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Off the beaten track

Geeta Padmanabhan



Life On Her Own Terms: Ruzan Khambatta

Special Arrangement

IT entrepreneur Ruzan Khambatta stumps nay-sayers who questioned her entry into the business

Read this brief interview and profile the respondent.

Your strengths?

Initiative, trying to be the best in the field, comprehensive style of communicating with my team

Do women make good entrepreneurs?

Yes, women are intuitive, interactive, collaborative, empathetic. They provide building blocks for trust

Who is your inspiration?

The field. I learn by being street-smart. I love to meet people.

Any must-do in your rule book?

Voice your opinion, solve your problems with logical explanations, don't cry!

If you guessed the speaker is independent-minded, no-nonsense, enterprising, and someone who isn't afraid to lead, you got it right.

Ruzan Khambatta is a Gujarat-based entrepreneur who dabbles in IT, software, and specifically Augmented Reality.

In the city to speak at the *Successful Women In Management* conference, as part of the annual conclave of Great Lakes B-School, she had ready opinions on every subject open for discussion. After giving her young audience plenty to take away, she said crisply: "Add value to what you do, take time off for yourself".

She took a backward ride to explain her spirit of enterprise. She was trained to join her entrepreneur father who introduced innovative products in the market, she said. But no, she wouldn't get shadowed by her father's identity, she would create one for herself. "It was a tough call," her decision wasn't very welcome. Eventually, "my parents came around, probably thinking I could always join the family business later." She hasn't.

She went for IT business; she wanted a new field and do R&D. And IT meant knowledge — you could take it

anywhere, she reckoned. On the ground, IT was a low-capital business, a great option for someone starting a business from scratch, with zero funding.

She taught herself software, researched and developed ideas at night, tried to put them to practice during day.

“I learned a lot working in the field,” she said. “I’m grateful to all those people who said “not workable”. It’s because of them that I did it all myself.”

Successful Women In Management

An advantage!

When speakers pepped up women to exercise their rights, enhance their capabilities and be bold and authoritative, Ruzan asserted that being a woman had a clear advantage. “*behen* It helps that expectations from us are less. Make your weakness your strength.”

Team-building has become her core strength. Working on tight budgets has helped her find out-of-the-box solutions.

Meeting deadlines has made her innovate and ‘technovate’, gifting her with a hands-on implementation quality.

Ruzan Khambatta described herself as an ‘executioner’. She could have added ‘of clichés’.

Mantra For Success

In business, the only thing that works forever is customer loyalty. Money is short-term gain, and customer loyalty, a long-term benefit

Dream to become successful, not rich. Success brings achievement, fame, respect, confidence, satisfaction and money

Be positive — say ‘I won the silver’ not ‘I lost the gold’

Enjoy criticism. Learning / unlearning is a life-long process

Visit www.ruzankhambatta.com

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