

Mythbusters

Debunking Common Assumptions
About Indie Development

Jenna Hoffstein

Women in Games Boston 4.6.15

About me!





Positive



Practical



Positive



Practical

Tonight's talk

~~Universal~~
~~Truth~~

Tonight's talk

MYTH

A journalist's job is to write about the best games.

REALITY

A journalist's job is to write interesting stories for their audience.

The Surgeon Simulator developers made a game about ... math

By [TraceyLien](#) on Sep 10, 2014 at 2:31p

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TOP STORIES

Next wave of amiibo pre-orders starting today at GameStop, Target and others (update)

By [Samit Sarkar](#) on Apr 02, 2015

Dark Souls 2: Scholar of the First Sin makes everything harder; here's proof

By Polygon Staff on Apr 02, 2015

We create some truly stupid decks for Hearthstone's Blackrock Mountain add-on

By Polygon Staff on Apr 02, 2015

One tweak and Diablo 3 suddenly

MYTH

If I hear a lot about a game, it must be making a lot of money.

Variations on this myth:

If a game wins [big award]...

If a game is released by [publisher]...

If a game gets covered by [website or Youtuber or streamer]...

... it must be making a lot of money.

MYTH

This combination of platform and genre are a guaranteed success.

REALITY

There is NO guarantee for success anywhere. There are no silver bullets.

(Check out Mike Rose's GDC talk from this year on indie game sales where he talks figures for each platform.)

Stats for App Store, March 2015:

42,744 new apps
(including 11,116 new games)
-> 1,425 apps per day

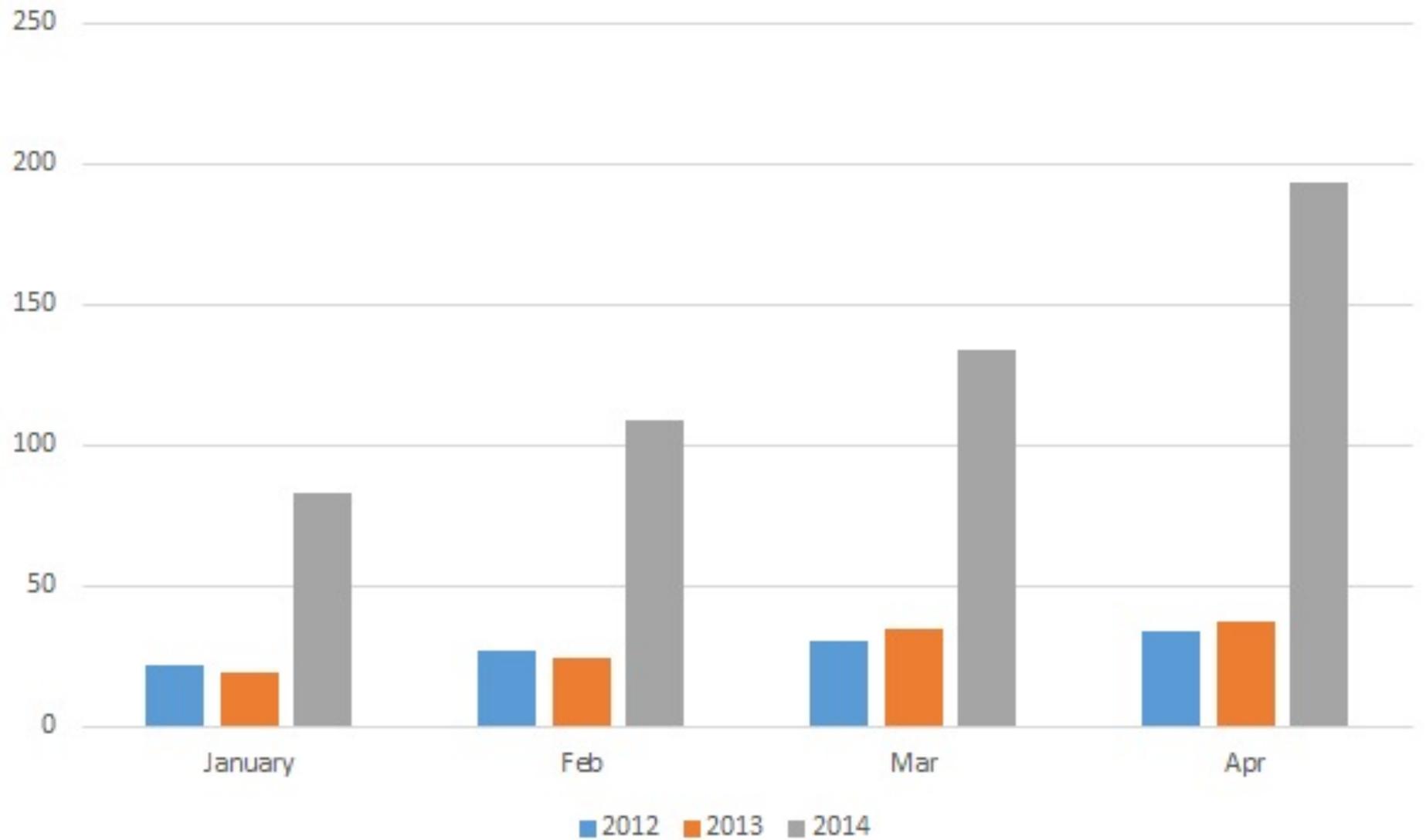
Stats for Steam:

4,500 games total
-> 7 per day

These numbers continue to rise.

of New Releases on Steam

Gamasutra.com



MYTH

Most indies support themselves through sales of their games.

REALITY

Many indies are financially supported by their significant other and/or family, or take on contract work. Some work full-time.

Member Login

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 PROGRAMMING

 ART

 AUDIO

 DESIGN

 PRODUCTION

 BIZ/MARKETING

Let's get real about the financial expectations of 'going indie'



There are many ways to measure the distance between "going indie" and *independent sustainability* in the world of game development.

March 25, 2015 | By Bryant Francis

 13 comments

MYTH

If I make a great game it will be successful.



MYTH

If I make a great game it will be successful.

REALITY

Many things factor into a game's success, and only some of them have to do with the game itself.

What factors into a game's success?

(an incomplete list)

- How many people know about your game?
 - Social media buzz
 - Articles, awards, Youtubers, streamers, etc
 - Platform featuring
- Do those people want to buy your game?
 - Game description, screenshots, reviews
 - Genre, mechanics, polish, innovation
 - Target audience
 - Competing titles
- Will those people buy your game?
 - Price
 - Platform

MYTH

I've never faced harassment for being a woman, so my gender doesn't matter.

REALITY

Women face significant disadvantages for being women.

Gender matters:

- Women who initiate negotiations for higher compensation are penalized
- Women are interrupted more in conversation than men
- Men are retweeted almost twice as much as women
- In performance reviews women are given more critical feedback, as well as feedback on their personality that men don't receive, with descriptors like "bossy", "abrasive" and "emotional"

"Lean Out: The Dangers for Women Who Negotiate" – The New Yorker

"Women Get Interrupted More – Even by Other Women" – New Republic

"One Twitter, Men are Retweeted Far More Than Women (And You're Probably Sexist, Too)" – Social Times

"The abrasiveness trap: High-achieving men and women are described differently in reviews" - Fortune

MYTH

That person is too busy and important to talk to me.

REALITY

People are just people!
Don't put anyone on a pedestal.

EVERYONE POOPS

By Taro Gomi



Kane/Miller
BOOK PUBLISHERS

Practicing what I preach – contact me!

jenna@littleworldsinteractive.com
@jhoffstein

(but really. please reach out!)

MYTH

I'm not qualified to submit a talk proposal.

I'm not qualified to submit my game for an award.

Variation on this myth:

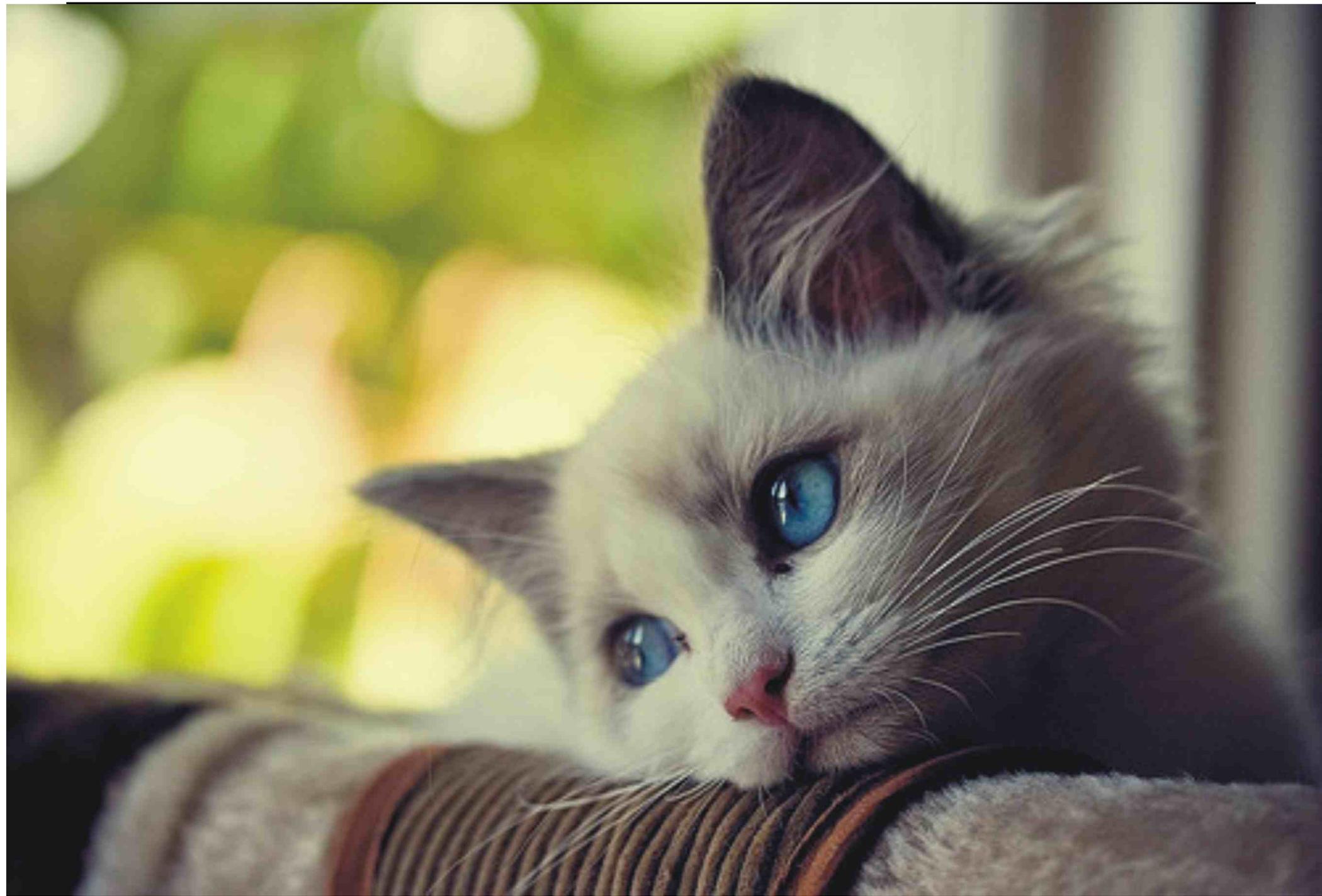
If someone is speaking or won an award, they must know much more than I do or be much better qualified.

Men consistently **overestimate** their abilities and performance

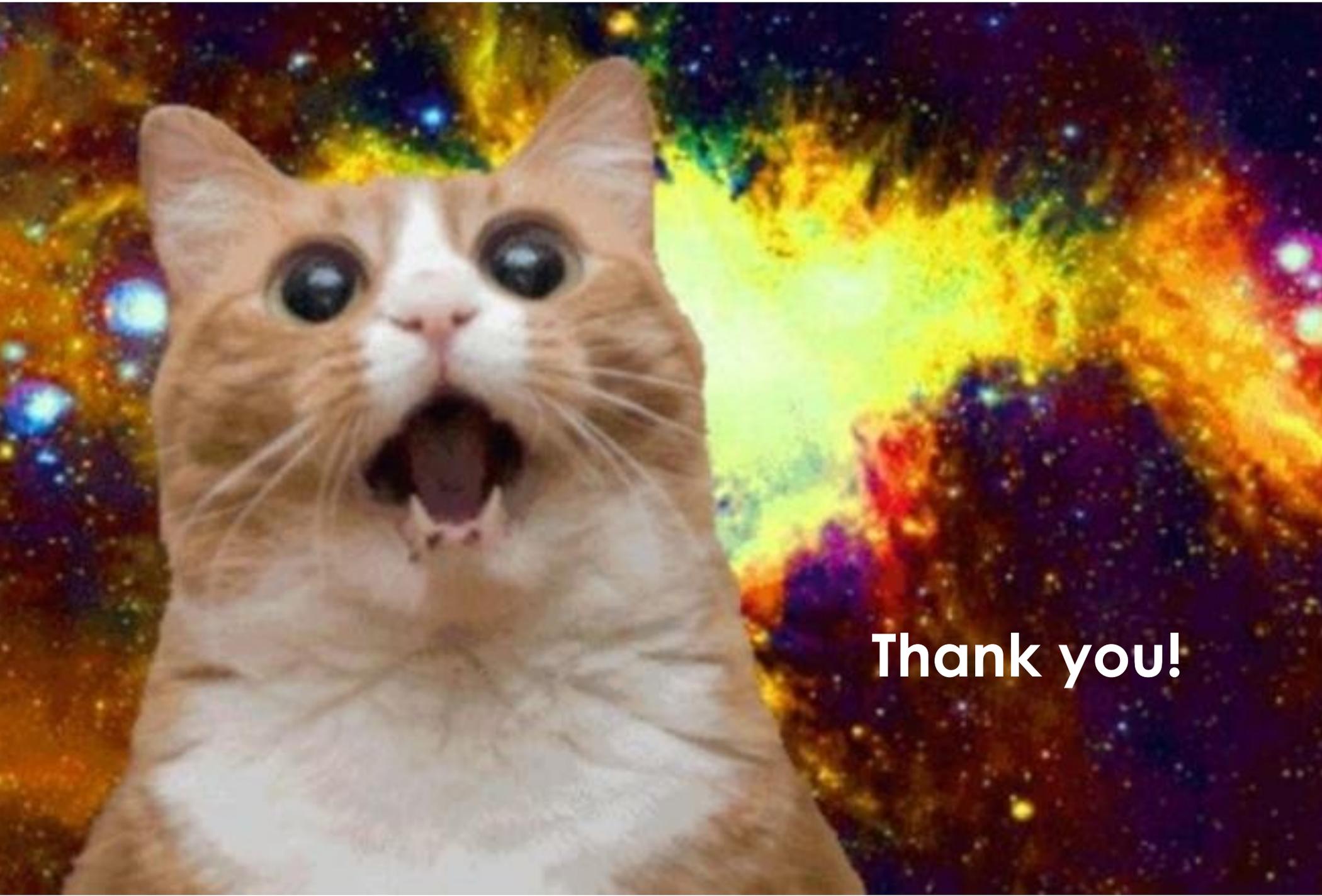
Women consistently **underestimate** their abilities and performance

Don't hold back back because you don't think you're qualified.

The worst they can say is no.







Thank you!