

If You Can Dream It You Can Get It

Hard work, persistence and excellence can turn any dream into reality. This was proved by Shweta S Prabhudesai when she topped CA Final exam of May 2004 with more than seven awards to her credit. In the following write-up she traces her journey from a student to a qualified professional and shares her views on challenges faced by women in the sphere of Chartered Accountancy.



CA. Shweta S. Prabhudesai

"If you can dream it... you can get it," is something I have firmly believed while pursuing the prestigious Chartered Accountancy course. Topping the CA exam was a dream I nurtured and it was a dream that transformed into reality.

I have always been a good student securing consistently decent scores in exams so much so that my friends and relatives were quite surprised when I chose Commerce as a career path after Class Xth rather than the normal Science stream. However, my mind was set on becoming a Chartered Accountant. I knew that it requires a lot of discipline, determination and dedication to excel in this course and was thus prepared to put in the extra effort. Till date, 26th July, 2004, the day my CA Final results were declared and I was informed that I had stood first, remains the best day in my life. It was a wonderful feeling and a sense of achievement, which continues to have amazingly soothing effect on me even today, particularly when I think about it in moments of frustration or despair.



Articleship in CA in my opinion is the best aspect of CA course. It just exposes you to the corporate world where one learns not only to conduct oneself well but also to keep up the effort and constantly improvise in work. It is an excellent grooming ground for young students. Realising the importance of articleship, I registered as an article trainee with Lovelock & Lewes (audit arm of PricewaterhouseCoopers in India). The kind of audit work I was exposed to was phenomenal. This helped me grow as

a person as well as professionally and I can say that it has contributed a lot in my success in the exam.

On qualifying as a Chartered Accountant, I joined Standard Chartered Bank and have been with the bank ever since. It was transformation from an aspiring student to a professional CA. During these years I have noticed that there is a growing acceptance of women at managerial level. Gone are the days where women were expected to be good only at clerical or teaching jobs. We are now getting equally good opportunities to climb high up the

Attempt the Impossible in Order to Improve Your Work.

corporate ladder. Having said that, much more is still desired. Though the number of students enrolling for CA is on the rise, it is still dominated by men. In spite of being as intellectually endowed and eager to prove, the fact remains that due to social expectations the priority for women is always family, and career can be thought upon only later. This background does affect the number of women excelling in the field of Chartered Accountancy. Many times due to a tightrope walk between family and career, either women lose out on growth opportunities or completely put the career on a back seat. A lot is required to change this attitude and an initiative needs to begin at our end. It is very important to have a firm belief in our own capabilities in order to convince others of the same. If determined and focused, both family and career can be balanced well.

CA provides an extremely good platform to showcase our abilities and we need to capitalise on it. There is a growing need to make women aware of this platform and opportunities arising therefrom. It is correct to say that Chartered Accountancy is one of the most difficult and highly respected courses in India. As a CA, we have a wide array of career options.

Over the years, the role of a CA has expanded considerably. Earlier, a CA was considered to be an expert in audit, accounts and taxation. However, now corporate world has realised that a CA has much more potential and is qualified and equipped to do much more. We can now see CAs in the field of research, treasury management and consultancy to name a few.



With the economy opening up, opportunities would further multiply.

One of the areas where women need to gear up is imbibing a professional attitude. In my opinion, we need to develop the following:

- Excellent professional skills
- Ability to be an effective team member as well as team leader
- Keep one-self updated on different topics. This need not be restricted to one's own area of work
- Accept challenges as these keep us going and fill us with a sense of achievement,
- Set high standards of performance and judge yourself against these.

Our Institute has recognised these needs and this can be seen through the various initiatives and amendments to course curriculum.

Introduction of CPE for qualified, GMCS for students, etc are just few of these.

To summarise, the journey from a student CA to a qualified Chartered Accountant has been a vastly enriching one. It has helped me evolve not only as a professional but as a human being as well. It has brought

with it a sense of responsibility towards the profession and society at large. India is on a fast track to progress and there is no dearth of good opportunities. This is the right time to strike gold and we as CAs, especially women, need to gear up to face the challenges of the profession and make the most of it. Together we must work and make a lasting impression of our capabilities on the world.

Every Job is a Self-Portrait of the Person Who Does it. Autograph Your Work with Excellence.