

'If women don't grab chances, fear will set in'

Vidya Shah, CEO, EdelGive Foundation

■ ***How difficult was it to rise to the top?***

I think it usually is as difficult for women to grow in their careers. The only difference is that usually women have to make more trade-offs than men, as the responsibility of child-bearing and child-rearing falls respectively, solely and mostly on women. Whether for men or women, the role of the spouse in encouraging the other in career progression, bearing the weight of family equally and making compromises where necessary cannot be underestimated.

■ ***What are the typical obstacles women managers face?***

For many decades, the assumption has been that family and children are the most important concern for women. As women rise in their careers, this is what preoccupies them most. While bad bosses and a lack of a supportive culture may be blamed as being obstacles along with familial responsibilities, women will need to see workforce participation and career growth to be important to their own personal growth.

■ ***Your advice to young women managers?***

If women don't grab opportunities, fear will set in, not allowing them to take up new challenges. In the race to maintain a balance between family and work, women often go through self-inflicted guilt. All you need is to be organised and be good friends with your family!

