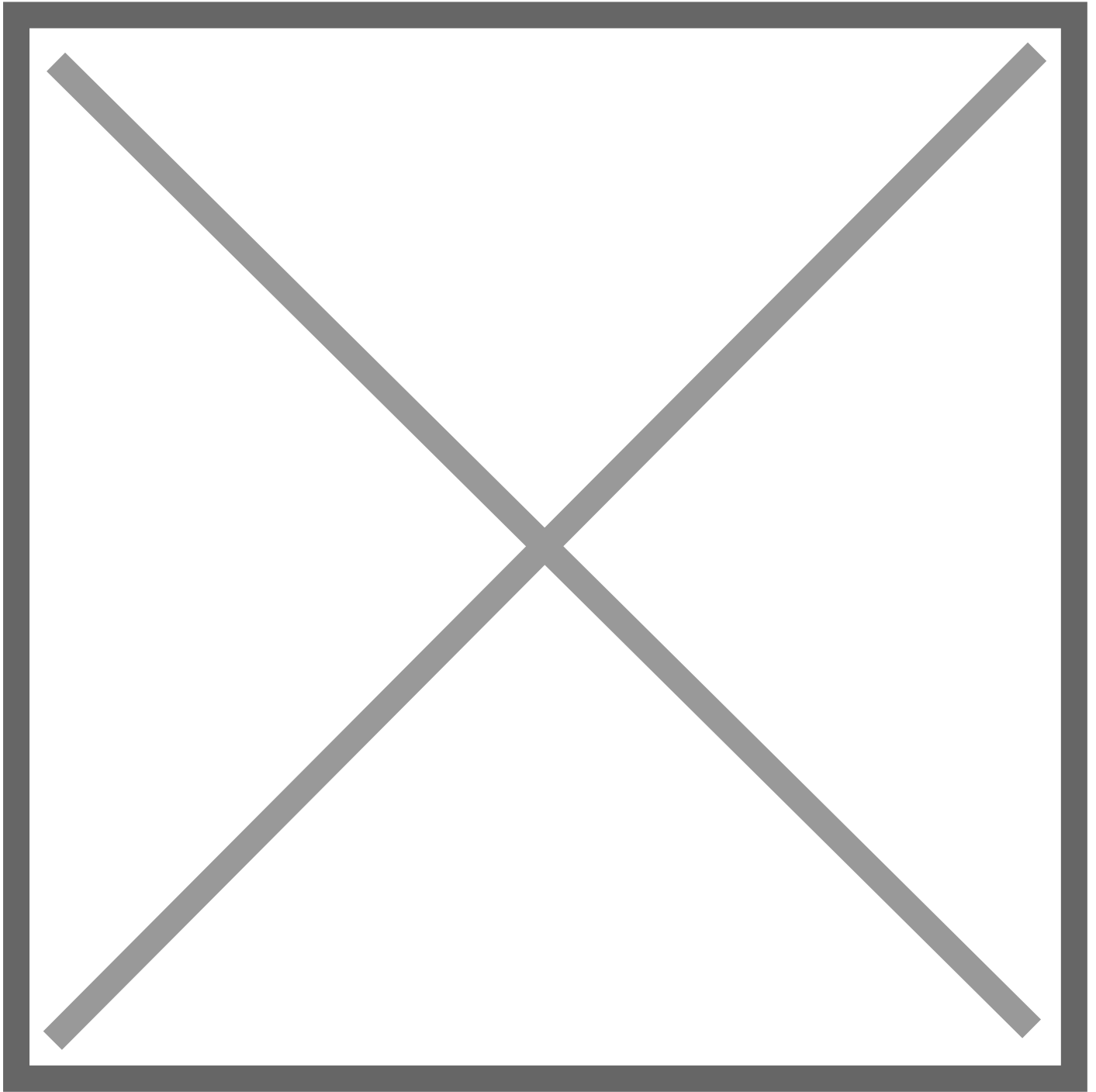


“We have to engage students early on, especially women, so they understand that if you’re in automobile manufacturing, there’s a wide variety of opportunities to advance your career in areas including engineering, programming, finance or HR.

Mentoring helped me realize what I could achieve. When I was a manager of a production shop, my supervisor was Susan Elkington. She was able to repair that broken rung on the ladder that we didn’t see a lot of women reach. She helped me get to that level. She helped me see that I was capable of doing [the job], even more so than some of my team members, who were all men.”

Susan Elkington

President, Toyota Motor Manufacturing, Kentucky

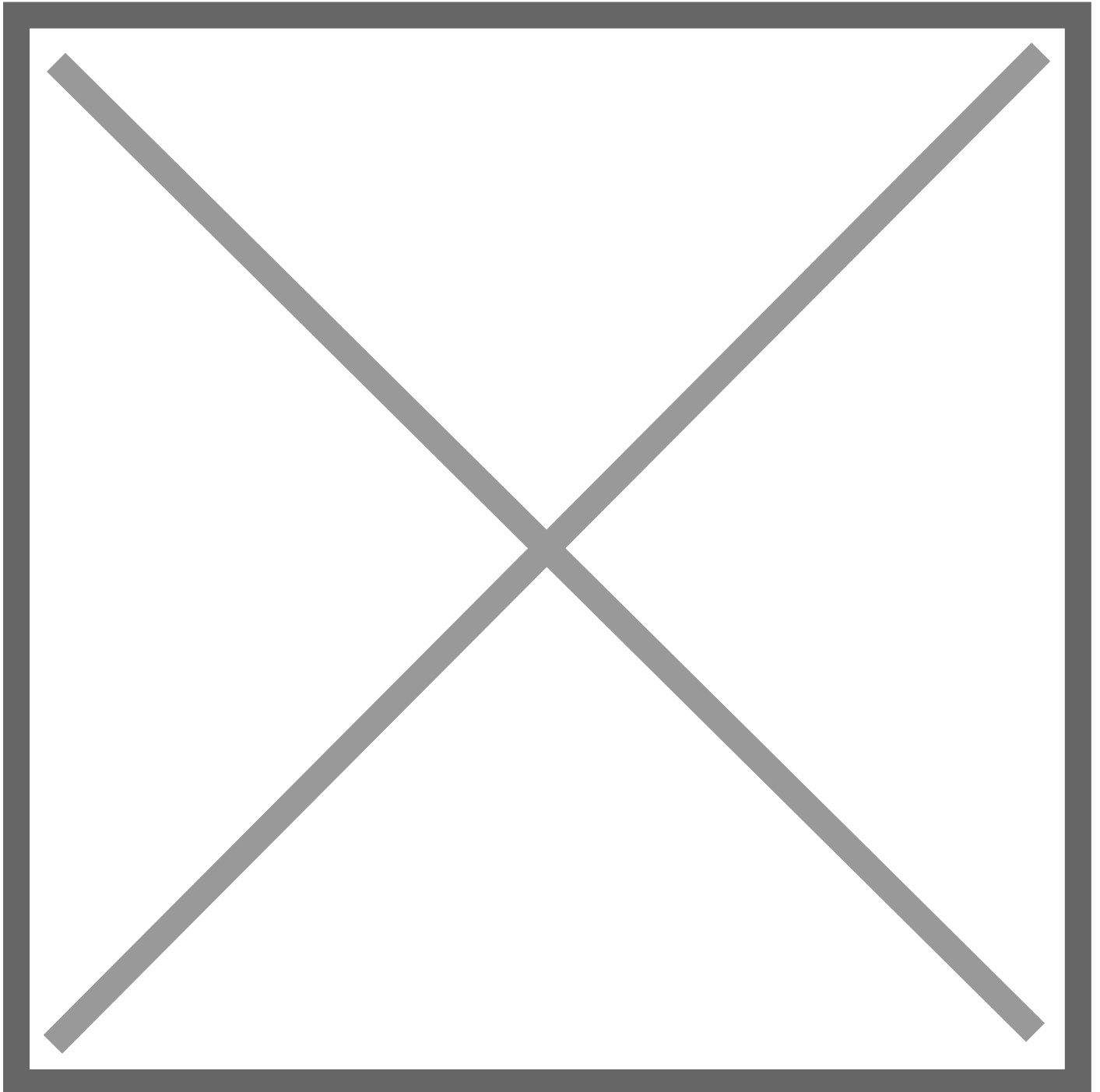


“Female engineers are often placed in systems positions or as project managers, which are coordinator positions, but then they don’t get the technical training that’s necessary, which sometimes limits them on the technical side of the operations. I wish I would have spoken up more for other females in the industry earlier. As I gained confidence in myself, I was more willing to be outspoken about those things.

One of our primary jobs is to continue to develop the next generation of leaders. And it was an unbelievable opportunity that I worked with Leah [Curry] at TMNA in body weld. She and I kept getting promoted at the same time, but I went to my boss and said that I needed to move because Leah needs to soar. And she did. She made president before I made president. That is, to me, one of the best work accomplishments that you can have: seeing others succeed.”

Karen Ideno

Group Vice President of Private Label Sales, Product & Marketing, Toyota Financial Services



“Mentors and sponsors are incredibly important to career development and growth. My mentors and sponsors have lifted me up throughout my career. Their support helped grow my confidence and appetite for risk as they provided me with opportunities to be at the table and to share my thoughts and experiences through my diverse lens. It’s because of these relationships that I now passionately mentor and sponsor team members to lift the next generation of Toyota female leaders!

As a mentor and sponsor, I advocate for other women leaders and create pathways for experience and exposure which are critical to navigating their careers. Our employee resource group, Women Impacting & Influencing Toyota, provides a great platform and network to build relationships. In the community, I also pay it forward by mentoring amazing young girls who have aspirations in marketing, finance and business. From a workforce readiness perspective, they are the future leaders we want to attract to Toyota and the automotive industry!”

Sandra Phillips Rogers

Group Vice President, General Counsel and Chief Legal Officer, Chief Diversity Officer, Toyota Motor North America

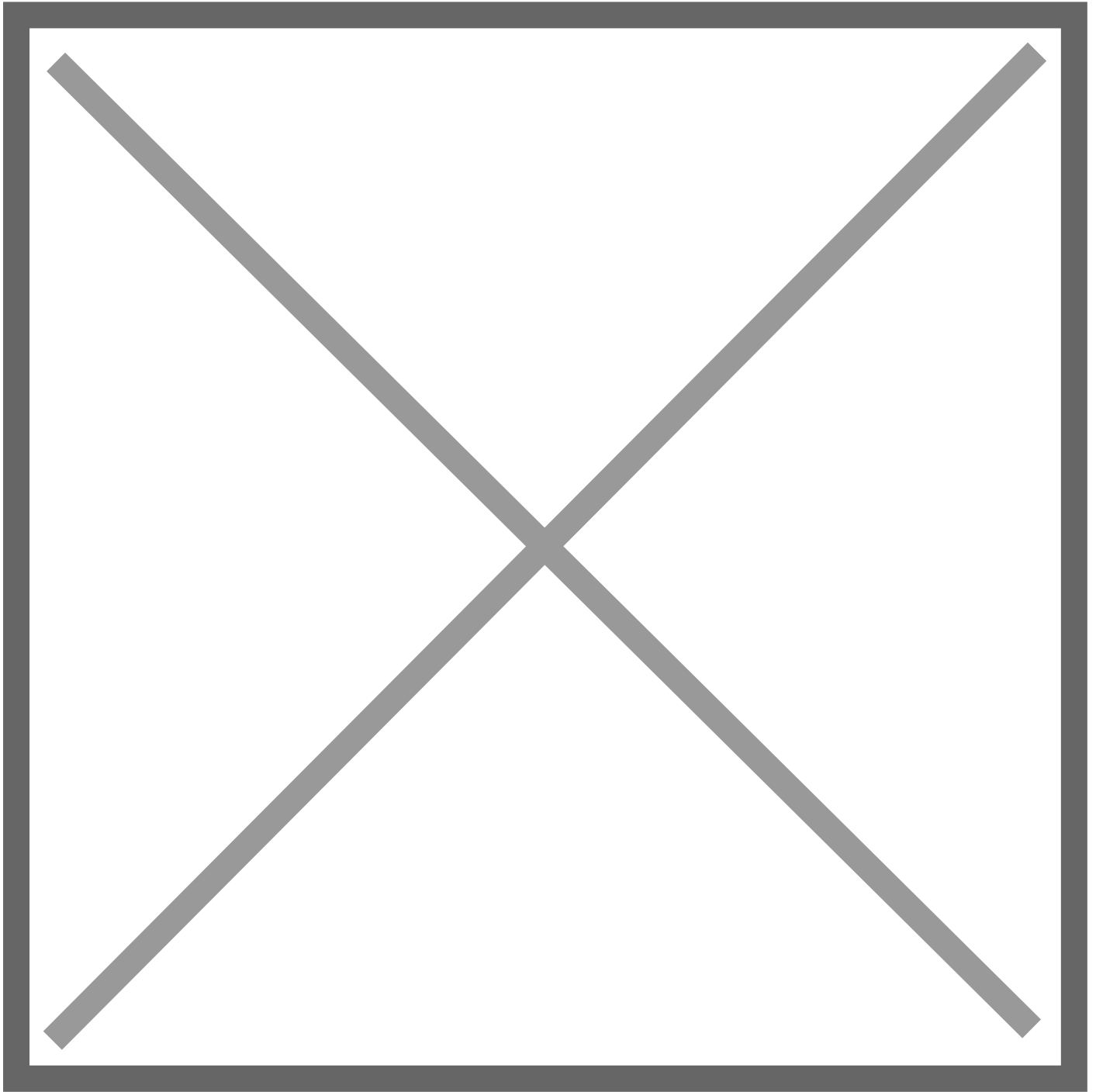


“The industry has a lot of responsibility to make itself more attractive. I take on that burden every day, ensuring that we have a work environment where there’s opportunities for support and belonging, whether that’s through affinity groups or mentoring, sponsorships, development or allyship.

When I speak to young girls, I’m always telling them, ‘Think about a career in STEM.’ Because I think the future is really going to be looking for talented young women who have that background. I say do it because we’re really charting a new course here, and as we transition into a future of mobility, there’s no better time to be a woman in automotive than right now.”

Kristen Tabar

Group Vice President of Vehicle Development and Engineering, Toyota Motor North America



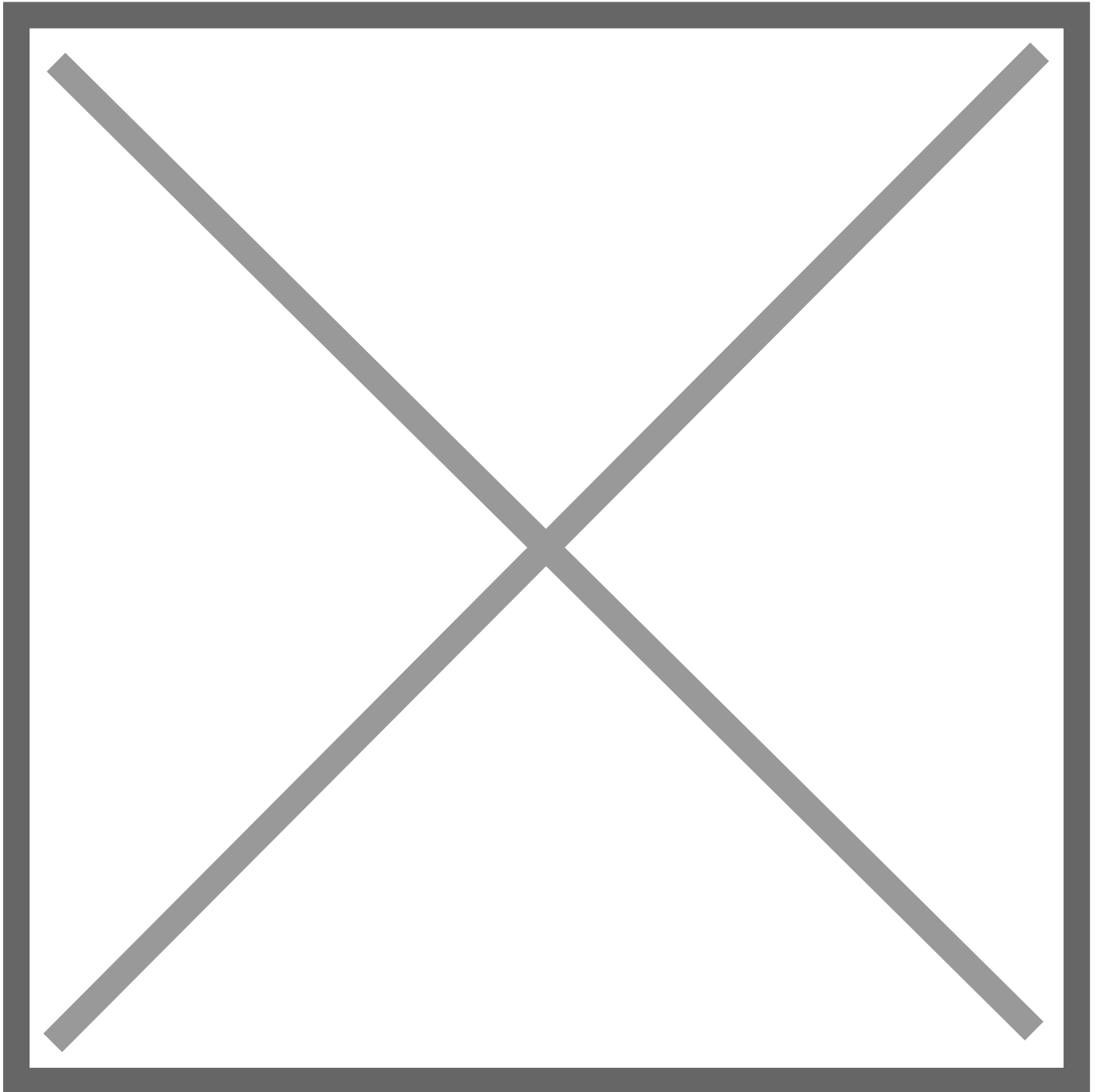
“I spend quite a bit of time talking to middle school, high school and college age women who are thinking about going into engineering or manufacturing. I describe the automotive industry as more about making things that help people, enabling mobility for everyone through safe and innovative products. It’s exciting to come up with new ideas and make them into things that people use every day.

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Unfortunately, many younger women have misconceptions about the automotive industry driven by old images. We need to do a better job sharing how different the automotive industry is today and just how much it's changing toward the future. It's about all of the exciting technologies and products and how they interact with our environment and customers."

Julia Wada

Group Vice President of Strategy, Innovation and Transformation, Toyota Financial Services



“There’s very little at Toyota that you can accomplish by yourself that’s big and meaningful or impactful. And I’m a big believer in the value of a diverse team coming together to accomplish great things.

Mentors can help us to think differently and to think bigger about what’s possible. It’s done that for me and so many others at Toyota. We need to continue to invest in and develop the great women we have in the auto industry already, and show people what they’re doing. That’s one of the best ways to bring talent in from outside.”

Kelly Kay

Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer, Toyota Research Institute



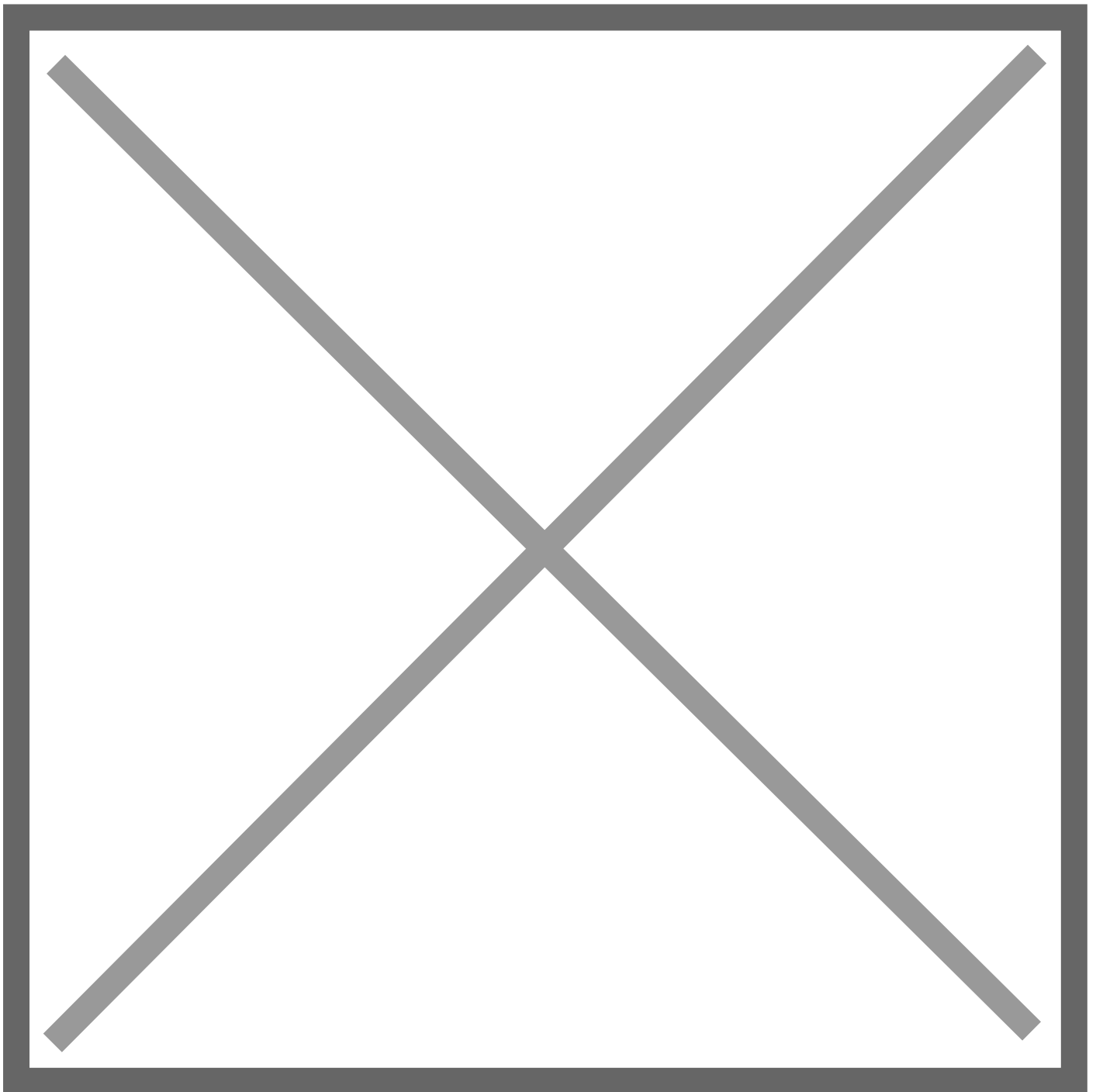
“We need to change how people think about the industry. It’s open to men, women, anyone who wants to be part of it. By increasing diversity at Toyota, we can better serve our customers. Diversity is important to me, but it’s also important for business.

We all know that when we see other women in positions of power, it lifts the sights and ambitions of generations to come. But that is just part one. Part two is for women who have achieved success to then take the critical step of actively mentoring the next class of women so we can transfer knowledge, social capital and psychosocial support. It is this combination of opening others’ eyes to what success looks like and then actively showing them

how to achieve it that makes all the difference.”

Lisa Materazzo

Group Vice President of Toyota Division Marketing, Toyota Motor North America



“Women have tremendous value to add to any industry, including the auto industry, because diverse teams simply perform better. Women account for a smaller percentage of the auto industry than the overall labor force even though they influence over 70% of vehicle purchase decisions. This gender gap is a missed opportunity for

the industry as it transforms in areas such as digital technology, artificial intelligence and electrification – just to name a few. Diversity of thought, which is enhanced with a gender-diverse workforce, can help drive innovation and, for smart, forward-thinking companies, can be leveraged to create a competitive advantage.

Many women I speak to recognize the gender disparity that exists in the auto industry and fear that translates to a lack of opportunity for them. But there is opportunity for advancement, especially at companies like Toyota that embrace diversity (in all its dimensions) and inclusion – not only because it’s the right thing to do, but because it makes good business sense. The industry has more C-suite and VP-level woman executives than ever before. That’s something we need to promote in order to attract the next generation of female leaders.”

Joanna Dean

Vice President of Sales, Toyota Financial Services



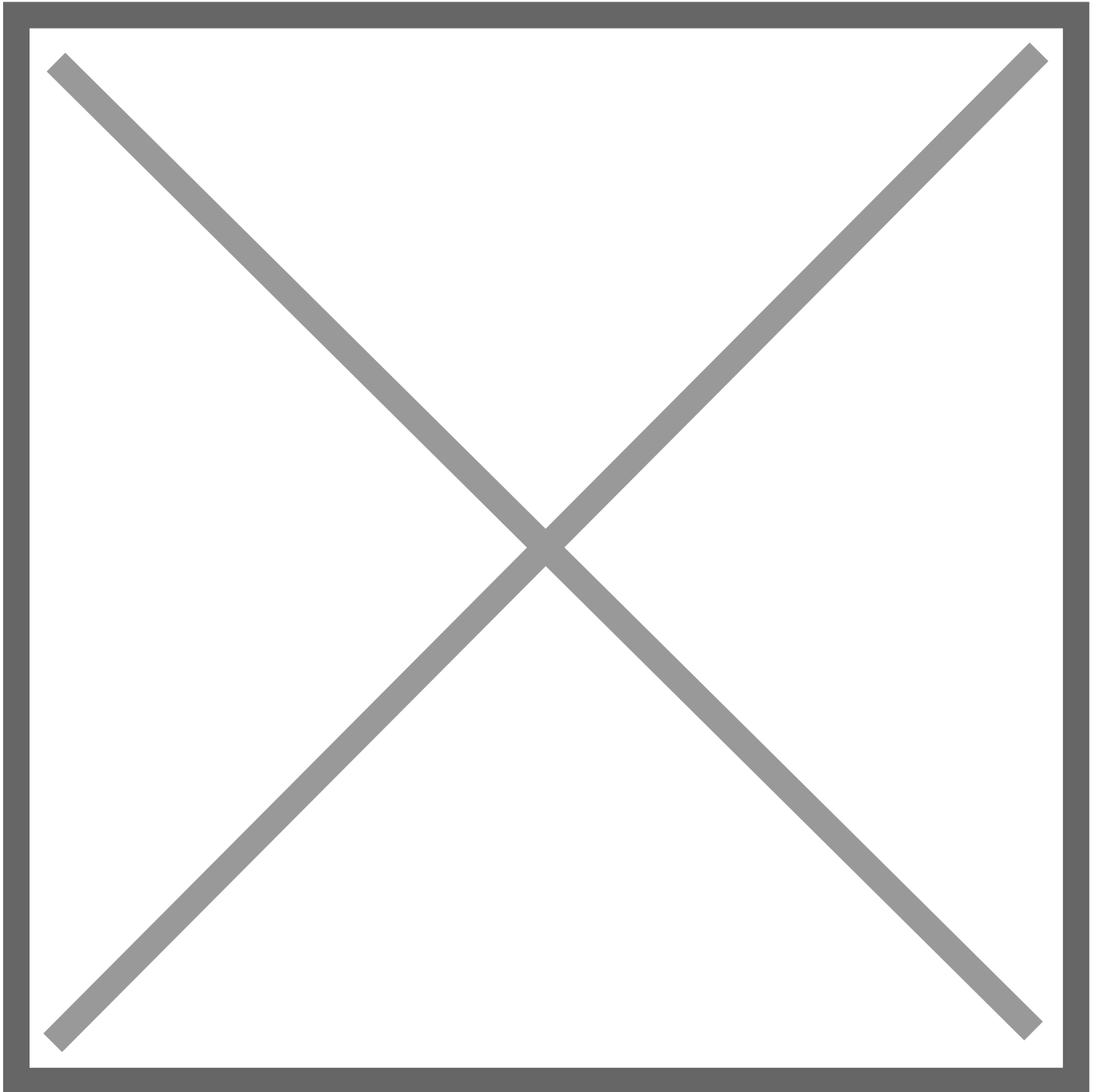
“I think mentorship is absolutely critical, but I think it’s important to distinguish between mentorship and sponsorship. Sponsorship, where someone is putting their brand equity into seeing you succeed, is what’s going to accelerate growth for women leaders. And that sponsorship is earned, through good, old-fashioned hard work and strong performance.

When I look back on my career, there was always someone who took a chance on me. Now that I’m in this role, I feel like it’s my responsibility to pay it forward because so many did for me. Early in my career, I thought it was like this act of benevolence, but now I see the other benefits. When you can elevate and move very talented

people through your organization, it makes your life easier. You get to assemble your dream team.”

Anna Sampang

Group Vice President of Service Operations, Toyota Financial Services

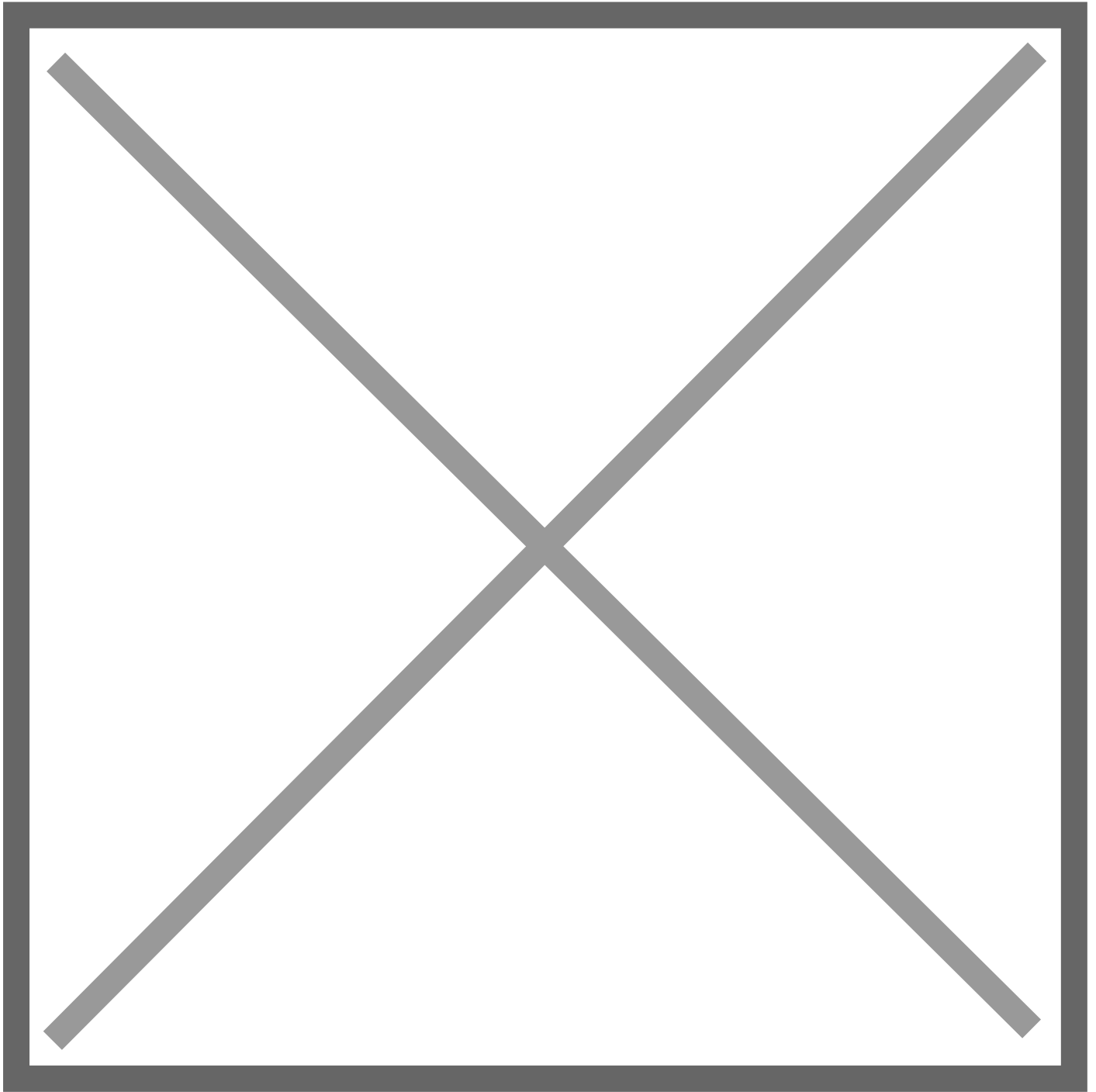


“To make the industry more appealing, we must continue to invest in ways to attract and retain women. Let’s showcase women making a difference in the industry and ensure they are in positions where they are able to shape the future of the products, services and companies they work for.

If we can reach more women at a younger age, we can better educate them on the numerous career paths available to them by highlighting women in different roles. When girls are able to see women in the auto industry, they can better visualize what's possible. It increases their curiosity and interest in maybe one day joining the auto industry."

Tracey Doi

Chief Financial Officer, Toyota Motor North America



“It’s an exciting time to join this disruptive automobility industry. There’s a growing need for creative, strategic thinking and new skills and experiences as the industry transforms. Gender diversity brings different perspectives and leadership styles, contributing to a more engaging and innovative work environment.

Women may have a perception that this is a heavily male-dominated sector with a slower pace of change and limited career advancement. We need to illustrate the impact women are making across the supply chain, from an engineer developing the latest telematics application to a marketing planner sharing her latest campaign, and everything in between.”