

VIEWPORT **2019**

SECOND CAREERS OF WOMEN PROFESSIONALS



THE INDIA STORY

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THE INDIA STORY

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SECOND CAREERS OF WOMEN PROFESSIONALS

THE INDIA STORY

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FOREWORD

Dr. Saundarya Rajesh,
Founder-President,
AVTAR Group



It was the mid-2000s. The L-P-G wave (liberalisation – privatization – globalization) had created its opportunities in the market and women in India's workforce, had become a visible reality. There was increasing intent on hiring, retaining and advancing women. It was against this backdrop, that we at Avtar, turned corporate attention to an until-then-unheard-of and untapped talent pool – that of second career women, women who were on career breaks intentional about returning to work. In 2006, under the aegis of Avtar, India saw the first ever recorded instance of second career recruitment drive – a drive exclusively to hire women on career breaks. The terminology of 'second careers' was new, the talent pool was vast, the possibilities immense!

13 years later, the case for second career programs reigns in, as strong as ever. The case in fact has become even more pressing, for it is a decade of declining women's workforce participation that is sandwiched between 'then' and 'now'. Women's workforce participation rate (which is the proportion of women who are economically productive) fell from 36 percent to 24 percent in the past decade, as per NSSO data. Close to 48% of India's women quit work, midway to attend to familial commitments. As per projections, we are at least two centuries away from gender parity. That is a bunch of unpleasant stats to deal with. But there is a silver lining, in fact it is a thick silver band! In 2018, for the very first time, India closed the gender gap in tertiary education. Close to 48% of university grads in the country today, are girls. We are the country with the maximum number of female commercial pilots. And we have winspiring women, role models emerging in every potent career stream!

The need of the hour now is to bridge the gap between near parity at the threshold of careers to skewed gender ratios at the mid-management levels. And that requires a combination of corporate enablers to retain women, women's own

intentionality and innovative corporate reactions to women seeking career returns. Mainstreaming career returns and normalizing career breaks can push the needle – it can help reverse the trend of declining labor force participation rate of women, it can help businesses infuse greater gender diversity in their workforce, it can have incremental influences on the country's GDP!

As an early evangelist and a second career woman myself, it is heartening to see the momentum build in the second career movement. Today, 53 percent companies on the WORKING MOTHER & Avtar Best Companies for Women in India list, have formal second career recruitment tracks. At Avtar, we have helped curate second career programs for over 30 different organizations and have enabled the career come-backs of 8000+ women.

Drawing from the best practices at some of the most successful organizations in India Inc., this edition of VIEWPORT, the annual research report from Avtar, tells the second career story of India – the trials, the tribulations, the highs and the lows! For a 360-degree perspective, the report delves into the aspirations of the current second career women cohort. This edition also features role-model second career women whose comeback stories are all about intention and inspiration.

My dear leaders, HR practitioners, women – in which ever capacity you read this report, I urge you to become an ally to the second career movement, to pledge your allegiance to the cause. For in the heart of it is there a very strong talent case, an equally powerful business case and an intensively robust social case. Let us together cheer the returners, celebrate companies that pave the way for career come-backs and help complete several thousands of second career stories!

Saundarya Rajesh

INTRODUCTION

The Second Career Terrain in Corporate India

It was a non-descript night – uneventful and regular. At 3.30 in the morning, Tanvi tossed in her bed yet another time, sleep eluded her. Tomorrow, she was to join InnovTech Solutions as their Senior Brand Strategist. She recognized the waves of emotions riding within – excitement and apprehension leading the pack. Tanvi was making her career comeback after a break of four and a half years. A break she (the college topper, the over achiever!) had voluntarily taken at the altar of motherhood. Tanvi lovingly looked at Meera – her four-year old daughter, sleeping blissfully unaware, right next to her. She felt the events of the past two months unfold themselves in quick succession, in front of her.

Tanvi had attended a career refresher boot camp for women on career breaks, held in her city. It was there that she met Sheila, Senior Solutions Architect at InnovTech, who had come representing InnovTech – a key sponsor of the event. Sheila was mighty impressed with Tanvi and her ideas. While the boot camp sessions offered Tanvi the much needed clarity to design her come-back, the connect with Sheila led her on to job prospects, much sooner than she had planned for. Five rounds of challenging interviews later, Tanvi received the offer letter, much to her delight. The next couple of weeks went into logistical detailing – the perennial dilemma of every dual career family. That InnovTech had a state-of-the-art, in-house child care facility was a huge enablement for Tanvi. It was decided that Vikram, her husband (who worked in the UK shift), would drop Meera at this child care facility, on his way to work. Cut to three years later, Tanvi is all set to head Brand Strategy for South Region, at InnovTech. Her exceptional quality of work and commitment has made her a management favorite. She along with Sheila and her team of D&I allies have formulated InnovTech's very own second career recruitment track. Tanvi now wants to give back, by being a mentor to second career women who walk the InnovTech path. She wants to help complete many a second career story!



India is a land of 1.3 billion people – 48.5% of the country is women. However, on global metrics that quantify gender gap, India continues to be ranked abysmally low. India is at the 108th position in the World Economic Forum's Gender Gap Report 2018. As per the UN's Gender Development Index (GDI), we are at 149 on a total of 164 countries assessed. In order to bridge the gaps towards greater parity and inclusion, it is critical to understand the dynamics of women in India's workforce and the challenges therewith.

In the Indian socio-cultural milieu, societal expectation on women catering to the responsibilities of 3Cs (Cooking, cleaning and caring) is disproportionately high. That the gender chore gap, (a woman-man per day figure on time spent in cooking, cleaning and caring) at 333 minutes, is one amongst the highest in the world, does not come as a surprise. The male-bread winner – female caretaker family model continues to be the most common one. A decline in the women's workforce participation rate in the country (from 36 percent to 24 percent in the past decade), statistically testifies this gender role

stereotyping. And thus, though 27% of all entry level positions in India Inc. are women, 48% of them abort careers mid-way (at the altar of motherhood and maternity), leading to a steady leak in the talent pipeline leaving 15% at the mid-level and only 5% of women at senior executive positions. This talent drain of trained, qualified professionals also means that investment of time, capital and effort spent in educating these human resources – women also go unutilized/under-utilized post their exits. But there is also a huge talent case hidden there – that of second career women (women on career breaks, intentional about making career come-backs)! Second career women were an unheard of talent pool until the mid-2000s. It was in 2006, that the first recorded instance of second career women hiring happened in India, under the aegis of Avtar. Between then and today, there has been incremental traction around the second career ecosystem – at least a 50 companies in India today, have formal second career women hiring programmes. Several thousand women have made career come-backs, but the fact remains that for reasons myriad, women continue to take career breaks and the second career women talent pool

INTRODUCTION

continues to swell. As per recent estimates, there are at least 70 lakh second career women in India today, seeking career returns. And what this indicates is that come-backs like Tanvi's are not as common as we would have liked them to be!

Against this backdrop, AVTAR's annual research for 2019 – **VIEWPORT 2019**, unveils the second career ecosystem in Corporate India, through a 2 part research, as outlined below:

1 PART

Survey of women on career breaks

The results from this survey will help understand expectations and aspirations of the current cohort of women on career breaks and their plans on career come-backs

2 PART

Best Practices from Companies that have formal Second Career Programmes

This compendium of best practices will help understand corporate experiences of hiring, retaining and advancing second career women.



SECOND CAREERS FOR WOMEN

Socio, Economic, Business Case

We live in a day and age where disruption is the order of the day. Current jobs are giving way to new jobs, AI & technology is revolutionizing the way we work. Hiring projections indicate that jobs would be opening up across sectors like IT-Software, BPO/KPO, BFSI, manufacturing, education and healthcare. As per reports from Online job portal Shine.com, new jobs are likely to be created not only in Tier 1 cities, but also in Tier 2 & 3 cities¹.

So the fact remains that the talent need is vast and deep and there is a shortage of skilled, employable talent with the matching skills. Map this on to the available talent pool of second career women – close to 70 lakh women from across India, currently on breaks but intentional about making the career comebacks². That is a very strong talent case that builds itself into the business needs. It is also important to note that in a business climate characterized by VUCA, a stable workforce is critical for all employers. In a 2013 research conducted by Avtar, close to 56% of organizational leaders who were employers of second career women, opined that second career women were an alternate, stable talent pool at their organizations³. In industries such as FMCG, second career women constitute a major segment of potential customers/consumers. Having more second career women on board, helps such businesses become more reflective of their customer bases, a definite win-win. Research also suggests that women with previous corporate exposure bring in the key strengths of effective time management, higher productivity and more inclusion, adding value and balance to the workplace, strengthening the business case. Also, when companies are able to map their roles strategically to customized flexible working models that are offered in the second career track, there is also a cost imperative associated. Studies have shown that implementing remote work allows companies to expand their pool of recruits. Companies reap the benefits of hiring across the globe and using talent remotely. They can do this while also reducing the need for travel, therefore cutting company expenses. Employers can hold interviews, training, meetings, and conferences in a virtual setting through internet and video. This provides drastic savings for businesses by cutting back on travel expenses. Businesses can also cut costs by reducing expenses like office space, supplies, utilities, and employee accommodations⁴.

India, the world's fastest-growing major economy, could add up to \$770 billion—more than 18%—to its GDP by 2025, simply by giving equal opportunities to women, according to a report by the McKinsey Global Institute. McKinsey estimates that a higher participation of women in the workforce, raising the number of hours spent by them on the job, and including them in higher-productivity sectors will help spur such economic growth. As women's contribution to the country's GDP is currently just 18%, one of the world's lowest, with only 25% of



India's labour force being female, India's economy also has the second-largest potential in the Asia-Pacific (APAC) region from improving gender parity, the report said⁵. Research has also helped establish that when more women join the workforce, wages rise, including for men⁶. Tapping into the second career women talent pool can be a definitive step, towards enhancing the number of women in India's workforce, the economic imperative being clearly established.

There are also social benefits to empowering women and making them contributors to the economy. Women spend 90 percent of their income on their families, and economically empowered women boost demand, have healthier and better-educated children, and raise human development levels, as per UN Research⁷. In a country that is on a growth path but is at the same time bound by rigid gender norms, when businesses engage with second career women, it could lead to more gender inclusive norms at the familial unit level.

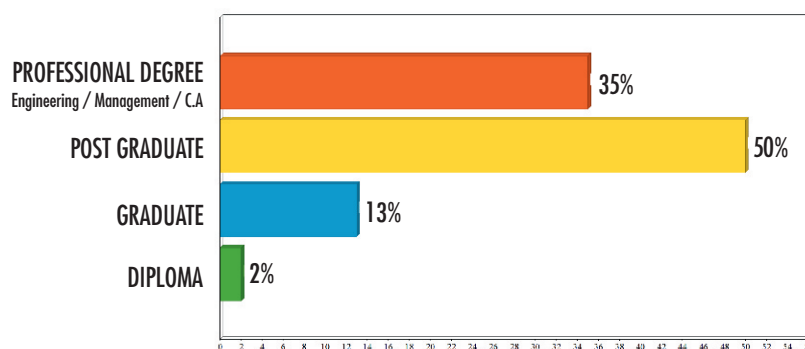
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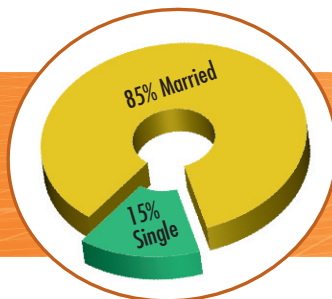
Survey of Women on career breaks

Study Contours

The survey on second career women was conducted between August – September 2019. We reached out to the talent pool of secondcareer women whose expertise were in domains as diverse as BFSI and manufacturing to education and healthcare. An online survey that covered the key aspirations of women on career breaks and their plans on making career comebacks, was administered. Few women on breaks profiled from the Avtar Women network were also surveyed, telephonically. The survey received a total of 783 responses. The charts present the key demographics on the segment of second career women who responded to the survey.

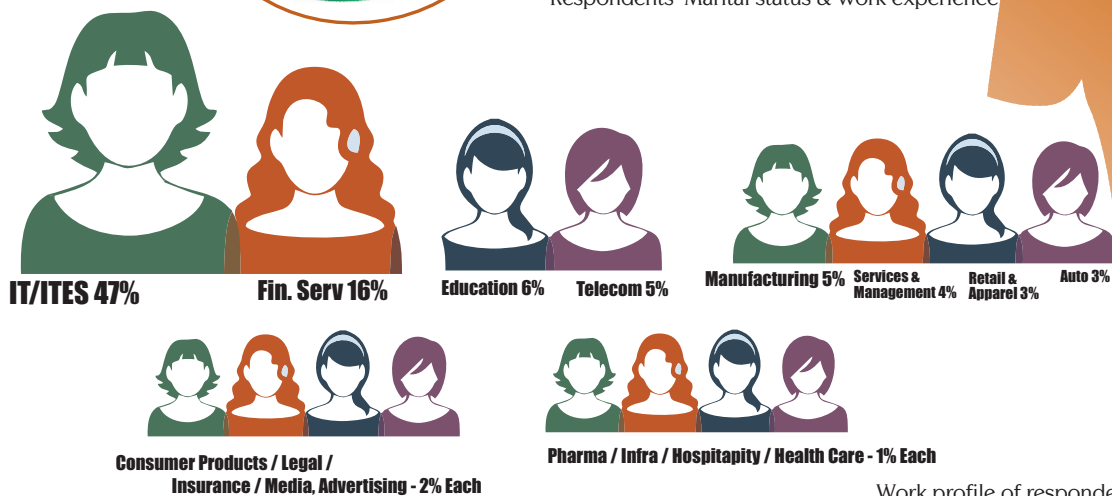


Educational backgrounds of respondents



Average Work Experience
9 years and 5 months

Respondents' Marital status & work experience



Work profile of respondents

Key highlights

The survey on second career women traced the career journey of women professionals, specifically the defining aspects of their breaks. From the reasons for their career breaks to their aspirations on their career returns to their engagement with social media and other channels to plan their return, the survey addressed several key aspects. In this section the key highlights that emerged from the survey results are shown.

Survey of women on career breaks

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CAREER BREAK SPECIFICS

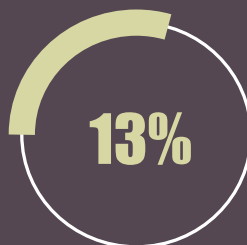
56% of women surveyed took their career breaks during the mid-career stage and 31% took the break during early career stages. This goes on to show that it is at the mid-career stage that women are most likely to face work-life integration challenges and hence take a break.



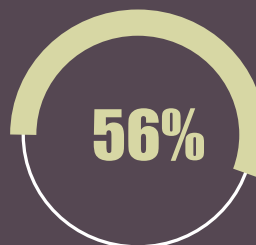
Maternity (35%) and motherhood related challenges (45%) remain the most common reasons for women to take a break from their careers. It is also important to note that close to 16% women take breaks for elder care responsibilities. Only 4% of women surveyed said they took breaks to pursue higher education. The results are indicative of the fact that caregiving expectation is what prompts many women to drop off the workforce.

Career stage at which break was taken

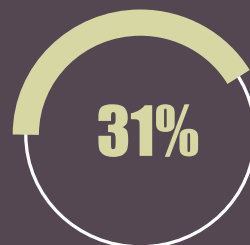
Advanced Career
over 15 years of
Work experience



Mid Career
5 -15 years of
Work experience



Early Career
under 5 years of
Work experience



**4 years
4 months**

Average duration of career break

The average duration of the career break amongst respondent women were 4 years and 4 months.

Reasons for taking a career break

45% MOTHERHOOD CHALLENGES

35% MATERNITY

17% RELOCATING TO PURSUE A HOBBY / PASSION

16% ELDER CARE RESPONSIBILITY

15% RELOCATION POST MARRIAGE

12% HEALTH CHALLENGES – SELF / DEPENDANT

04% HIGHER EDUCATION PURSUITS

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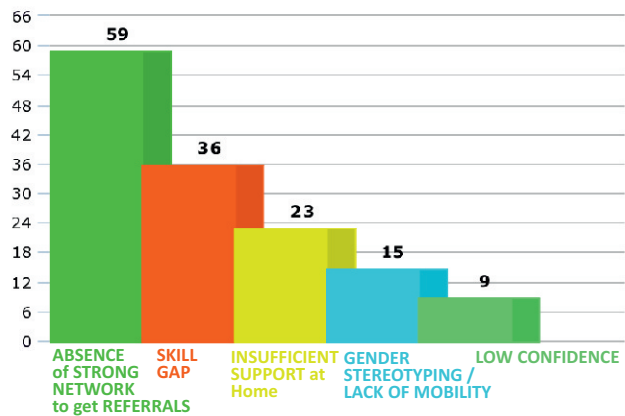
Survey of women on career breaks

CAREER RETURN CHALLENGES

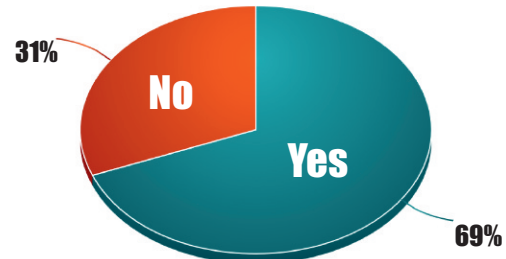
It is evident that the biggest barrier for women planning a career re-entry is their absence of a strong network to get referrals. Avatar's research in 2015 on 'Tracking the Career Trajectories of Men and Women in India to Assess Career Intentionality'⁵ had revealed that there existed a gender gap in terms of the key career intentionality pillars, with men being more invested in intentionally pursuing careers. The lack of active networks being a barrier may also be a reflection of this, while it could also be attributed to the gender role stereotyping in our country with the caregiving expectation weighed heavily on women, giving them little or no spare time to network and socialise. 36% of women also felt that there is a skill gap owing to their absence from the professional circuit, that acts as a barrier. For 23% of second career women, insufficient support at home served as a deterrent in their career come-back journey.

Women's response to a question regarding pay cut on Career re-entry, show that a majority of them – 69% anticipate a pay-cut on their returns. This data-point shows the prevalence of motherhood wage penalty (how mothers suffer severe wage and hiring disadvantages in the workplace), a gap that definitely needs to be bridged in the pursuit of wage parity. On the wage parity front, as per the Monster Salary Index 2019, women in India earn 19% less than men, reflecting a high gender pay gap [8]. To make workplaces inclusive of second career women and wage parity to be established, this gap needs to be necessarily addressed.

Key barriers for Career re-entry



Anticipate a pay cut in Career re-entry



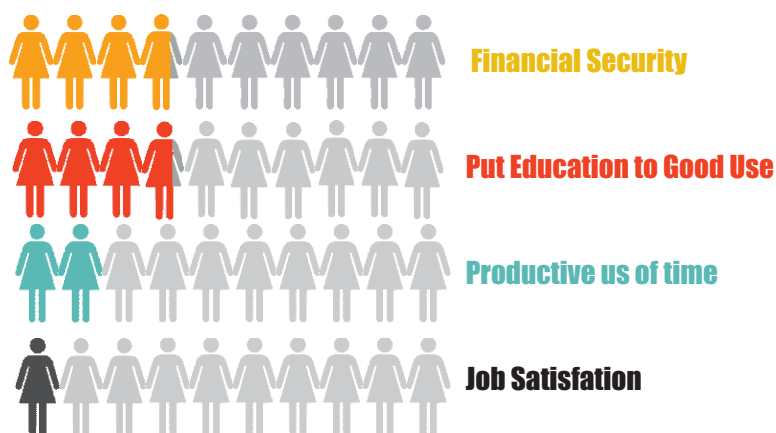
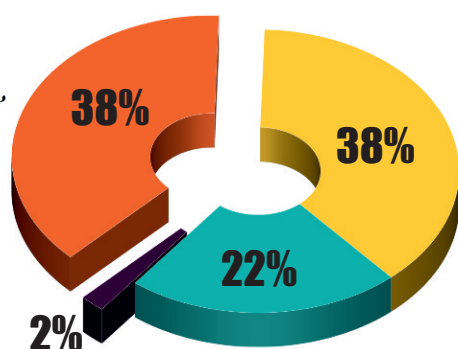
Survey of women on career breaks

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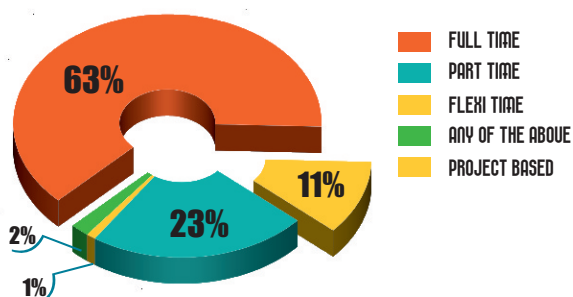
CAREER RETURN ASPIRATIONS

It is important to note that both financial security and putting education to good use are the primary drivers for women to make career returns, both recording a 38% response as the number 1 driver. The increasing need for financial security may be understood in a context of rising cost of living. While 22% of respondents also felt that they would want to make career returns to put their education to good use, 2% women said the primary motive of their career return was to ensure financial independence.

Most Important & Motivating Factors for Career Return



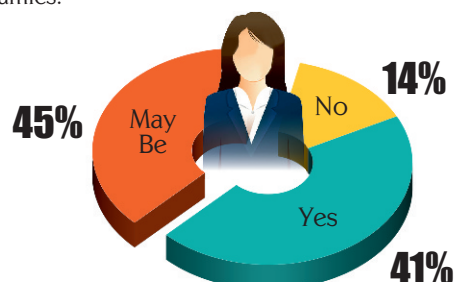
Type of engagement women want in their career return



It is interesting to note that for 63% of second career women, a full time role is what they aspire for. This is an indication of high career intentionality amongst this cohort of women. While 23% women said they would want to come back to flexible roles, only 11% are in the look-out of part-time assignments.

Plan to remain in core domain (core area of expertise) in the career return

For 41% of women, making a come-back in their own domain is important. However, 45% women were open to the idea of a domain shift and were flexible about this possibility. This goes on to show that a good segment of the second career women talent pool is willing to explore opportunities in the evolving market dynamics.



1

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Survey of women on career breaks

PREPAREDNESS FOR CAREER RETURN

Enrolled for Up-skilling during career break

With 69% women saying that they have up-skilled themselves during the break, it is clear that a vast majority of second career women are cognizant of the skill gaps that can occur owing to the fast paced evolution of technology and the way we work.

69%



31%



Identified mentors to aid career re-entry

66%



34%



66% respondents said that they have had mentoring conversations and mentors play a critical role in enabling their career come-backs. This is yet another indicator of the intentionality investment made by second career women for their career returns.

Professional networks second career women are part of

12%

were part of
Industry
Bodies

31%

were part of
Workplace
Alumni

65%

were part of



LinkedIn

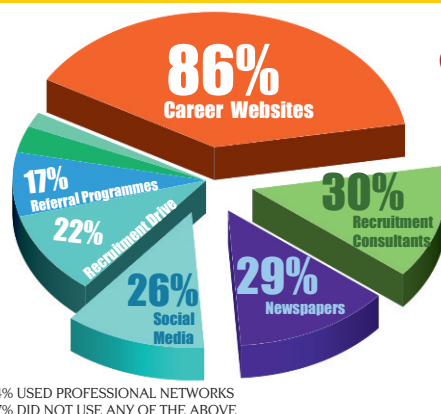
22%

were part of
School
Alumni

08%

were part of
Job Portals /
Peer Group
Network

It is good to note that 65% second career women are active on LinkedIn – the world's largest online professional network. This is yet another positive reinforcement of their intentionality. While 31% of women were part of their workplace alumni groups, 12% were part of industry bodies and consortiums.



Channels used for initiating career re-entry

86% of second career women respondents said that they had applied to job opportunities on career websites, this could also be an indication of the rising popularity of second career programs in India and greater visibility to these programs. While 30% engaged with recruitment consultancies to help them on their career comebacks, 29% said they also followed mainstream media job ads. Only 7% said they were yet to initiate their career return. 4% women said they were actively pursuing networking to plan their comebacks.

In Summary

The survey results indicate that the current cohort of second career women are intentional about their career come-backs and aspire to make purposeful career returns. From seeking mentors to up-skilling themselves to being active on professional networks (virtual and otherwise), they engage with various returnship enablers to make their come-backs smoother and quicker.

Second Career Programmes in 2019

Best Companies for Women in India

The Working Mother & Avtar 100 Best Companies for Women in India have emerged the front-runners in the path to gender inclusion, year on year, ever since the inception of the study in 2016. Amongst the various initiatives that the Best Companies have towards recruiting, retaining and advancing women, engagement with the second career women talent pool is a key area of focus. While in 2016, 30% of the 100 Best companies had formal second career recruitment tracks, in 2019, 54% companies had such formal programmes. 10% of all women hires in the 2019 – 100 Best Companies were second career women. Between 2016 and 2019, the 100 Best Companies for Women in India have hired 15,551 second career women, successfully reintegrating them into mainstream careers. The table below illustrates the specific kinds of programs these companies have for inducting second career women in their workforce.



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SECOND CAREER PROGRAMMES : CASE STUDIES

CASE : 1



Encore! India - Now in its third year **Encore!** is one of Barclays' flagship diversity and citizenship programmes that helps individuals who have taken a career break prepare to re-enter the workforce. This 12-week paid fellowship programme gives a strong platform to restart careers after an extended absence from the workforce. Women professionals can get attuned with the current industry trends and can sharpen their skills by handling projects using varied resources, mentoring and networking opportunities offered by Barclays. It also expands Barclays' talent pool with fellows who bring unique life experiences and perspectives to managing and navigating the workplace.

Testimonial

Arulmozhi Narayanasamy, a 2018 fellow, is now a Developer with Barclays. She had taken a break of few months to be with her new born. Arul found coming back to the mainstream had its own set of challenges... but with Encore! she felt the programme helped her to reinvent and made her confident by giving a first-hand experience.

Arul on her experience remarked,

"I feel more energetic and enthusiastic towards my profession after my comeback. There is a greater balance between my professional and personal life. I feel more confident and independent now. My team members and manager are very understanding and encouraging and I would like to thank them for their support."

CASE : 2



CAPTivate is Capgemini's Career Comeback initiative to support skilled female professionals who want to make a transition back into the workforce. Capgemini's ambition is to have a diverse workforce and they are injecting greater urgency into our efforts to tackle gender imbalances in the workplace. As part of their exclusive, women-only campaign, resumes are invited from enthusiastic and talented women—currently on a career break—who are looking to get back to their careers. Women who are currently not employed for a minimum duration of a year can apply to jobs that are relevant to their work experience. A minimum experience of 3 years is essential.

Eligibility and Selection Process

- Women who are currently not employed can apply to jobs that are relevant to their work experience. A minimum experience of 3 years in essential
- Candidates' resume will be evaluated against parameters such as technological skills and roles and responsibilities handled in their previous organization
- Suitable candidates will be contacted by the Capgemini Recruitment team to participate in multiple rounds of technical and managerial interviews
- Selected candidates are offered full-time, regular employment at Capgemini

Behavioral Developmental interventions and Integration

- Capgemini values Behavioral skills and conducts trainings to ensure smooth transition back to work.
- Mentoring engagements are initiated for the participants
- Various platforms of interaction with leaders and fellow participants are enabled.

LEADER'S QUOTE

"Stay relevant by continuously up-skilling yourself. Always make your aspirations known, ask for feedback, be open to feedback, and do something with that feedback. Work on getting the support you need to achieve that position."

Gayathri Ramamurthy, Lead Diversity and Inclusion, Capgemini India

SECOND CAREER PROGRAMMES : CASE STUDIES

Testimonial

"I was a successful working mom till my son needed me as a full time mom as he started struggling balancing his academics. It was a tough call as I loved what I was doing at work front and tried every possible way to hold my job back, balancing work and Home. But at one point I had to choose as I felt I was not doing justice to both and realized I can't be the super woman all times. My biggest fear then was who'll take me back again in a job with 15 years of experience and year plus break in Industry like IT. But I took the decision and discussed with my erstwhile employers & Family and took a career break in 2017 January.

Initial days in my sabbatical I was unsure where to start and what to do to occupy myself. Idle mind was proving to be devil's workshop. So decided to study and continued my passion for studying. I joined LLB from KSLU, Bangalore. Today, I have just one more semester exam now to complete my LLB degree.

During my break, I posted in LinkedIn saying I am back from Sabbatical and was looking for an opportunity. Capgemini leaders immediately responded to my post asking me to share my profile. They saw the career gap and I had my reasons to explain to them. Discussions were arranged for me with Senior People. Thanks to Capgemini they assessed my overall Personality, Capability, Attitude and more than anything my Perseverance and Aggressiveness to come back to mainstream in rightful way.

"I am proud and happy to have chosen Capgemini and be their Living Live example of their Diversity Inclusion Program supporting women returning back from career break."

Radhika Seenivasakan, Program Manager – Platform Services, Chennai, Capgemini India

CASE : 3

CREDIT SUISSE

WORKING MOTHER | AVTAR
The Power of Diversity

TOP 10 BEST COMPANIES
FOR WOMEN
2019

In 2014, Credit Suisse implemented an innovative program called "Real Returns". Launched in India in 2016, the program seeks to tap into a talent pool of experienced professionals (mainly women) who have taken an extended career break (2+years). The 12 week structured, senior level internship is comprised of unique projects, training, mentorship and networking that helps facilitate a smooth transition back into the workplace, and empowers returners with the tools and confidence to successfully relaunch their careers.

The program is tailored for participants, enabling them to work on projects with business critical elements and measurable performance metrics. Key aspects of the program include:

- Structured Training: Participants engage in a variety of orientation events and training sessions designed to help them transition back into the work environment. For example:
 - Tackling confidence issues - focused on leveraging career peaks
 - Personal Impact - focus on core skills to project confidence and increase presence
 - Understanding different work styles
 - Navigating a large organization
 - Addressing knowledge gaps
 - Tackling any psychological barriers that may hinder successful re-entry
- Network: Participants are able to broaden their professional network and build relationships across the bank by interacting with employees within the same business area as well as with other returners, and participating in a variety of networking events and speaker sessions.
- Support and Mentorship: The program is organized using a cohort structure with a view that returning as part of a small group will provide participants with additional support networks. Participants are partnered with senior level mentors and undergo one to one career coaching focused on long-term career goals.

Since its launch in India, with over 2500+ applications, 100+ participants have successfully graduated from the program, with 100% of participants finding the internship a valuable platform for restarting their career.

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SECOND CAREER PROGRAMMES : CASE STUDIES

Testimonial

"In mid-2018, I applied to Credit Suisse's Real Returns Program – a program that is designed to employ female professionals like me who have taken a career break. I had previously been with an investment bank in Singapore for 5 years; however due to personal reasons, I had to return to India and take a career break of almost a year and half. When I was ready to return back to work, I found the job search to be quite a struggle because of my break, even though I had 18 years of professional experience.

I decided to give Real Returns a try because it seemed like a great option for someone like me who was looking to restart her career. The program comprises a 3 months internship and is a win-win for both the candidate and the company as it can lead to a permanent role at the end of the internship. The HR and Business Heads who interviewed me were very positive and encouraging, and my discussions with them made me feel confident that joining the program was the right decision.

Alongside me in the batch were 14 women with diverse professional backgrounds, and each one of us was made to feel very welcomed in the organization in spite of our respective career breaks. The internship was a hugely rewarding experience for me and I was delighted to be given a full time role within the bank upon completion of the program. With the continued great support of my senior managers and the team, I have now successfully completed more than a year at Credit Suisse, and it doesn't seem like I had ever taken a career break.

The Credit Suisse senior management is very supportive of Real Returns globally and I am proud to have joined the bank through this unique program."

Chetna Bhatia, Vice President, Business Process Control

CASE : 4



PayPal believes it's possible to change the world. They did it more than 18 years ago, when they invented digital payments, and they wish to do the same when it comes to bringing more diversity into tech. 42% of PayPal employees globally are female. PayPal has also more than doubled the number of women in leadership since 2010.

Launched in 2016, PayPal Recharge is a unique six-week program focused on empowering women technologists in India, designed to help them jumpstart their return to the workplace after taking time off to explore their passions, develop interests, spend time or take care of their family. Recharge is open to women who have taken a personal career break for a period of 1-5 years, with at least 5 years of work experience in product development and analytics and with backgrounds in Java, J2EE, PEGA, test automation, release engineering, risk analytics.

Through Recharge, PayPal gives around 100 women each year, exposure to industry experts, providing them with a more holistic view of the tech landscape, learning the latest industry trends and helping them finetune their skillsets. This includes introduction to mobile app development and Node.js as well as mentorship sessions with PayPal technology leaders in the country.

The participants also go through a round of interviews which further narrows down the attendees to 30 Rechargers who enter a three-week technology boot camp conducted by PayPal as well as key industry leaders.

Towards creating a buzz for PayPal Recharge, the following were done:

- Leveraged PayPal Stars who have participated in previous editions of Recharge, giving them the opportunity to share their experiences of the program with other women
- PayPal ran robust PR and social media campaigns to raise awareness for the program and encourage maximum registrations for the initiative
- Extensive media outreach through press releases, media interviews, columns and opinion articles

SECOND CAREER PROGRAMMES : CASE STUDIES

In the last three years, PayPal's Recharge programme has received over 5000 applications, reflecting the potential of this initiative to further careers and has helped kick-start the careers of around 36 women the opportunity to work in its technology centers across Bangalore, Chennai and Hyderabad in roles including Software Development Engineer, Software Development – Test Engineer, Software Development Manager, Release Engineer and Risk Analyst.

LEADER'S QUOTE

"Women are a driving force for the economy in India. At PayPal, we are not only committed to building a strong and diverse organization, but also believe in the need to create a more gender diverse technology ecosystem. With PayPal Recharge, our goal is to help kickstart the careers of these women, pushing them to become trailblazers in the technology industry. The last three years have proven to be a success with us receiving over 5000 applications for this program since its inception, reflecting the potential of this workgroup. We are constantly working towards creating a supporting environment in line with our core value of Inclusion and hold ourselves accountable to demonstrating that value in many facets of our workplace."

Jayanthi Vaidyanathan, Senior Director, and Head Human Resources

CASE : 5

ThoughtWorks®

WORKING MOTHER AVTAR
The Power of Diversity

100 BEST COMPANIES
FOR WOMEN
2019

Vapasi - Bringing women back to work.

Vapasi is a free certified technical training program offered by ThoughtWorks to enable experienced women technologists who are currently on a career break to re-enter the world of Tech. Designed to address the gender gap in the tech industry, this bootcamp caters to the technical community and provides a holistic platform for women who have quit their jobs, by offering the requisite support and mentorship, striving towards fair appreciation and compensation for women. The bootcamp, spread over three-four weeks will help you sharpen their programming and testing skills through hands-on sessions. Vapasi is tailored for both Developers and Quality Analysts. The Vapasi Quality Analysts edition will help sharpen participants' testing skills through hands-on sessions on core QA practices, including Manual and Automation testing while Developers edition focuses on intensive hands-on programming experience in object-oriented programming languages.

The program is also a platform for women to interact with other women, to learn from each other and the trainers, and to discuss the latest trends in technologies. Towards the end of the program, we will direct them to open source projects they can contribute to during their free time so they can remain hands-on until they chose to get back to the industry. In addition, we also look at connecting these participants with senior women at ThoughtWorks who will be able to guide or mentor them and help them make the transition back to the industry. Once the women complete the program, they are given a course completed certificate and are free to apply to any company they choose. ThoughtWorks provides an internship to selected candidates, based on their performance in the program and their ability to apply object-oriented programming concepts. Post internship, all interested interns are invited to go through a formal (and shorter) interview process with ThoughtWorks and then join us as full-time employees.

Testimonial

"Vapasi helped me gain confidence and ignite a familiarity with emerging technologies. While the program's intensive format sharpened my existing skillset, what was truly impressive was the exceptional patience demonstrated by the trainers and mentors. Vapasi has helped me get my career back on track."

Soumia Annie Jose, an alumna of the Bangalore Vapasi program, ThoughtWorks

LEADER'S QUOTE

"We have always understood the importance of diversity at the workplace and are committed to providing an inclusive environment for our employees. Empowering women's success in technology, giving them enough confidence to resume their career and make their transition back to tech smoother are the key focus areas for us Vapasi program. We hope through the program, we provide more opportunities for women technologists to reenter the tech sphere and shine."

Tina Vinod, Head of Diversity & Inclusion, ThoughtWorks India

2
PART

SECOND CAREER PROGRAMMES : CASE STUDIES

CASE : 6

WELLS
FARGOWORKING MOTHER AVTAR
The Power of Diversity100 BEST COMPANIES
FOR WOMEN
2019

The Glide career continuity program is a highly customized offering from Wells Fargo EGS (India) for women returning to the workplace after taking career breaks to fulfill personal responsibilities that demand significant commitment. Women with eight or more years of experience, who have been on break for 2 years or more are eligible to apply for the six-month program. Unlike an internship, it is a 'Career Continuity Program.' The selected hires are on-boarded as full time employees from Day 1.

The structured learning regimen starts with a gradual ramp-up of work hours from part-time to full-time, offering highly customized training sessions to include brushing up soft skills or upskilling on technical aspects, meet-and-greets with senior leaders, HR, Women's Team Member Network, career counseling components, mentorship through networks/buddy programs and periodic performance evaluations to help support reentry to office life. The program has been successfully running for three years.

LEADER'S QUOTE

"The program was envisioned to address the loss of vast talent pools in the form of women unable to continue their careers due to personal commitments. There are a number of factors that make career re-entry difficult after an extended leave of absence -- be it catching up with industry technologies and practices, loss of confidence, or concerns about balancing personal and professional commitments."

Tanay Kediya, Senior Vice President, Head Payments, Virtual Solutions, and Innovation

"A career gap does not take away a person's inherent capability or their capacity to reintegrate into the workforce and start contributing, especially if they are given the right kind of support."

Nirupama Guruprasad, Senior Vice President and Chief Administrative Officer.

"We have seen two batches complete the program with nearly no dropouts at all. This goes to show that women on a career break are looking for that small window of opportunity to convert back into successful professionals. All they need is the right mix of time, effort, and faith in them."

Prakriti Panwar, Head of Diversity and Inclusion.

CASE : 7

ZenSar

WORKING MOTHER AVTAR
The Power of Diversity100 BEST COMPANIES
FOR WOMEN
2019

Diversity at the workplace in Zensar is a norm and seen as an investment towards building a better organization and contribute to business growth. They encourage it and envision it, for they believe that only when they have a workforce which is unique and yet different, can they hope and dream to consistently be where they are - in the space of innovation and consistent growth. With over 10000 associates spread across 48 nationalities, diversity has helped foster an atmosphere of mutual understanding and respect and enabled us to generate innovative ideas. Currently, the percentage of women at Zensar stands at about 31%, with a healthy mix across levels.

While they were doing well on the gender ratio score, they also realised that most of the women were dropping out before they reach the managerial cadre – primary reasons being marriage, relocation with husband and parental responsibilities. They realized that there was still an untapped source of talented women – of women who took career breaks for the stated reasons. Consequently, they decided to create a program which could help us identify and tap this Talent Pool. They successfully launched Enliven – an initiative to provide a platform to women who have taken a career break and wish to return to work. The initiative aims to encourage, give counselling and help women to overcome challenges and apprehensions in the Second Career journey.

The first step was a workshop - a joint venture with Women in Technology, Pune Chapter partner. While Zensar understands that hiring is just one part, they also recognised the need to sensitize managers and associates about the same. As a step in that direction, they began spreading awareness about this initiative within the organization – through emails to all associates, talking about the importance of this initiative, value that women coming from a career break can bring to the organisation and by seeking referrals of women on a career break. They made this initiative an inclusive one, and involved members from various teams to come together and ideate and execute this program. That also ensured that all bases – from hiring to training to awareness to policy changes.

Around 50 women attended the program during the launch, which had inspiring journeys shared by senior women leaders who spoke about the challenges in rising in one's career, especially with the responsibilities of a family, and how to deal with the same. Post the event, they received significant number of resumes of women who had taken career break, from associates. As a process, the selection / hiring of these candidates is handled by Zensar's Talent Acquisition team involved in this program.

As next steps, Zensar plans to conduct similar program across other locations in India like Hyderabad and Bengaluru. They are also working on defining internship programs, relevant HR policy changes and further awareness drives across organization. Zensar hopes that Enliven will really give another chance to the rather untapped talent, that deserves it!



CONCLUSION



Come 2020, we walk into a decade of opportunities & possibilities. Technology is becoming the most dominant enabler of work, of our times. What this can also lead into is a world of possibilities for second career women – the talent pool of skilled women who are intentional about the journey back. If companies can leverage the technology enabler to offer customised work solutions and invest their conviction in engaging with this talent pool, it can radically accelerate their journeys to gender inclusion. Companies who are starting on this journey can begin with women on their own employee alumni network/ex-employees and progressively expand the canvas to include other women on breaks with industry specific niche skills. Taking a leaf or two out of the structured best practices at the Best Companies, companies can also ensure ROI on their engagement models with second career women. While there are industry and sector specificities that companies may have to cater to, the model remains adaptable across. And the potential cascade effect is huge – more women in economically productive forms of employment, betterment in the labour force participation rate of women and more gender diverse workforces in workplaces across India.



TOP 10 BEST COMPANIES
FOR WOMEN
2019

2019 Working Mother & Avtar Top 10 Best Companies for Women in India



accenture

Accenture Solutions Pvt. Ltd.

 **BARCLAYS**

Barclays in India

CREDIT SUISSE 

Credit Suisse

Deloitte.

Deloitte in India


EY
Building a better
working world
EY

IBM

IBM India Pvt. Ltd.

KPMG

KPMG

 **PEPSICO**

PepsiCo India Holdings Ltd.



Shell India Markets Pvt. Ltd.

**Tech
Mahindra**

Tech Mahindra

WORKING
MOTHER

AVTAR
The Power of Diversity

100 BEST COMPANIES
FOR WOMEN
2019

2019 Working Mother & Avtar 100 Best Companies for Women in India

3M Science.
Applied to Life.

3M India Ltd.

ABB

ABB India Ltd.

accenture

Accenture Solutions Pvt. Ltd.

Adobe

Adobe Systems Inc.

ADP

ADP Pvt. Ltd.

agshealth

AGS Health Pvt. Ltd.

ANZ

ANZ Support Services India Pvt. Ltd.

aspire
SYSTEMS

attention. always.
Aspire Systems (India) Pvt. Ltd.

AstraZeneca

AstraZeneca India Pvt. Ltd.

AstraZeneca

AstraZeneca Pharma India Ltd.

SNC-LAVALIN **ATKINS**

Atkins, member of the SNC-Lavalin Group

AXA

AXA XL
(XL India Business Services Pvt. Ltd.)

BARCLAYS

Barclays in India

Biocon

Biocon Ltd.

**Boehringer
Ingelheim**

Boehringer Ingelheim India Pvt. Ltd.

CISCO

Cisco Systems

citi

Citibank

Cognizant

Cognizant Technology Solutions
Corporation

Collins Aerospace

Collins Aerospace

CREDIT SUISSE

Credit Suisse

CRISIL

An S&P Global Company

CRISIL Ltd.

**CUSHMAN &
WAKEFIELD**

Cushman & Wakefield India Pvt. Ltd.

CYIENT

Cyient Ltd.

CYPRESS
EMBEDDED IN TOMORROW™

CYPRESS Semiconductor Technology
India Pvt. Ltd.

DBS

DBS Bank India

Deloitte.

Deloitte in India

Deutsche Bank

Deutsche Bank Group

Dow

Dow Chemical International Pvt. Ltd.

WORKING
MOTHER

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100 BEST COMPANIES
FOR WOMEN
2019

2019 Working Mother & Avtar
100 Best Companies for Women in India

Lilly

Eli Lilly and Company India Pvt. Ltd.

ELICO[®]
HEALTHCARE SERVICES

Elico Healthcare Services Ltd.

MCM Midland
Credit
Management™
an encore capital group company
Encore Capital Group

EY
Building a better
working world
EY

Flipkart

Flipkart Internet Pvt. Ltd.

GE

GE India Industrial Pvt. Ltd.

gsk do more
feel better
live longer

GlaxoSmithKline Pharmaceuticals Ltd.

Goldman
Sachs

Goldman Sachs Services Pvt. Ltd.

HARMAN
A SAMSUNG COMPANY

Harman

HCCB
HINDUSTAN COCA-COLA BEVERAGES PVT. LTD.

Hindustan Coca-Cola Beverages Pvt. Ltd.

hp

HP Inc.

IBM

IBM India Pvt. Ltd.

ibs
Inventing future

IBS Software Pvt. Ltd.

iIndegene

Indegene Pvt. Ltd.

Infosys[®]
Navigate your next

Infosys Ltd.

integrä
powering content transformation

Integra Software Services Pvt. Ltd.

Invesco

Invesco India Pvt. Ltd.

JSW
Better Everyday

JSW Steel Ltd.

K RAHEJA
CORP.

K Raheja Corp.

Kellogg's

Kellogg India Pvt. Ltd.

KONE

KONE Elevator India Pvt. Ltd.

KPMG

KPMG

MACQUARIE

Macquarie Global Services Pvt. Ltd.

MAERSK

Maersk India

susten
By Mahindra

Mahindra Susten Pvt. Ltd.

go-m

MakeMyTrip (India) Pvt. Ltd.

mastercard
Mastercard Inc.

Mastercard Inc.

MetLife

MetLife Global Operations Support Center

Mindtree
Welcome to possible

Mindtree Ltd.

Mondelez
International
SNACKING MADE RIGHT

Mondelez India Pvt. Ltd.

Morgan Stanley

Morgan Stanley

Mphasis
The Next Applied

Mphasis Ltd.

MSD
INVENTING FOR LIFE

MSD Pharmaceuticals Pvt. Ltd.

Myntra | JABONG

Myntra Jabong India Pvt. Ltd.

Nestlé
Good Food, Good Life™

Nestlé India Ltd.

netmagic | NTT

Netmagic IT Services Pvt. Ltd.

WORKING
MOTHER

AVTAR
The Power of Diversity

100 BEST COMPANIES
FOR WOMEN
2019

2019 Working Mother & Avtar 100 Best Companies for Women in India

nielsen

Nielsen India Pvt. Ltd.

NOVARTIS

Novartis Healthcare Pvt. Ltd.

Omega
Healthcare

Omega Healthcare
Management Services Pvt. Ltd.

OPTUM®

Optum Global Solutions

PayPal

PayPal India Pvt. Ltd.

NORD
ANGLIA
EDUCATION

People Combine -
Nord Anglia Education - India

PEPSICO

PepsiCo India Holdings Ltd.

P&G

Procter & Gamble

ptc

PTC Software (India) Pvt. Ltd.

publicis
sapient

Publicis Sapient

pwc

PwC India

Qualcomm

Qualcomm India Pvt. Ltd.

Raychem RPG

Raychem RPG Pvt. Ltd.

RENAULT NISSAN
TECHNOLOGY &
BUSINESS CENTRE INDIA

Renault Nissan Technology &
Business Centre India Pvt. Ltd.

SHELL

Shell India Markets Pvt. Ltd.

SOCIETE
GENERALE

Societe Generale
Global Solutions Center

sodexo
QUALITY OF LIFE SERVICES

Sodexo On-site services

SONY
PICTURES
NETWORKS

Sony Pictures Networks India Pvt. Ltd.

Standard
Chartered

Standard Chartered Bank PLC

Standard
Chartered

Standard Chartered
Global Business Services Pvt. Ltd.

TARGET

Target Corporation India Pvt. Ltd.

TATA

TATA COMMUNICATIONS

Tata Communications Ltd.

STARBUCKS®

Tata Starbucks Pvt. Ltd.

Tech
Mahindra

Tech Mahindra

THALES

Thales India Pvt. Ltd.

ThoughtWorks®

ThoughtWorks
Technologies India Pvt. Ltd.

USTGlobal®

US Technology International Pvt. Ltd.

ValueLabs

ValueLabs LLP

verizon

Verizon India
(Verizon Data Services India Pvt. Ltd.)

Walmart India

Walmart India Pvt. Ltd.

WELLS
FARGO

Wells Fargo EGS (India) Pvt. Ltd.

Western Digital

Western Digital

wipro

Wipro Ltd.

Walmart

WM Global Technology Services Pvt. Ltd.

ZenSar

Zensar Technologies

ZS

ZS Associates India Pvt. Ltd.

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About Avtar



Avtar set up in 2000, is India's first diversity advocate & workplace inclusion expert. Renowned for its extensive work in the space of Diversity & Inclusion and more specifically, women's workforce participation, it is the country's largest provider of second career opportunities for women and is also the earliest to begin working on diversity audits and measurement.

Lead by the visionary Dr. Saundarya Rajesh, Avtar has ventured into areas of women's empowerment and career creation, which are firsts to India, such as – 1) Creating a marketplace for second career women to meet potential employers, 2) Developing a comprehensive set of career enablers which companies can implement in their workspaces, 3) Spearheading original research that has provided cutting edge insights to organizations 4) Re-Skilling, Up-skilling and Counselling of women to pursue sustainable career paths and 5) Building career intentionality amongst under privileged girl children. Over its 18 years of existence, Avtar has helped charter Diversity & Inclusion plans for several organizations in the IT, FMCG and Financial sectors in the country. Avtar in association with Working Mother Media (a celebrated gender parity champion of the US) conducts India's largest gender analytics exercise – Best Companies for Women in India (BCWI), which completed its fourth successful edition, in 2019.

www.avtarinc.com | www.avtarwomen.com



ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Dr. Saundarya Rajesh

Social Entrepreneur,
Founder & President, AVTAR Group

Dr Saundarya Rajesh is one of India's most respected thought leaders on Diversity & Inclusion. An award-winning social entrepreneur, she is best known as the pioneer of Second Career opportunities for women in Corporate India. She has been recognized as a "#100Women Achiever" by India's Ministry of Women and Child Development as also listed in the United Nation's "Women Transforming India". As part of the UK Government's initiative to recognize leaders from all over the world who are making transformational changes in their home countries, Dr. Rajesh was recognized as one of the Top 35 Global Changemakers and was featured in a specially-commissioned exhibition of portraits at a London Art Gallery. In early 2019, she won Twitter India's #Web Wonder Women Award for disseminating positive energy via the web. She is also, the only Indian to receive the "Winds of Change 2019" award by The Forum on Workplace Inclusion, Minnesota, USA.

A relentless advocate of the potential of women in the workplace, Dr. Saundarya is the advisor of choice for an impressive list of organizations and leaders on the benefits of Inclusion and Diversity. One of the earliest voices in India to speak about the need for gender balance in the workplace, her

diversity immersion sessions have benefited varied audiences, ranging from industry bodies to the police force, from entrepreneurs to college goers, from organizations like Accenture, Deloitte, IBM, Mahindra Group and Tata Group to small and medium businesses. Inspirational in her approach to tackling systemic issues faced by women, Dr. Saundarya has irrevocably changed the game for the Indian Woman Professional, by introducing the concept of "Career Intentionality" and "Career Reentry" to Corporate India.

An entrepreneur who has created successful, growing enterprises such as AVTAR Career Creators, FLEXI Careers India and AVTAR Human Capital Trust, Dr. Saundarya is also counted among India's early stage innovators in the space of Artificial Intelligence in HR. Bruhat Insights Global, founded by Dr. Saundarya provides cutting edge predictive and prescriptive analytics for hiring solutions. Bruhat was recently featured at the World Artificial Intelligence Show at Dubai.

Widely quoted on women's careers, entrepreneurship and inclusive leadership, Dr. Saundarya is a highly sought-after speaker at conferences -- both national and international -- and a firm believer in integrating work and life. In her pursuit to develop and inspire people to grow to their full potential, she has made her debut in through the book -- "The 99 Day Diversity Challenge™" published by SAGE that hit the stands on October 30, 2018. The book, in its pre-order window on Amazon, broke records by selling out within hours of its launch. The 99DDC™ has won several acclaims from industry leaders and has been designed to develop diversity and inclusion mindset in any organization or even individual within the proverbial 99 days.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

**Karthik Ekambaram**

Senior Vice President - Avtar

Karthik is a Diversity and Inclusion specialist who has completed several seminal projects successfully for various organizations. An MBA, with over 20 years of experience in business analysis, talent strategy and workforce diversity consulting, Karthik has devised flexible working policies and created diversity-ready workplaces for several fortune 500 organizations. He brings with him a rich experience of managing a wide range of requirements for creating futuristic workplaces.

As one of India's pioneering workers in the field of Second Career programs, Karthik has been a key architect in the re-entry of women into the workplace. He has worked on many research studies on Diversity & Inclusion, Second careers for women, Generations in the workforce, Flexible working and Work-life balance.

Karthik leads India's largest Gender Analytics study – Working Mother and AVTAR Best Companies for Women <http://www.avtarinc.com/bcwi.html>. He has also conducted Diversity & Inclusion workshop and audits for a number of organisations.

Karthik has also co-authored several papers that have been published in Journals of National and International repute. He has been conferred the DIVERSITY LEADERSHIP AWARD by World HRD Congress.

**Anju Rakesh**

Senior Manager – Research & Analytics, Avtar

Anju Rakesh, a CBSE national topper is a Computer Science Engineer from BITS, Pilani – one of the premier institutes of technical education in India. Research had always been her passion and in her career spanning 12 years, she has published several papers on women careers in national and international journals. In 2010, she was chosen to present her research paper at AAAI (American Association for Artificial Intelligence), a highly prestigious Artificial Intelligence conclave in Atlanta (USA). A listed co-inventor of two patents at the USPTO, Anju's tryst with 'gender analytics' started about half a decade back when the 3 Ms in her life – Marriage, Maternity and Motherhood reshaped her approach towards women's careers.

As Senior Manager - Research & Analytics at Avtar, Anju (a second career woman herself) has played pivotal roles in several women centric studies undertaken in-house - on career intentionality of women professionals, on generational diversity amongst Indian Women Professionals and economic centeredness of Indian women, to name a few. She is also the focal point at Avtar for Corporate India's largest gender analytics exercise that identifies and lists 100 Best Companies for Women in India – Working Mother & Avtar Best Companies for Women in India study, which recently concluded its fourth edition, after successful runs in 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019.

A WORLD OF OPPORTUNITIES AWAIT

WOMEN PROFESSIONALS
MAKING A CAREER COMEBACK

