

### FEATURE

# Determined to Keep Going

**Priti A Sureka**  
Director, Emami Ltd

**T**hough from a conservative Marwari family, Priti Sureka, Director, Emami Ltd, has never let the existence of the gender bias hold her from going ahead in life. At the helm of affairs at Emami Ltd, heading the company's marketing and R&D division, she is a member of Emami's strategic think tank and is one of the key drivers of the crucial Marketing Division. The first woman director in the company, Priti is also the brand custodian of Boroplus, the most powerful brand from the bouquet of Emami with a staggering 74% market share. She was the mind behind the legacy of celebrity endorsements of Emami Ltd, and various other initiatives that have contributed towards the success of this Rs 6000 crores conglomerate.

**Q:** What is the strongest quality that has helped you grow both professionally and personally? 'Determination' is my strongest quality. I feel and I believe that 'determination' is a necessary trait for success and growth



in any sphere whether it is professional or personal. The 'undetering' power of the mind can let one overcome any hurdle in life. Determination gives the resilience.

**Q:** Tell us about your decision of joining the family business. Was it natural progression for you or did you (being the girl of the house) have to prove yourself to join the business?

I would not say that joining the family business was natural progres-

sion for me. Coming from a conservative Marwari family, it is but natural for the boys to join, but was a rather aberration to the general Marwari societal norms for a girl to join the family business. I was from childhood interested in business and work and initially, it wasn't well accepted. But I didn't bother about it for I knew what I felt was right. Fortunately both my parents and my husband are of a progressive mindset. Office and business are 'second home' and my passion.

**Q:** What are your thoughts on the existence of the traditional mindset which still keeps many capable women from joining the family businesses?

Traditional mindset, though evolving now, is still not on the desirable track. Women are still not accepted largely in the corporate world – the household calls, maternal calls are still seen as the primary duties of the woman and work and business are at best, accepted as secondary. I think our society is still to give due credence to the role of women in the corporate world.



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**Q:** Could you tell us about any milestones achieved in your business journey so far?

A strong arsenal of celebrities has always played a pivotal role in successfully endorsing various Emami products. However, the launch of Beauty Secrets by Madhuri was a memorable experience. Heading the R&D department of a company which believes in 'making people healthy and beautiful, naturally', we cannot afford to sit on laurels. There have been high as well as not-so-high points in this journey. But I have always believed in taking success and failure in the same stride.

**Q:** A personal experience or achievement where you felt that being a woman you've achieved something that you set out for?

Being accepted in the Board of Di-

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rectors as the first woman Director, according to me, was a culmination of all my credentials as a true professional.

**Q:** How do you achieve the balance between work and home?

I am strong proponent of time management, work planning and effective delegation. These are virtues which are talked about extensively, but hardly adhered to. The moment we learn to adopt them effectively in daily life, we'll find that a lot many things can be accommodated in the ordained 24 hour daily cycle. Moreover, for me it's not about doing a balancing act between work and home. These are commitments which keep me going and the urge of fulfilling them comes from within me. Hence they cohabit amicably.

(As told to Anuradha Kaul)