

Acceptance levels of women are higher now

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—**Dr Radhika Bobba**, Director (Medical Services), Stempeutics; partner & founder, Anhvita BioPharma Consulting, Bangalore

An active member of Drug Information Association, India; and Indian Society for Clinical Research, Dr Bobba is actively working with regulatory bodies to strengthen the Indian regulatory policy in line with international recommendations

Q What challenges did you face as a woman during the initial stage of your career?

When I joined the industry, in the early 1990s, there were few women in the middle and senior management positions. Certain gender biases were prevalent. I did overcome that when colleagues and bosses realized the seriousness with which I approached the tasks assigned to me.

Q What is the secret behind your successful career?

The most important factor for my success is my family's support. I followed an unconventional path — after medical school most of my friends chose academia and clinical subjects; and I was the only one who tried to find a job in the industry. These experiences have been critical in making me an effective team member and a lead. I have a strong drive to offer better patient care, and unafraid to try something new.

Q How can a woman effectively run a business at a leadership level in the life sciences industry?

The challenges are no longer in running the business but on how to find the time to ensure deliverables are achieved at a consistent high quality, and within the set timelines. There are more women leading by example, and the acceptance levels are higher now.

Q How do you see the future for women in the life sciences industry?

Women in the life sciences industry are armed with a “can do attitude”, and look for feedback frequently. They need challenges, and organizations should offer a variety of development opportunities. More women will become entrepreneurs and focus on niche specialty areas. This change has been possible because of the burgeoning IT and ITES industry, that has expanded the footprint for women within the industry.

Q How do you balance family and work?

I am fortunate to have an extremely strong family support. Family-work life balance is complex.

Q What are the qualities needed to become a successful entrepreneur?

Be passionate about your work, believe in what you do, and focus on what you want to achieve; learn from the job role, know the people around you, and be willing to change; gain the courage to try new things; and step back and look at the big picture though you are an expert at what you do. Financial strength or support is a key factor in aiming to be an entrepreneur.

Try to follow science with clinical relevance. Get a wide range of exposure in the field including commercial aspects and finance, discovery, and development.