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BIZDIVAS

periodical



*You Are What
You Believe*

C O R E T E A M

Sarika Bhattacharyya, Co-Founder, Biz Divas & Altavis started her entrepreneurial journey in 2011 with more than 14 years of experience in corporate world. Sarika is passionate about economic independence of women and giving them a voice. She has been nominated for prestigious Women Leadership programs including Fortune/US State Dept Mentoring Program Global Ambassadors Program. She has been featured as the Top 50 Indian Women to follow in Twitter by WOW Asia.

Ranjana Deopa, Co-Founder & Board Practice Head, Altavis & Biz Divas, has over 14 years of experience in Office Automation and Private Banking, having worked with firms like Xerox, Max New York Life Insurance, ABN Amro and ICICI Bank. In her last assignment with International Private Banking Group of ICICI Bank she was looking after NRI Business from US, Canada and South East Asian markets.

Priyanka Awasthy, Co-Founder, Altavis & Biz Divas, has over 15 years of experience in Investment Advisory and Relationship management with multinationals like Citibank, Standard Chartered and DSP Blackrock.

Shilpi Singh is an Executive Coach & Hospitality Entrepreneur. She has had 14+ years of HR experience with some of the world's best media companies – Ogilvy & IMG. She has handled PAN India responsibilities and challenging global matrix across multiple industries from luxury to telecom.

Rashmi Mandloi is a Talent and Diversity consultant with a professional career of over 13 years with Deutsche Bank, Convergys, Standard Chartered Bank. She specializes in consulting with organizations that are keen in building 'inclusive work spaces' via customized Attraction, Engagement and Retention strategies.

Dinakshi Arora, after a successful stint with in the IT industry with organizations like IBM, Satyam and Polaris, chose to work for the cause of women leadership. Her experience in project management, in-house training and interaction with clients across continents enabled her to multitask her various responsibilities as Program Manager, Biz Divas. Having moved to new role she is Editor at Biz Divas now.

Garvita Chaturvedi is an Executive Coach and Human Resources Professional with in-depth exposure to a wide swathe of services industries in various HR functional roles in People Strategy, Compensation & Benefits, Performance Management and Content Development across IT/ ITES, Banking, Financial Services and Insurance sectors.

Ela Gupta, Assistant Program Manager, Biz Divas is a Marketing and communications professional who has previously worked with Synergy Consulting and Adfactors PR. She has experience in strategizing media and communications functions of corporates planning to raise funds from conceptualization phase to the implementation phase.

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C O N T E N T

Editorial

Sarika Gupta Bhattacharyya, co-founder Biz Divas talks about what inspired her to be where she is now.

You Are What You Believe

A peep into the lives of some truly inspirational women who don't believe in the concept of impossible.

Biz Divas Journey

Divya Jain takes you through the Biz Divas quarter gone by.

Current Affairs

Taking note of evident changes in how elections work and participation of women in current scenario.

Balanced Leadership

Manu Rikhye, Executive Vice President and Managing Director, India, Encore Capital Group, in a candid chat on why Diversity and Inclusion are the way to go forward.

Personal Effectiveness

How to have a powerful Twitter presence.

Lifestyle

An account of transition of women from shy homemakers to venturesome travellers.

Third Speak

A review of portrayal of woman protagonist in Hindi cinema through the years.

Women Leadership Globally

Donna Orender, CEO Orender Unlimited, talks about women leadership and the value of inspiring.

Winner Circle

Get to know Biz Divas members and their stories of empowerment.

What's Up

A glance at women-centric events and other resources.

Talk To Us

Biz Divas career coaches help you resolve some tricky professional problems.

Diversity Hiring

Biz Divas brings you diversity job openings in association with Monster.

INSPIRATION

Biz Divas stands for inspiring. Inspiration is the magic that does wonder to our sense of purpose and will to achieve what we want to stand for. A good thing about inspiration is that it can come from anywhere. You just need to look around and you will see plenty of evidence of that.

An Economics (Hons.) and M.B.A, I was enjoying my lucrative job as an investment banker in organizations like Merrill Lynch. As a Senior Financial Advisor, I was managing UHNI and Family Office and had clients from all across India and South East Asia. While I was doing all that, I always had a passion for women empowerment that led me to leave my cushy job and work in that space. Well, that, and an incident that left an indelible mark on me.

I was a part of a CSR initiative to impart financial knowledge to people. One day I was surprised to see a well-off client's wife turn up as a participant. I asked her about the reason of her being interested in financial literacy. The client's wife told me that she had been sent by her husband who was terminally ill and had just a couple of months to live. While the woman had a lot of money, her complete lack of knowledge about handling it was a big handicap. The way the woman narrated her story moved me and I figured that it's not just acquiring money that is the problem. Women are more often in the background and not at the helm of things and that needed to be changed.

So after quitting my job, when I started Biz Divas Foundation with friends and co-founders Ranjana Deopa and Priyanka Awasthy, the idea was to let the women know and understand their worth. Also, there is a lot of collective brain pool that goes to waste as there aren't many avenues for women to interact and share their journeys and insights. Biz Divas empowers women with entrepreneurial, financial and professional development skills through educational workshops, mentoring and providing networking opportunities. It has been three years since the inception of group Biz Divas Foundation, a not-for-profit organization, and it is heartening to see it touching so many lives in an inspiring way.



Another good thing about inspiration is that the more you inspire, the more you get inspired!

Here's to inspiring each other!

Sarika Gupta Bhattacharyya

YOU ARE WHAT YOU BELIEVE

DINAKSHI ARORA & KANCHANA BANERJEE

A peep into the lives of some truly inspirational women who don't believe in the concept of impossible.

What is that special something that sets apart achievers from the rest of us? Achievers don't necessarily do extraordinary things; they just do the ordinary in an extraordinary way. They seek inspiration from their struggle. The hurdles in their path become the undefeatable energy that fuels their driving force.

For this issue of Biz Divas Periodical, we spoke with four amazing women - each unique and different from the other, each a visionary by herself, each enormously successful in her respective field. They have battled odds, tackled challenges, they are different from the each other and yet so similar in spirit.

Each of them is a true Biz Diva, they have chartered their own paths, marched to the beat of the drum that they played in their minds and are true inspiration for everyone, not just women.

Preeti overcome a physical disability. Anjum played the gentleman's game and showed that it could very well be a lady's game! Anita took garbage off the streets and made it into a fashion accessory worthy of being slung on the arm of a diva and a fashionista. And Apurva showed the world that to reach the highest rung of career - Lady! You don't

need to be a man.

So disability is not a bar, preset gender notions are not a bar, area of work is not a bar, the so-called glass ceiling is not a bar. **Our question to ourselves now is - what is a bar, really?**

PREETI MONGA

Started out as an Aerobic instructor, went onto teaching English, typing and computers to visually impaired children along with counseling their distressed parents, then selling pickles freelance, Preeti didn't have it easy owing to the fact that she was visually impaired and lacked formal qualifications. Not a person to be defeated by harshness of life though, she won the job of marketing and sales manager at the pickle company in spite of their initial hesitation, along with working as freelance journalist and a health and fitness consultant.

Always the one who spoke from the heart, she offered emotional and trauma counseling services and delivered talks and lectures, which to date have the effect of moving audience to tears as well as charging them up to be bold and stand for themselves!



Preeti Monga, Director, Silver Linings Synergies Pvt Ltd

travel & CSR advisory business and her NGO since 2010, in addition to offering consultation to overseas companies for establishing their operations in India by providing them with Admin, HR, PR, Marketing, Accounting and Sales support, Preeti Monga is a woman in whose lexicon the word impossible doesn't exist.

Dealing with challenges all along and crushing them with her unwavering grit (who could think of training or having a blind Aerobics instructor??), Preeti developed her expertise in figuring out ways, no matter what - be it managing to commute to and from classes with no mobility skills or running her fitness center successfully without any money at all or taking care of two small children or keeping afloat in a bad marriage or walking out of it eventually. (She is married again

Raising awareness about the capability of people with disabilities at various forums led to her career as a corporate trainer. She freelanced as a personality and personal development coach for girls and women with visual impairment; along with providing them with all round mainstreaming skill trainings. She also worked as Public Relations and Fund Raising Head with an organization and then worked with Dr. Shroff's Charity Eye Hospital as PR Head and Trauma Counselor, taking care of their patient satisfaction, patient care, soft skill trainings as well as marketing for ten years.

While continuing all her freelance work, she registered her own NGO called Silver Linings Trust. She wrote a number of books, including her autobiography 'The Other Senses'.

Now running her own recruitment, training,

and happily now!)

All this while keeping her sense of humor intact, even better, with each passing day! If you don't believe us, you must listen to her talk. That you must anyways, as she is one of those gifted motivational speakers whose words weave magic and have the knack of seeping deep into your soul.

What keeps her going: The burning desire to

“ Most of us don't recognize or believe in our own potential. And it is easier to lay around and lament about what is wrong than to get up and take life head-on despite all the unknown challenges waiting in the path to success!”

live with dignity along with helping others to do the same!

Preeti Monga is the Founder Director of Silver Linings Synergies and the Silver Linings Trust, an organization which offers a host of services to corporations and people at large. Her list of awards and achievements runs into a couple of pages. She has received the 'Red and White Bravery' award, the 'Rajeev Gandhi Manav Seva' award and the IIPM 'Indomitable Spirit of Survival' award, 'National Award for the Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities - 2013' under the category 'Best Employees/Self Employed with Disabilities' from the President of India, to name a few.

APURVA PUROHIT

After graduating from IIM Bangalore, Apurva made her foray into the world of advertising and brand building with a lot of enthusiasm. The idea of working on multiple brands, understanding consumer psychology behind purchase decisions and using creativity as a tool to influence those decisions fascinated her. Having enjoyed working on brands such as Colgate, Palmolive, Santoor, Dupont, Eveready, the Congress campaign, Taj hotels and the Aditya Birla Group for the next few years, she set up Lodestar as the first ever media independent agency in the country in 1995. In 2001 she moved as President of Zee TV and then to Times of India to set up their television channels. It was an exciting time to be in the business of media and then

“ Only the woman makes the choice of being the heroine, the victim or the bystander of her story . No one else can make that choice for her!”

IVFA , a PE firm bought Radio City and asked her to come there as CEO. It was a quasi-entrepreneurial role as well as a time of a quantum leap ahead for the FM industry and a scaling up period for the organization. She has been with MBPL for the last 9 years now.



Apurva Purohit, CEO, MBPL (RadioCity 91.1)

Not that she didn't have to face all the typical challenges that any woman faces - getting torn between professional and personal responsibilities especially when one becomes a mother, being in the dilemma of having to change jobs because the husband got transferred, living with a the constant guilt that accompanies women, the only difference is that she didn't let anything be a deterrent to pursue her professional ambitions.

Far from that, she analyzed those factors with keen and sharp wit and worked around them, even making those her allies, coming out with a

book in the process! Her book “Lady, You’re not a Man” is a motivational as well humorous take on the adventures of women at work which is a must read for all professional women.

She believes that her mission in life is to become the best version of herself and also to make a difference wherever she is. Not really a believer of role models, she feels that we have to search within ourselves to become better people. Doing enough introspection spending quiet time with oneself is essential. Career and family is not an either-or situation and even managing both is quite manageable, once you are sure of your dreams, she asserts!

“In fact, once a woman accepts that she

doesn’t really have a choice - she needs to work and have a happy family life too, she will herself work out solutions to the impediments surrounding her. Not giving up is what distinguishes the champion from the also-ran,” Apurva muses.

Apurva Purohit is CEO, MBPL (RadioCity91.1). She, over the past 9 years, has led the organization through a cycle of ‘Build-Grow-Consolidate’. Apurva has worked on all aspects of the business from formulating the entry strategy into new markets, bidding for new licenses, setting up infrastructure in 20 cities. An alumna of IIM Bangalore, she has spent over 24 years in advertising and media. She has been voted among the top 50 women in business and among the top 10 women in the media industry.

ANJUM CHOPRA

She’s a lady who plays the gentleman’s game. And doesn’t make a big deal out of it. When asked if she faced any challenges, she looks surprised.

Anjum Chopra has been one of India’s premier batswomen for a while now. Batting left handed she has forced journalists to overuse the phrase ‘lazy elegance’. Playing predominantly through the ‘V’, Chopra does not hesitate to come down the wicket to the spinners. Usually a slow starter, Chopra is all about timing and hardly ever tries to tonk the ball. Equally comfortable on the off and on side, Chopra can bat anywhere at the top of the order.

Anjum was recently honoured with the Padma Shri award in April, 2014. Dedicating the award to country’s women cricketers, she said that being conferred with India’s fourth highest civilian

award was very ‘humbling and encouraging’. It is an award for the all the years of hard work put in and an encouragement to do better work and bring more laurels to the nation.

One of the country’s most successful women cricketers, she has played 12 Tests, 127 ODIs and 18 T20s in a career spanning 17 years. She is the eighth-highest run-getter in women’s ODIs, and has featured in six World Cups, four 50-over World Cups, including the 2005 edition in South Africa, where India reached the final, and two T20 world cups. Anjum also captained India to a test series win in South Africa in 2002 and in England in 2006.

Anjum Chopra is a fearless left-hander who was influential in some of India’s most memorable victories. Born in a family of sportspersons, it isn’t surprising to see why Anjum veered towards sports. She is also a state level basketball player and

represented her college in inter college swimming championship as well.

But that is not all about Anjum!

- She is the first Indian player to score a One Day International century, a feat achieved in England in 1999. She is also the first player to appear in 100 ODI’s for India.

- She has an MBA degree and a corporate job. A student of St. Stephen’s College, Delhi, Anjum did her masters with dual specialization – Human Resource & Marketing.

- An Arjuna Award recipient in 2007, Anjum has co-authored world’s first coffee table book on history of Women’s Cricket titled ‘Women’s Cricket World - A Journey from 1745- 2013’.

- She has also acted in a docudrama ‘Poor Cousins of Million Dollar Babies’ that received national acclaim at the Arnold Sports Film Festival in Ohio, 2011. It talks about disparities between men’s and women’s cricket.

- The first cricketer who has received an international appointment in the world of women’s cricket, she was appointed as a Technical Consultant to South Africa women’s team. Her expertise initiated South African women’s team to be placed top five in world cup ending Feb 2013, resulting in their automatic qualification to the next World Cup that will be held in 2017. Previously they



Anjum Chopra, Woman Cricketer

were placed 9th and had to qualify for the World Cup held in India in 2013.

- She was appointed as a ‘Goodwill Ambassador’ to promote the cause of women on foreign soil at international men’s cricket match between South Africa and Pakistan which was being played for ‘Breast Cancer Awareness Day’ for women. Championing the cause of women, Anjum, was invited as the global ambassador in South Africa, where she also spoke about the cause on national television and their sports channel.

Anjum Chopra is a player, captain, consultant, motivational speaker, author and actor. Anjum is also a commentator/subject expert with Doordarshan and other leading news and sports channels. As a sports caster she represents women’s cricket on television analyzing the game from a players perspective.

“ I don’t believe that anything can hold you back, if you want to make it happen.”

ANITA AHUJA

Creativity really knows no boundaries and Anita Ahuja is an example of that. She took the waste garbage and converted that into a fashion accessory! All one really needs is the burning desire to do something and make a difference.

Anita Ahuja, internationally acclaimed artist and award winning designer and writer is the power behind the social enterprise Conserve India. Born out of a desire to reduce India's mountain of waste, improve energy efficiency, and help some of Delhi's poorest out of the city's slums, Conserve India has made a successful venture by turning plastic bags into high fashion.

Conserve India has grown from a small seed of a local experimental project into a huge tree of life providing shade to 300 people.

Anita says, "Instead of just recycling garbage, we thought of upcycling by washing, drying, and pressing the bags into sheets. Handmade Recycled



Anita Ahuja, Creative Director,
Conserve India & Conserve HRP

Plastic (HRP) was born and designs for handbags, wallets, shoes and belts quickly came flooding in."

“ Invest in yourself to build your physical and mental muscle. Be the queen of your life. Balance will automatically come. A natural road will be formed for the fulfillment of your dreams.”

The project changed the lives of so many people. Today, Conserve India employs and trains hundreds of people from Delhi's most disadvantaged communities to clear their streets of the plague of plastic bag waste. Once the waste bags are turned into HRP products they are sold for profits which are then spent in the same communities on education and welfare programmes. As a natural progression with inspiration from her experience of working with rag pickers, Anita explored the combination of art and science and made the concept of "waste as an art" possible.

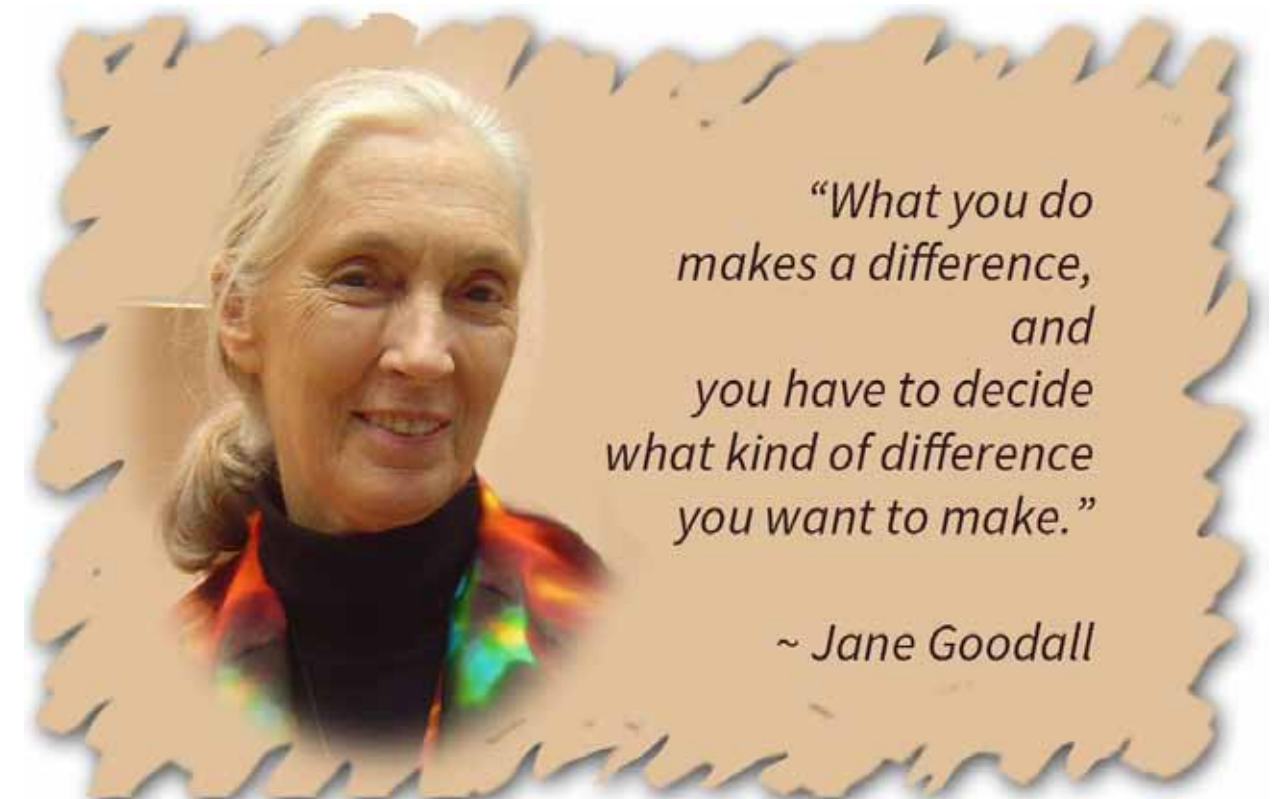
Anita has many accolades to her name for her amazing work. Ashoka Fellow, Bill Clinton – Letter of Commendation, Women Empowerment Award by Delhi Chief Minister are few of the many awards that sit on her mantelpiece.

An urban lady, who like most of us, lives in the concrete jungle, Anita has put her creative genius into finding an artistic solution to garbage. Conserve bags are today sold all around the world as fashion accessories. Her endeavor is testimony to the fact that a brilliant idea can be born out of anything, even garbage.

Inspired by several designers and artists with whom she shared professional canvas, Anita knows that following and building dreams need time and effort. Equipped with enthusiasm to make the world a better place to live, Anita isn't one who lets challenges stand a chance!

Anita Ahuja, Creative Director, Conserve India & Conserve HRP, is an internationally

acclaimed artist and award winning social entrepreneur. Conserve India has a unique human capital structure of rag-pickers being both suppliers and employees. The concept of uniqueness is also extended to the products by utilizing waste material like plastic, tyre tubes, labels, seat belts to create fashion accessories like hand bags.



“What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make.”

~ Jane Goodall

BIZ DIVAS

MOVING FORWARD IS THE ONLY WAY

Divya J Jain

An anonymous quote I read goes this way – “Purpose is the reason you journey. Passion is the fire that lights your way.” To me this aptly describes the Biz Divas journey in its third year of existence, expanding, innovating and in all ways giving more and more to its purpose of connecting professional women to advance them both personally and professionally; while being tremendously motivated by their passionate belief in the power of women and how they can inspire change in our society.

While a lot more goes on behind the scenes, more than most of us can ever imagine, the last few months has seen the Biz Divas team host some visible and extremely relevant events to further their purpose, where women like you and me benefit tangibly by meeting new people, hearing their perspectives, growing our networks and even learning tricks of the trade. Even more powerful is



the way these events benefit us in a not so tangible way by growing our confidence, answering some un-asked questions, inspiring and empowering us to walk faster and ahead in our own journeys. I had the privilege of being a part of some of them and here is my take on them.

I-Inspire 2014 held on 4th April 2014

In its second year, I-Inspire 2014 was even bigger and better than the first one held in 2013. The Biz Divas team outdid themselves in creating an event which saw 200 women participate, listening to more than 40 eminent speakers and thought leaders from varied backgrounds and organizations share their thoughts, practices and success stories.

The daylong event held at Crowne Plaza Gurgaon sponsored by Barclays, Monster, Encore Capital Group, Ernst & Young and Jacob's Creek saw the speakers and participants journey through many relevant topics including “One Woman in Every Boardroom”, Mentoring, Reinventing Oneself, Unconscious Bias at Workplace, Power of People & Partnerships, Future Leaders in Futuristic Workplaces, Lessons in Leadership and several more. The speakers' approach was direct, their opinions were candid, the experiences real and the messages invaluable. The format for the day was



varied and a mix of panel discussions, workshops and break-away sessions kept the day fluid. The live opinion polling and day long capture of audience perspective through sound bites gave it a tech savvy feel.

While the topics, speakers, setting and format notched up the event into the cadre of some of the best professionally managed conferences, there were enough and many aspects to the agenda and planning which kept the personal, thoughtful and engaging style of a typical Biz Divas event alive. The wish tree was loaded with wishes and notes from the participants. The innovative networking lunch and pushed the women out of their comfort zones and encouraged many engaging interactions between women who had just met, just because their lunch plates had the same number tag! A quick group jig on a lively number helped the group shed the post lunch lethargy in 2 minutes. The session

involving interactive theatre literally had the entire audience jump into the act and participate through questions and insights! The thoughtful lobby layout allowed some of the women entrepreneurs to showcase their products and gave the participants an opportunity to shop too!

All this nicely culminated into a post event networking reception allowed the participants, speakers and sponsors interact over glasses of pink champagne and tasteful snacks. I-Inspire 2014 was nothing short of a huge success, meeting its purpose in every which way!

Power Networking Meet in Gurgaon held on 8th May 2014

A group of 50 enthusiastic Biz Divas members and non members converged at Ramada Central, Gurgaon, one not-so-hot May evening for a quick

networking session. Kicked off in the most logically relevant way by a brief talk on the whys & hows of networking, the event brought together a commonly motivated group of women who were eager to progress on the journey of creating their own powerful networks. Entrepreneurs, corporate professionals represented in almost equal numbers saw the group mingle effectively, create new connections and lay the ground for future alliances. It wasn't all as serious as this sounds, with lots of warmth and laughter doing the rounds! Everyone walked away with not only a bunch of visiting cards, but new acquaintances and some more miles covered in their own networking journeys.

Webinar on Business Planning held on 13th May 2014

The first in the series of 5 webinars planned in partnership with The South Asian Women's Entrepreneurship Network (SAWES), the webinar is

an evidence of the Biz Divas team's constant focus on being relevant and innovative. This session dealt with the all important topic of having a business plan. Touching important elements like writing an Ideal Business Statement, Creating a Marketing Message, Developing Strategy and Defining Key Goals, this session provided the right professional tool sets for budding women entrepreneur to start off their ventures.

Networking Event in Bangalore held on 7th June 2014

Biz Divas launched its Bangalore chapter in March and before they could ask members for a meet-up, the members wanted one! They shared enthusiasm and the responsibilities as well. One of the divas offered to enrich the group with her expertise on a subject of universal importance – Personal Branding. Another one was busy capturing the moments on her SLR and was quick to share



the candid shots with Biz Divas. The Saturday morning came and went with an efficient energy shot, focused tips on personal branding, sharing of insightful experiences and ending with some great networking that Biz Divas stands for.

Theatre Speak and Powerful Monologues on Gender Sensitization "Zubaan" in Mumbai held on 20th June 2014

It featured Tom Alter, multifaceted actor, sports writer and novelist, recipient of the Padma Shri Award for his distinguished contribution in the field of art. A legendary name in theatre and cinema, Tom Alter brought valuable insights and fresh perspective through performance led interaction with the audience at the event.

The keynote speaker was Mrs. Urvashi Saxena, Income Tax Commissioner and the theme was

- To address gender diversity and social

biases powerfully through the magic of theatre and entertainment.

- To sensitize audiences on gender balanced perspective and build fresh mind maps through interactive insights with leading experts.
- To celebrate the success of women achievers in business and industry.
- To encourage women break barriers, stereotypes and be inspired to achieve leadership success.

The event was organized by Inner Katha Interventions in association with Biz Divas.



ANOTHER PROUD FEATHER IN BIZDIVAS CAP!



It feels great to be appreciated for sincere efforts and working with a passion. The motivation reaches another level when the pat on the back comes from inspirational women like **Hillary Clinton**, former United States Secretary of State, **U.S. Senator & First Lady of the United States**, **Anne Finucane**, Global Chief Strategy and Marketing Officer, Bank of America and **Alyse Nelson**, CEO Vital Voices. It is a proud moment for us at Biz Divas to share that **Sarika Gupta Bhattacharyya**, co-founder Biz Divas was honored with the first annual **Leadership in Mentoring Award** by **Vital Voices & Bank of America** in June 2014.

A true believer and promoter of gender diversity and related business issues, Sarika is a strong advocate for gender targets within organizations to bring a more balanced perspective to discussions and decision making. The recognition took place at the British Ambassador's residence in Washington, D.C., with attendees from



Sarika Gupta Bhattacharyya, co-founder Biz Divas and Anne Finucane, Global Chief Strategy and Marketing Officer, Bank of America

the business, government and nonprofit sectors.

The award is meant to shine a spotlight on an extraordinary woman who has used her own leadership journey to pay it forward, invest in the next generation and paving the way for transformational and sustainable change.

WOMEN ON BOARDS A VISION AND A MISSION FOR BIZ DIVAS

What is this fuss about Women on Boards? Everyone is talking about the same, and everyone seems to be having a view. When the new company act got notified this April that mandated one woman on each board, it was time for some serious thinking! Coupled with the fact that the deadline for implementation is as early as 1st October 2014, there is an urgent need to understand the act from a policy, process and implementation perspective. Biz Divas believes in building a voice on policy, legislation and advocacy as opposed to being mute spectators. We had to chip in to support the landmark act, which is considered to be a tipping point in India Inc's history.

India's leading law firm Khaitan & Co, expert in the area of Company Law, found a synergy with our thoughts and partnered with Biz Divas to come up with a document for corporate India which would make the implementation easier. Under the

umbrella of Biz Divas Corporate Networking Group, we then reached out to some of our member organizations for support to this initiative. **Barclays**, **Capgemini** and **Honeywell** believed in this journey and partnered with us on the way. Our **Strategic Partner Monster** and our **Knowledge Partner Ernst & Young** helped us in giving direction to our plan.

India being a diverse country with different cultures and approaches, it was but necessary to understand views from pan India. **Rashmi Mandloi**, **Diversity Lead Biz Divas** and **Kalpana Unadkat**, **Partner Khaitan & Co** decided to travel to 8 locations across India to discuss and debate this over a series of Roundtable Discussions. The summary findings along with perspective on the implementation of the law will be put together into a research report by them.

The business case for this is apparent. India currently has 1472 Public listed companies out of

“ Although there is a difference across cities in India in the value that women bring to boards, there is consensus that women have a positive impact on boards”.
Kalpana Unadkat, Partner, Khaitan & Co



WE HAVE COME A LONG WAY... AND THERE ARE MILES TO GO!

KIRAN CHATURVEDI

I can clearly recall almost all the elections of my childhood when politics was a dirty word and the squeaky clean middle class steered clear of it, when slogans and promises of politicians were mocked with distant disdain, when voting was not something “our kind” actually got their fingers into, when, though for years the longest serving Prime Minister of the country was a woman, women hardly ever talked politics, that clearly being the topic for the men’s conversations.

Cut to the present, and I can recount names of educated, professional women who are joining gala fund raiser dinners, for the party of their choice. A colleague hosted a political candidate at her home for a teatime debate. Many of my friends, quite a number of women in them, actively volunteered at polling booths on Election Day, having spent days campaigning for their party, even traveling to other cities for the same .

So is politics changing, or are we? What is the shift really about, and what does it portend?

As polling ended, the 2014 elections for our 16th Lok Sabha recorded the highest ever turnout with 66.38 per cent voters participation, beating the previous high of 64.01 per cent in the 1984-85

elections. Significantly, 16 of the total 35 states and UTs recorded a higher women voter turnout than men. While national data records show an increase in women voters from 40% of overall voting population in 1950s to 60% in 1990s, this has gone up further this time. It is a happy statistic that a 16.68 percent gender gap in turnout in 1962 was less than 8 percent in 1998. Another decade and now it is narrowing further.

Clearly, the eligible woman voter had decided to come out of the purdah and actually get herself inked. There is evidently a more transparent and cleaner system of voting. There is less and less of booth capturing, physical intimidation and violence related to election time. It is, simply put, safer now than ever for women to vote. But it is not just about safety. It is also about coming to see oneself as having a say, and being an ‘agent of change’.

Interestingly, the first General Elections in 1951 had many women voters struck off rolls as they would not give their own name, but had registered as “Pappu ki amma” or “Dinoo ki ghar wali” ! The nation’s first election commissioner would have none of this, and in the next elections, all those and many more women registered with their ‘real’ names!!!

“ In West India, there were unique ideas on approaching this law, whereas in the South, there was a demand for a process and framework to fulfill it. The East wanted to get on to implementing with a wait-and-watch attitude, whereas the North was keen on involving various other government bodies to make the implementation successful.”

Rashmi Mandloi, Diversity Lead, Altavis & Biz Divas



which there are 8990 directors. Women directors is 350 of that list which accounts for just about 4% of the list. According to the All India Management Association, Indian companies require 966 women directors to meet the requirements of the new law. Only one in 8 management roles and 1 in 20 executive roles are held by women in India, says a study by IIM Bangalore.

Diversity of views and woman perspective is a virtue on the board and is a welcome change was mentioned by most of the men across the Round tables.

The act has grey areas and foremost among it is the comparison of the provisions of woman director and independent directors on the boards of companies. It is not clear if the woman director is also required to be an independent director. Neither are her qualifications and the question whether she

can be part of the promoter group. Apart from that, various liabilities associated with an Independent director on board of companies do not make it easy to strategize for most of the company boards that are debating on filling the positions.

Cofounder and Board Practice Head Biz Divas & Altavis, Ranjana Deopa feels, “Organizations clearly need to look at a larger talent pool and sometimes at skill sets very different from standard so as to add innovative thinking and perspectives to the boards.”

To summarize, getting women on boards is not an end to the task but a means and tool for organizations to approach different perspectives which otherwise have been very non inclusive traditionally. It’s the start of a wave and a differential approach, and in time we will see its results!

“ While I do feel that there is no dearth of women talent for board positions, organizations need to look beyond those 80-100 regular names. Even if having one woman on board is an act of tokenism, the new act will be a game changer and is very forward looking. If implemented well, India’s example will be spoken of on the same lines as Norway’s in the future.

Ranjana Deopa, Co-Founder & Board Practice Head, Altavis & Biz Divas



So the rural woman was way ahead in getting herself on the voter list and to the polling booth, even if it was under family pressure and as per community trends of voting. In the last few years urban woman voter is catching up.

Just because more urban women voted now, will there be more woman focus in policies? In societal power structures? The urban woman votes as “herself”, more than a rural woman does. The number of families with the husband and wife voting differently is clearly an urban trend, as per my limited dip stick surveys during this election.

But in sheer numeric terms, the numbers of this class are too small to matter. On the other hand, this is a class of woman who are vocal, with powerful media access. They have clout as aspirational role models. They have something magical with them. And if they will own up to it, and live out its potential, we can dream of things so far unimagined for ourselves, our nation and its future destiny. And that magical thing, that powerful stardust is the potential of leadership.

It is my belief that this new class of urban, educated, women voters can take leadership, because of their education, upbringing, exposure, skills and access to resources. They are eminently suitable to be the leaders and the beacons for many more. They can inspire, to take more and more people along on the journey to a greater destiny. They can lead a change in the quality and content and diversity of the political debate. With diversity of thought, experience and perspectives engaging in the process, issues of development can be viewed more holistically.

Sociologist Dipankar Gupta says about the

current voter trends, “Turnout goes up whenever there is a crisis or tension.” The urban woman’s connect with her dissatisfaction and her desire to act and to create change is showing in increased voting. However, he cautions, “We are undergoing a period of tension with growing resentment against corruption and concern for the economy. This turnout is seeking change. Ironically, the only change these voters can bring about is that of political leadership and not of policies.”

Clearly, even beyond greater voter turnout among woman, a change of policies is the real game changer we need. And that does not come by only greater voting, it comes from political candidates who put forth such a roadmap for their policies if elected to power. There remain only 58 women MPs in the Lok Sabha – a more than 100 percent jump from the mere 5 percent representation in 1952, yet far below the global (22 percent) or even the Asian (18.5 percent) average. Clearly we need more woman candidates and more women elected. In “The Ethics of Voting”, political scientist Jason Brennan argued that unless citizens put in the hard work to become informed and upright voters, it’s better if they don’t pollute the polls with their spurious votes. I would add to it, that unless informed and engaged voters stand to get elected, we will be governed by spurious policies.

So let us we, women, more and more of us, engage in the political process. Let’s not hand over leadership. Let ours be truly empowered leadership that inspires change, by example. Let it not be protest vote, a voice of frustration. Let it be a movement of engagement that aims for a change in policies, and change in the vision of a shared future.

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

MUCH MORE THAN THE RIGHT THING TO DO

Manu Rikhye, Executive Vice President and Managing Director, India, Encore Capital Group, grew the Indian team tenfold from 200 to 2000 employees and his staff now supports the company’s global operational, analytic, and IT needs. Under his leadership, Encore India has been recognized among the Top 50 Companies to Work in India by the Great Place to Work Institute, for three successive years now.

In conversation with Dinakshi Arora

Diversity & Inclusion – we need it

Diversity in the workplace is absolutely crucial in today’s world for an enhanced ability to reach strategic goals and create better organizational outcomes. Else, there is a risk of looking at the world through the lens of limited perspective that robs us of alternate views. Diversity and inclusion are essential at all levels, aspects and quadrants of leadership.

It’s the right thing to do and how!

While having diversity and inclusion within an organization is the right thing to do morally, there is a business imperative associated with it as well. In fact, “right thing to do” in itself is the business imperative. Customers, investors and other stakeholders are increasingly giving more weightage to organizations implementing right processes. Doing the right thing is becoming more relevant than ever, especially in business. There is enough evidence to indicate that women in senior



women leadership roles, board room levels or CXO positions give stellar results. Research indicates that having three or more women in the board room enables companies to produce almost 50% more ROE.

Encore on its way to real diversity and inclusion

Focusing on outcomes such as diversity numbers or growth rates of diverse talent is a great way to evaluate the progress the organization has made. However, at Encore, what we want to bring is real change. First and foremost, the focus needs to lie on creating a culture that is sensitive to the cause of diversity and is focused on inclusion. Only a complete understanding of what inclusion means can make the initiative successful. While it is easy to state that 20% of our future leaders be women, what we need to discern is whether these 20% women leaders will be successful?

Be sure of the reason and let everyone know

We have to understand what Inclusion really means. If you want to launch a program that is focused on diverse talent, you first have to connect with each and every member of your organization and help them understand the need. You need to help them be a part of the solution and not be a part of the problem. Only when they are your co-partners in implementation of that program, will your program succeed on a variety of metrics. In the context of gender diversity and inclusion, if every man wants to make women working at Encore successful, it is going to be a lot more helpful than anything Encore as an organization can do to make women successful.

Sensitization programs help

At Encore, early in our Inclusion journey, we took the significant and radical step of showcasing the importance of inclusivity at the workplace. This was done with detailed diagnostics and research including employee focus groups and leadership interviews. Our diversity partners *Altavis* along with *Steps Drama* presented these insights to all our employees through interactive theatre based workshops. Though nothing has 100% conversion rate but approaching the subject through different mediums enables you to reach out to different audiences. Some would understand data, so you need to make data available to them so that they get the magnitude of the problem. Some would understand through emotional connect. These workshops helped employees attain the “aha!” moment, that no amount of class room training or campaigning would have achieved.

Top leadership commitment is an absolute must for D&I agenda

The culture of an organization is a function of the CEO or leadership. A leader’s shortcomings and strengths manifest as shortcomings and strengths of the organization. More than anybody else, the leader needs to be connected with the value of inclusion.

Success at D&I means enabling choices

Success at diversity & inclusion means giving our employees, both men and women, the power of

choice at Encore. Whether they want to have better work life balance, or to be more ambitious in their careers or to take a back seat, we need to be able to provide employees with these choices and options in their careers. We are continually focused on enhancing our policy framework to create enabling and progressive policies and inclusive, flexible benefit programs.

A leader is a leader and leadership skills are the same

Leadership expectations don’t change whether it’s a man, a woman or a person from some religion or caste or creed because leadership in essence is about serving others. Leadership is not about chasing positions and titles; it is about an individual’s ability to inspire others.

Strangely as we have taken D&I as a global initiative, we have realized that things abroad are not much different. The same themes and fears play out everywhere, their degrees may vary according to geographies and awareness levels, fundamental biases still remain. The laws or regulations just scratch the surface of the problem. Till you fully embrace what Inclusion means, it is unlikely to bring about any real change.

Message to women aspiring to be leaders or being a part of harmonious culture

The limit of your potential is set by you. If one feels discriminated, each one of us has the power within us to step up to create an inclusive environment. If the majority isn’t including, can you walk up to them and share your story? By sharing your story you have included them. The burden doesn’t necessarily rest on the rest of the world. You can take charge and create a better environment for yourself and everyone else.

D&I future for Encore and India

Fortunately, there is a growing sensitization and awareness of the need for inclusion in the corporate world. It is emerging from business needs and there will be companies that will create real inclusive culture and become beacons of change. As companies embrace this concept and witness better results, they will be inspired to invest more in it, transforming it into a virtuous cycle that keeps perpetuating itself. Hopefully organizations will also help see the impact of that in the society.

Platforms like Biz Divas have an important part to play

Biz Divas is a great initiative and it helps put into perspective that change cannot be superficial. Biz Divas as a forum is very well positioned to energize and become the catalyst to change and create an ecosystem that will sustain the change.

5 STEPS TO POWERFUL TWITTER PRESENCE

SUNITA BIDDU

Twitter! It's the rage. It's everywhere today. At the same time, let's accept the fact that it is one of the most daunting social networks around. But wait a minute! We users are smarter. Let me share 5 steps to get started and build a powerful twitter presence investing only a few minutes every day. I personally spend only 15 minutes a day and yet enjoying great reputation and revenue out of it.

1. Begin with Designing your Profile

The first connect starts with that awesome profile picture and an impressive two-liner bio that grabs attention. Get a happy headshot for the display photo and use this formula for drafting a professional bio. Keep it short and hot:

"What you do + What makes you different + Your hobbies + How you're ready to help"

After multiple updates over the years, twitter has recently introduced headers to play around and represent what you do using great visuals. Try twitterheaders.co. It's a quick free tool to get some cool header visuals until you decide and design a custom header.

2. Use the Right Hashtags

Whether you're a beginner at twitter or someone who is already been there for a while, the right use of hashtags can change your twitter experience completely. Search with your industry focus keywords (without space) and join the conversations.



Be the first to respond on posts if possible. You'll get noticed faster.

For example, if you're a health coach, you may want to search with #healthyrecipes presuming food plays an important role in maintaining great health.

However, make sure you read through the conversation and build on it with great sense of humor and personality. Follow the relevant people with busiest conversation. They can be become your influencers later.

Follow this **3 factor rule** always:

Relevant message (what attracts and connects people), right audience (who's online now), and right time (when's the perfect moment to publish this message).

3. Let People Know

They wouldn't know until you inform. This is how you can do a subtle and acceptable broadcasting among your friends and industry connections.

1. Use your twitter handle in email signature.
2. Send a short and nice email to your contacts and encourage them to connect with you on twitter. Write a few lines on how important it is and how you're enjoying already. This way you not only get followers but also help many open and try this chirpy social network.
3. Cross connect your twitter with Facebook & LinkedIn accounts.

4. Be Consistent

Like every other good social network, twitter demands you, your time and a enthusiastic participation. Spare minimum 15 minutes for

twitter every day. More is merrier. Twitter is active with maximum users between 1pm - 3pm. Use this high time of the day when you're short of time.

5. Put Tools to Work

Let me conclude the topic with some free awesome stuff. These 5 free twitter tools will make your twitter life easier.

Hootsuite - for easy scheduling and management.

Tweetbeep - keeps track of your mentions, company and everything related to you.

Cotweet - helps you manage multiple twitter accounts (for multiple businesses).

ManageFlitter - great tool to help you filter the best twitter performers and users so you can invest your time with right tweeple.

JustUnfollow - use the "copy followers" feature of this tool and get connected to the quality people who follow your industry influencers.

In my last article about 5 great apps for

“Remember that people on any social network will connect and stay connected for a reason, make it a good one!”

working women, I spoke about flipboard app. Try this for twitter and you'd fall in love with the app (and me for telling you). The way it makes reading, replying and saving for later easy for you, you can get the most out of twitter.

Twitter gives you the chance and platform to be heard by masses. Try it and enjoy it using these 5 steps!

GO TAKE A HIKE!

VIDYA DESHPANDE

Women have become intrepid travellers. They no longer hesitate to throw on a backpack and set off on a hike



Who's the typical adventure traveller? A 28-year-old male who is single, pumps iron and has a size 42 chest? Not any more! A recent survey by an American travel company says that the typical adventure traveller is a 47 year old female and she wears a size 12 dress! The survey says older women are experiencing this rite of passages and Baby Boomers and single mothers are ready to set out on an adventure trip more than ever before.

In any case, the survey says, most travel decisions are made by women: 80% of a family's travel decisions are taken by women, regardless of where they travel, who they travel with or who pays

for the trip. That is the power of the women traveller!

Women travelling on their own in India too is a growing tribe. Last week at an all women travel meet organized at a five star hotel by a leading travel company, there were as many as 40 women travellers. And what was amazing is that each one had a story to tell of travelling in India and abroad.



Take Anubha for instance. She has been travelling on her own to several countries and has hilarious tales to tell. Anubha has done the "Queen" like travel, long before the movie and on her own. "I never tell my parents or relatives that I am travelling alone," she says. Anubha has been to more than 46 countries, backpacking, living in cheap hotels, and even in back of a truck.

every month so that at the end of each year, she can take off on a trip on her bucket list. Year before last, she and three of her gal pals went off to a trip to Brazil, last year it was Italy and this year she's off to the Netherlands and Germany. "The ticket from here to Amsterdam is the most expensive, the rest is not costing me much," says Nina. After doing extensive research on the Net to get cheap bed and breakfast deals, Nina says, the total cost of her month long trip to these two countries will not cross Rs 1.5 lakhs.



The girlfriends' getaway market is the latest buzz in the travel industry around the world. In the US, it's about 4 per cent of the market while in India is less than one per cent. However, it's a growing segment and the travel industry is yet to wake up to the economic power of women traveller.

So what's stopping you? Just pick up your backpack and let the traveller in you take over!

There are others like Reema. She too has been bitten by the travel bug. She and her sister just got into a car and drove off on a road trip, discovering their itinerary along the way by calling friends for tips and directions. That was her first trip, since then there's been no looking back, she says.

Another one who's been caught by travel mania is Nina Sangma. Nina is 35, single and works with an internet portal. She saves a part of her salary



THE EMANICIPATION OF WOMEN IN HINDI CINEMA

SVETTA MOHLA

Celluloid, a product of its culture, holds a mirror against the ethos and perceptions of a society. And Hindi Cinema, called Bollywood fondly, is no exception with its skewed depiction and rudimentary portrayal of women in a largely male-dominated society. Hindi film actresses have mostly resigned to play the second fiddle to the lead hero with the moth-infested patriarchal leanings setting them in stereotypical moulds. The straight-jacketing of the ominous eye candy, the pelvis-gyrating glamdollar, the highly virtuous, the fervently dutiful, the notoriously conservative, and the sympathy-garnering, ever-sacrificing, ideal long suffering heroine has been a hallmark of Bollywood in its hundred years of existence.

Barring a few notable exceptions of author-backed roles in mainstream cinema like *Nargis* in *Mother India*, *Nutan* in *Sujata/Bandini*, *Waheeda Rehman* in *Guide*, *Suchitra Sen* in *Mamta/Aandhi* or *Rekha* in *Umrao Jaan* or the diagonally opposite parallel cinema which opened a new vista for stellar *Smita Patil* in *Bhumika*, *Shabana Azmi* in *Arth* and *Deepti Naval* in *Ek Baar Phir*, the subjugation of a woman's feelings, desires and ambitions has been unmissable.

With the advent of 90s, the role of Hindi

movie heroine has started becoming meatier. The country's liberalization has had a domino effect in the portrayal of the screen women. No longer is she a damsel in distress. The emergence of new sensibilities has started celebrating women power with aplomb. The urban, educated, working woman is a part of social reality. Women-centric movies are getting commercial and critical acclaim in equal measure. The fiercely independent, highly ambitious and supremely confident real life woman has found her reflection in reel too.

Be it *Vidya Balan* in the delicious game-changer *Kahaani* or as a single mom bringing up a progeny kid in *Paa*, *Konkona Sen's* soulful rendition of today's working woman in *Page 3/Metro/Wake up Sid*, the sprightly hockey player of *Chak De India* who rejects male appendage to further her career interests, Bollywood is gradually warming up to the female protagonist. Eyebrows don't get raised on watching a *Priyanka Chopra* playing her beau like puppets, *Namrata Shirodkar* in *Astitva* siding with her fiancé's mom *Tabu* when it is disclosed she sired him out of wedlock or *Sushmita Sen* offering her womb for surrogacy in *Filhaal*. Lesbianism, promiscuity, polyandry is no longer taboo. This year sleeper hit *Queen* had a pitch perfect *Kangna Ranaut* returning her engagement ring to a cringe-



worthy fiancé who jilted her at the altar whereas the effervescent *Parineeti Chopra* wastes no time to grab her sister's beau at the altar in *Hasee Toh Phasee*. Though sexual objectification of item girls and scantily clad bimbettes has resulted in visual pleasure turning into voyeuristic ogling, still a movie

lover waits as much for *Priyanka Chopra* playing *Mary Kom* or *Vidya Balan* donning *M.S. Subbalaxmi* in her biopic. Of course, feminism has still to go a long way in establishing its worth in Bollywood, but it sure has passed the struggling phase to grab a foothold!!

OPPORTUNITIES IN DISGUISE

THAT'S WHAT CHALLENGES ARE!

Donna Orender is founder Orender Unlimited, an independent marketing, media, and strategy company. Donna serves as a consultant to WNBA Enterprises, LLC. She served as the President of WNBA Enterprises, LLC earlier. Donna served as President of Women's National Basketball Association of National Basketball Association, Inc. since February of 2005. She has more than 20 years of sports business experience. Prior to joining the league, she spent more than 17 years with the PGA Tour and served as Senior Vice President of Strategic Development in the Office of the Commissioner. Donna's television production career began at ABC Sports and continued at SportsChannel. She also owned her own production company, Primo Donna Productions. Her community and philanthropic activities include serving on the boards of Beth El - The Beaches Synagogue, the Monique Burr Foundation for Children, Inc., the Jacksonville Film & Television Advisory Council, the University of North Florida College of Arts and Science Advisory Council, and Maccabi USA/Sports for Israel. In addition, she served as Co-Chair for the USA Women's Basketball team for the 16th World Maccabiah Games in Israel, and participates in the National Minority Golf Foundation Mentor Program. She played three seasons in the Women's Professional Basketball League (WBL), where she was an All-Star. She also was an All-American basketball player during her collegiate years.



Donna Orender, CEO, Orender Unlimited

Donna Orender is also mentor to Biz Divas co-founder Sarika Gupta Bhattacharyya.

Donna Orender in conversation with Biz Divas

Tell us about your professional journey.

I was involved in sports when I was a young girl, I was an athlete. From there I worked in Sports Television and worked in big networks and then worked as an entrepreneur. I started my entrepreneurial journey in 20s and by 27 I was running a major division in a big company, these myriad of experiences helped me have more perspectives on business.

What were the challenges on the way?

Well, I consider challenges as opportunities. I have never been a person who sat back and planned her career ahead. I just focused on doing the best I could, wanting to make a difference. I believe in being able to frame the work that I do in the way I find it gratifying and satisfying and more than delivering the value to my employers.

That said, one of the things I have learnt which most women think: if I do a good job, do the right thing, I will get noticed. But in reality it is much more complex than that. One needs to create that space for herself.

I worked at the PGA (global best men's professional golf) tour where there were 36 men and I was the only woman in the team. I was very aware of the fact and felt very different from them. But I thought my differences added value most of the time and sometimes I felt that my differences created a distance that perhaps I needed to fix. I wanted to be more like them than them to be more like me. It took me a while to understand the power of being myself.

What inspires you?

Life inspires me. My son says smiling, "Mom, you can get excited about shopping at supermarket, seeing things on shelf!" Helping people, being with people, new experiences and even quiet time and the opportunity to create new things and doing things which have not been done before inspires me. Seeing challenges as opportunities inspires me. When someone says you can't do this, I get inspired.

Tell us about Donna as a mentor.

As a mentor, I am very aware that we have the ability to touch people both consciously and inadvertently. I am very aware that all of us have

the power to impact people, you can have power to move them in positive ways. I remember being a young kid, working in a TV network, when the head guy walked to me and said "you are good". I clung to those words for a very long time. That was so inspiring and encouraging. So whenever people reach out to me, I always connect because the right touch or encouragement can bring in a positive change in their lives. You never know how that one little push can do wonders for somebody, so I make that time.

I think mentoring is about being true to who you are, engaging and taking a real interest in your mentee's well being. It's a two way street, so it's not enough just being a good mentor, one needs to have a good mentee too. Be encouraging, ask questions. Mentor is the catalyst but it is mentees like Sarika who are committed and push forward despite all the challenges. We can enable, guide and encourage them. Sarika has become joy and pride for me.

I mentor kids I have never met and who approached me online. I have always believed that success touches from within. We all have a tiny voice which booms inside our heads. We just need to listen to that tiny voice. We should embrace that strength and understanding and our inner voice will enable us to be much more impactful and powerful.

People in general are afraid of not knowing what right things are. They are afraid of failing, not believing in their own capabilities. That's where I believe listening to our inner voice helps us all.

I think we are at the cusp of evolution in terms of recognizing our potential. We are a capable part of the population which has such great gifts to give to the world.



GAYATHRI RAMAMURTHY

*Talent – COE,
Leadership Development and D&I Head - India,
Capgemini*

Though her academic specialization was in finance, Gayathri's affinity for working with people and engaging in skills development inspired her to work in HR.

She opted to work exclusively for Capgemini in 2009 and stepped into the only HR function that she had absolutely no experience with - Recruitment. She created the senior hiring process in talent acquisition, built a team and expanded coverage to all BU's. This was 24/7 work involving intense travel across all locations where they had a presence. Exhilarating though it was, her yearning to be in the developmental space led her into an uncharted territory again.

In 2012, Capgemini leadership placed their faith in her abilities, and assigned her to lead the Centre of Excellence for leadership Development. This was closely followed with driving the Diversity & Inclusion initiative in India.

So is consistently raising the bar with one's performance and taking on challenging roles. A self-driven individual who believes that working with her team and fraternity and learning from them is an essential part of her work well-being, Gayathri is on her

“**Hard work, honesty, boldness and self-belief are essential to be able to go through work-life situations gracefully.**”

way to much deserved success inspiring many women along!

Gayathri has an uncompromising belief in “self” and every woman like her who needs to make decisions and life choices that have enormous impact not just on self but also family, network and community.

A career for Gayathri, personally, is extremely vital to add value to self and for people she interacts with. She believes individuality and self-esteem are built through the varied roles we play in life and each role enhances self-worth.

She began her career in academia as a lecturer in a top ranked women's college in Chennai, but a deep felt need to be able to apply many of the theories established by management gurus led her to venture into a full blown corporate career.

After the birth of her second child, Gayathri resumed work as a quality consultant and worked with many corporate houses to establish and train employees on process discipline. Her list of corporates includes many like *Essar, TVS, Bajaj, Areva, Murgappa, Taj, Polaris BPO*, etc. Training was a key intervention to ensure change endured, and her passion for OD and change management developed here.



SMITA RAGHANI VEER

Founder, Dhi Design, a graphic design consultancy specializing in designing communication across a range of formats and media

pouring. In the next 8 months she was able to triple the number of clients.

The fantastic Biz Divas logo is a testimony to her creative talent.

Smita's trick to tackle time management is the multiple 'To Do Lists' and a little time for soul searching

Smita's creative aspirations can be gauged from the fact that while growing up Michelangelowasherultimateinspiration, his magic with art, sculpture and his determination to go all the way was something she looked upto and his faith in his subject gave her a direction in her career.

The first quadrant of her work life was quite predictable, she learnt on the job, experimented with work and stepped out of the bandwagon to do her own thing. While she gained a good standing, she then had to move cities and hit a standstill and lost the momentum.

Starting afresh in a new city was a challenge as she did not have a tried and tested network of vendors, co workers etc. Although she was working for herself, she did not count herself really an entrepreneur. The real journey started when she had to establish her credibility as a small entity. Social media came to her rescue along with support from her husband. In her opinion, introduction to the Biz Divas immediately got her back on the map and gave her access to a database of fellow entrepreneurs and that made sure the referrals kept

“**Search for the light at the end of the tunnel... it's always there, is her guiding mantra in her entrepreneurial journey.**”

which makes room for others and sets the clock and priorities in sync (at least most of the time). She lists her Reiki teacher as one of her key mentors who helped her take ownership of her life.

Her word of advice to aspiring women entrepreneurs is: “Please do participate in the activities that forums like Biz Divas plan out for us... It's not only the networking aspect but also opportunity to connect with industry experts and mentors to help us in our journeys.”

Biz Divas corner where you can find upcoming events, movies, books and other resources you will be interested in!

Entrepreneurship

Women Entrepreneurship 2014 - New Horizons

Calling Women Entrepreneurs, Professionals, Executives, Homemakers, Academics and Aspiring Entrepreneurs. From idea to execution, from getting your own website to getting customers, learnings with the eminent speakers to discussions with the best in the industry. Have it all in just one day!

Date: Friday, July 18, 2014

Time: 9:30 am to 6:00 pm

Venue: Jacaranda, India Habitat Centre, Lodhi Road, New Delhi

Fee: TIE Members - INR 1500.00

Non Members - INR 2000.00 (Inclusive of 12.36% Service Tax)

Contact: Upasana Sharma
upasana@tienewdelhi.org
+91 9810078395

“Women on Boards” supported by **Khaitan & Co** will be launched on **6th August 2014 at Palladium Hotel, Mumbai** in presence of dignitaries and eminent personalities from corporates, government and all walks of life.”

Gray Matter

Women's Worlds Conference 2014, Hyderabad

The University of Hyderabad is organizing the 12th International Interdisciplinary Women's World Congress, 2014, in Hyderabad, India. Theme for this conference is "Gender in a changing world". Initiated by Worldwide Organization of Women's Studies -WOWS, Women's Worlds Congress (WWC) is an International Interdisciplinary Congress on Women, held every three years. The focus of the congress is gender research and interdisciplinary scholarship.

Date: Sunday, August 17, 2014 - Friday, August 22, 2014

Time: All day

Contact:
academic@womensworld2014india.com
<http://womensworld2014india.com/ws/>

Fitness

Pinkathon

Pinkathon is a 10 km International Run only for women with the objective to encourage women's health and fitness and raise awareness about breast cancer, its causes and prevention. Pinkathon offers the running distances of 3 Km, 5 Km & 10 Km giving each runner an opportunity to run in their comfort zone. Biz Divas partnered with Pinkathon held last year in September and is gearing up to partner again and take it to next level! Promoter Milind Soman says, "We are most thankful to Biz Divas for their participation in Pinkathon and we are hoping that we will get your support this year too. Your run for Pinkathon is not just your support for every woman who is battling breast cancer, your run is your statement, your stand as a survivor, a supporter, a woman. This is your battle. Together we will do more!!"

Date: Sunday, September 14, 2014

Venue: New Delhi

For more details: <http://www.pinkathon.in>



Arty Side

Exhibition of Hand Embroidered Products









Shrujan will be organizing the largest Exhibition of Hand Embroidered Products. This exhibition will focus mainly on saris, shawls, and dupattas, among other garments. Besides displaying 16 different styles of Hand Embroidery, made by craftswomen from 10 communities of the Kutch region of Gujarat, the exhibition promises to present a whole new array of vibrant colors and high-quality fabric to enthrall any person with an eye and appreciation for art, textile, or embroidery.

Date: Saturday, July 05, 2014 to Tuesday, July 08, 2014

Venue: Aga Khan Hall, New Delhi







JOIN BIZ DIVAS!

Benefits of Corporate Membership

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| <p>Three Tickets</p>  <p>I-Inspire Women Leadership Conference (Value Rs.15000)</p> | <p>Three Tickets</p>  <p>Global Mentoring Walk (Value Rs. 5000)</p> | <p>Three Nominations</p>  <p>Mentoring Leadership Program</p> |
| <p>Four</p>  <p>Corporate Network Events including I INSPIRE & Global Mentoring Walk</p> | <p>Four</p>  <p>Diversity & Inclusion Round Table Workshops / Toolkits / Learning / Experts</p> | <p>15%</p> <p>15% Discount</p> <p>Discount on Consulting & Training</p> |
| <p>Employer Branding</p>  <p>Get featured in Success Stories on Biz Divas Website, Blog, Newsletter reaching 30000+ subscribers</p> | <p>Access to Network</p>  <p>Post your Jobs on Website & Access Biz Divas Members Directory</p> | <p>Knowledge Partner</p>  <p>For your Internal Women Employee Network</p> |

JOIN BIZ DIVAS!

Benefits of Individual Membership

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| <p>Four</p>  <p>Monthly Networking Meetups</p> | <p>Offers</p>  <p>Member-to-member Discounts</p> | <p>1:1</p>  <p>Complimentary Business Mentoring Session</p> |
| <p>20%</p> <p>20% Discount</p> <p>Discount on I-Inspire</p> | <p>Free</p>  <p>Participation in Global Mentoring Walk</p> | <p>Nomination</p>  <p>For Mentoring Leadership Program</p> |
| <p>Visibility</p>  <p>Get featured in Success Stories on Biz Divas Website, Blog, Newsletter reaching 30000+ subscribers</p> | <p>Access to Network</p>  <p>Opportunity to connect with entrepreneurial eco-system and corporate network</p> | <p>Promote</p>  <p>Your Business, Products and Services</p> |

Biz Divas invites queries from our readers regarding their career or business. Our panel of coaches reflects on the queries and advices based on extensive experience.

OUR COACHES:

SHILPISINGH is an Executive Coach & Hospitality Entrepreneur with 14+ years of HR experience with some of the leading media companies.

RASHMI MANDLOI is a Talent and Diversity consultant with a professional career of over 13 years with Deutsche Bank, Convergys, Standard Chartered Bank.

GARVITA CHATURVEDI is an Executive Coach and Human Resources Professional with direct and in-depth exposure to a wide swathe of services industries, within marque MNCs.

Dealing With The Mom Guilt

I have had continuous success at my full-time role and have been sticking with this organization for last 10 years. But of late, my work doesn't energize me or gives me 100% satisfaction, because I am torn between the needs of my four and a half year old daughter and myself as a professional. I don't feel I am able to contribute my 100% anywhere - at work or at home!
- Senior Operations Manager of a leading FMCG organization.

There is a lot of merit in first thinking through your own priorities, both long term and short term and chalking out your action plan accordingly. That time and effort will go a long way in helping you balance your input-output equation. There's variety in the roles you are playing and that's both draining your energy on one part and adding to your perspective on the other. So a

think-through approach on being present physically with the child at times when you are needed and wading your way through the professional arena will help to be happy and satisfied as a well rounded individual.

Having clarity is essential

I have been a serial entrepreneur. Have started 3 ventures in the last 7 years and am also a part of a very successful e-commerce venture. My struggle is managing all these different ventures and leading them to their intended road map, while balancing it with various partnerships and people management. I am not finding juggling all these balls easy. And that's not great news, because these are financial decisions and I am here for good. So I need to clear these hurdles as soon as possible.

- Entrepreneur, Women's clothes line

Looks like a typical entrepreneurial dilemma, most of entrepreneurs go through this some time or the other. It would be helpful to work on a solution that helps you understand where all these businesses of yours stand now and what's your and other partners' plan for each one. Also how much time and effort do you need to put in personally on various aspects. Is it possible to create a demarcation between promoter's action and decisions? That would help you to decide some things which can be outsourced and you can reduce your involvement from end-to-end ownership to final decision making.

- Leading KPO**
Manager - Accounts
Location - Gurgaon
Description - Looking for a CA with 7 - 9 years experience in Accounting. Experience in KPO is preferred.
- Leading Construction Company**
Sr. Manager - Customer Care
Location - Mumbai
Description - Candidate should have 8-10 years experience in Customer Care. Team handling experience is preferred.
- Consulting Firm**
Manager/ Sr Manager - Risk Advisory Services
Location - Gurgaon/ Mumbai
Description - CA with existing experience in Big 4 Consulting within Risk Advisory Vertical. Business Development and Delivery experience in Consumer Goods and Infrastructure is preferred.
- Data Analytics Company**
Director - Analytics
Location - Bangalore
Description - MBA from Tier I Institutes with minimum 14 years of work experience and last 5 years experience in Data Analytics.
- Leading FMCG**
Factory Manager HR
Location - Kolkata/ Hyderabad
Description - MBA/ MSW with experience of managing at least 1000+ employees. Experience with managing Labor Unions for at least 5 years and total experience of 9 years is mandatory.
- Leading Captive BPO**
Senior Manager - Brand Communications
Location - Gurgaon
Description - Post Graduate in Marketing Communications/ Marketing (Minimum 7 years).
- Financial Services firm**
Service Delivery Leader - Training
Location - Gurgaon
Description - 8-12 years of training delivery work experience, managing a 10 member team. Measure training effectiveness, partner with local business and global learning teams.
- Indian Conglomerate**
Sr Manager - HR
Location - Mumbai/ Gurgaon
Minimum 8 yrs of HR generalist experience with a multi local organization. Work as a senior member of core HR team, implement HR Strategies, manage HR operational issues, deliver manpower requirements, Inventory Control, MIS.
- IT Hardware / Networking**
Sales Consultant Services
Location - Gurgaon/ Mumbai
Should have 8-13 years experience in Business Development, Account Management, Engagement with CXO's, Partner management.
- Heavy Engineering Manufacturing**
Product Marketing Manager
Location - Gurgaon
8-13 Consulting experience with any big 4. Experience in Strategic Initiatives, M&A experience is mandatory.



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Dinakshi Arora

After a stint in the IT industry, Dinakshi chose to work for the cause of helping women reclaim their due space in society and workplace as Program Manager Altavis and its CSR Biz Divas Foundation. She is currently Editor - Biz Divas, a Content Professional and a Wellness Coach. Also a poet and a curious explorer of life, she loves to write and blog - mostly on self help, spirituality and women issues. Email: dinakshi@bizdivas.in, Twitter: @DinakshiArora, LinkedIn: [in.linkedin.com/in/dinakshi](https://www.linkedin.com/in/dinakshi)



Divya J Jain

Divya Jain is Director, Finance at American Express. With 14 years of experience in the Banking and Shared Services Industry, Divya has dabbled in many different roles which span Financial Operations, Business Analytics, Retail Banking, Relationship Management, Sales, Controls and Compliance and Project Management. An MBA from Management Development Institute, Divya is pursuing her childhood dream of learning to play piano and hopes to write a book one day.



Kanchana Banerjee

Kanchana is a freelance writer with nearly two decades of experience. She writes for numerous publications & companies and conducts online writing courses. www.writeword.co.in



Kiran Chaturvedi

After a long career in qualitative research, Kiran Chaturvedi started her own experiential lifestyle brand Birdsong & Beyond. They create bespoke journeys and experiential workshops to facilitate deeper, authentic connections with nature, culture and self.



Rashmi Mandloi

Rashmi Mandloi is passionate about Inclusion. Over the past year she has focused on work on Unconscious Bias and its ramifications. She is currently doing a research on 'Women on Boards' which has taken her across the country and consciously giving her a sneak peek on the cultural biases and behavior. Email: rashmi@altavis.co.in Twitter @MandloiRashmi or LinkedIn: [in.linkedin.com/in/rashmimandloi](https://www.linkedin.com/in/rashmimandloi)



Shalini Baisiwala

Shalini is a Gurgaon based interior designer with a passion for photography, travel and writing her blog.



Soniya Mathur

Soniya is a creative web and graphic designer with more than 14 years of experience. She is a versatile person, with an aptitude for updating with the latest trends. Extremely passionate about colors, designs and technology, Soniya provides a single window service for creative IT solutions. E-mail: soniya@huestechnologies.com LinkedIn: [in.linkedin.com/in/soniyamathur/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/soniyamathur/)



Sunita Biddu

Sunita is an Online Marketing Strategist, Social media & Blogging Coach with over 9 years of passion into her profession. She helps businesses & entrepreneurs create successful online visibility and branding.



Svetta Mohla

A Chartered Accountant associated with the NGO-AID NCR, a besotted cinephile, an avid bibliophile and an unapologetic Helicopter Mom rolled into one!!



Vidya Deshpande

Vidya is a freelance writer and runs Soul Purpose Travel, an adventure outfit only for women. She has spent the last year travelling to off-beat destinations with groups of like-minded women.

**We identify, invest in
& bring visibility to
women leaders**



Women on Boards

An Altavis Initiative



Executive Search



Diversity Consulting



Knowledge Forums



Research & Advocacy



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