

WOMEN IN MANAGEMENT CAREER CASE INTERVIEW

Student's Name

Institution of Learning



Women in Management Case Interview

INTRODUCTION

There have been efforts to ensure women are involved in top management positions as much as men so that the welfare of women can be addressed during policy formulation. However, because there are fewer women in managerial positions, this has not been achieved in most cases. Women have been considered subordinate to men and they have not been able to work in most managerial positions. However, there are few cases of women who have sprung to the top management positions and have even become national leaders. These women act as inspiration to other women. In this paper, we present an interview with Indra Ndooyi, a woman who has worked hard to become the CEO of PepsiCo, about the experiences she has undergone as a top manager of a leading organization. This interview is aimed at enabling other women get inspiration from her and believe that they can also lead bigger organizations.

Q: Could you tell me about your family background?

A: I was born in a Tamil family in 1955 and my ethnicity is Indian. I have received a lot of inspiration from my family members to become an important person that I am today.

Q: What is other people's attitude to your career as CEO of PepsiCo?

A: Some people consider me being just lucky to have attained the position of the CEO of PepsiCo, while others think that my hard work and self-confidence are the contributing factors to being the CEO of PepsiCo. Some people have a negative attitude towards my position

because they consider it a man's position and that I am unable to work in this position as a man would do so that the company can be propelled to achieve higher profitability.

Q: What is your Educational background?

A: I attended Holy Angels Anglo Indian Higher Secondary School in Madras. Later on I got my Bachelor's degree in Physics, Chemistry and Mathematics at Madras Christian College in 1974. I also attained Master's, degree in Management (MBA) from Indian Institute of Management in 1976. I attended Yale School of Management where I attained Master's degree in Public and Private Management in 1978.

Q: Could you tell me about your career history?

A: Following the completion of my studies, I began to work as a Product Manager at Johnson & Johnson and Textile Company Mettur Beardsell. While I was in Yale, I attended a summer internship at Booz Allen Hamilton after which I joined Boston Consulting group (BCG), and then Motorola, where I held strategy position. I worked in this position until 1994 when I joined PepsiCo and became the president in 2001. After becoming the CEO of the company, I have been responsible for directing the company's global strategy as well as contributing to its restructuring such as diversification of its investments into Tricon. I have also been instrumental in acquisition of Tropicana in 1998 and merger with a number of companies with PepsiCo such as Gatorade. I became the CEO in 2006 and was named the 3rd most Powerful Woman according to Forbes List of powerful women in 2014.

Q: What has been the most important event in your career history?

A: I consider being ranked among the most powerful women in the world since 2008 to 2014 as the most important event in my life. I think,

it is an indication that I have been hardworking and people observe the impacts I have on the work place in PepsiCo. There are other events that have been important to me, such as being named the CEO of the year by the Global Supply Chain leaders, and honorary degrees that I have received from a number of universities, such as University of Warwick, Duke university, Pennsylvania State University and Wake Forest University, to name a few. However, my appearance in the Forbes list is the most important event in my life because it acts as an inspiration for women to reach a position I have reached and also believe that women are equally competitive as men in top management positions.

Q: Did you have any mentors or sponsors in your career as a CEO?

A: There are a number of mentors who contribute to my daily success in the managerial positions. For instance, I always seek mentorship from previous CEOs of the company regarding the manner in which particular challenges in the organization need to be addressed since they have experience in similar positions. I also try to ensure I seek the mentorship of researchers, such as professors in management, to provide the ideas regarding the manner in which particular challenges in the organization need to be addressed. Furthermore, I seek the mentorship of my former professors in the MBA class regarding challenges I encounter, so that they can conduct research on the activities of the organization and come up with a proposal which can be implemented to overcome the problems. In addition, the company has a number of sponsors who provide advice on the positive direction to be taken in decision making. The company also provides workshops so that competence is achieved in the areas of management and execution of duties in order for the competitiveness of the company and overall profitability to be improved.

Q: Has your family life been affected by your career as a CEO?

A: Generally, my family life has been affected by being in a managerial position. I have to be available at the office almost on daily basis and when I come back home, I am exhausted and have no time to spend time with my children or relatives. There are cases where I can attend international conferences in a number of countries. However, I have come to realize that the demand of being a CEO is accompanied with denying me certain privileges in order to attain success. Consequently, I am never surprised that I do not have enough time for my family members. However, we are formulating policies so that top management of the company will be provided with leaves every two months so that they can also undertake their domestic duties and ensure they solve problems in their homes as well as they do in the company.

Q: What are the biggest challenges you experienced in achieving your goal of becoming a CEO and how did you overcome them?

A: In my effort to improve my competence and become a CEO, I experienced a number of challenges. For instance, I observed that women were considered to be subordinate to men and they were not allowed to make decisions regarding policies of management of organizations. This hampered my effort to make my voice heard in areas where I observed men making errors. I also observed that I was barred from attending a number of conventions that laid foundations for management strategies of organizations. As a result, I missed a lot on some important strategies that can be useful in managing employees and tasks in the company. I also realized that despite being qualified in academics as well as managerial potential, I was sidelined in some avenues where decision making was involved because it was regarded as men-only affair. In order to overcome these stereotypes, I always believed in myself and did not tolerate any objections based on my

gender. This ensured male colleagues respected my position and I managed to control them.

Furthermore, I have experienced stereotypic opinions that since I am a woman, I cannot become an effective leader. In most companies I worked for, the management associated masculinity characteristics with success and accomplishments. They observed that since I was a woman, I could not be assertive, aggressive or oriented towards achieving a particular outcome. I was denied entry into a number of managerial opportunities. Despite these opinions about women, I have focused on what I can do so that people could observe the outcome of my action and determine whether a man would have done it better. This has ensured my position is respected since I achieve good results as any other male employee who needs promotion.

At a certain point in my life, I was in a dilemma whether to concentrate on my family life or dedicate my time to the services of the company. This happened when I conceived a child and was unable to work effectively. Due to the responsibility of having to take care of my family as well as ensure the affairs of the company are managed, I have experienced challenges that have forced me to employ a housekeeper who took care of our children while we were at work. However, this did not solve the problem because being a parent, when I returned home I had to play the role of a mother while also ensuring I have enough rest for the next day's activities.

Q: Did you encounter any ethical problems?

A: I have definitely experienced a number of ethical problems in the company during my period as an employee as well as a CEO. The first ethical problem is that women were portrayed as subordinates to male employees and could not get promotions unless they provided sexual favors to the top managers. This affected women's willingness to fight

for higher positions in the company because their marriages would be affected.

Another ethical problem I experienced is that there was a high level of corruption and fraud in the company by to managers. For instance, it was found that some accounting managers misappropriated funds for their personal benefits and did not account for them. In certain situations, I observed that the professionals involved in recruitment and promotion accepted bribes as an avenue that could ensure a person is employed in a particular organization.

In certain circumstances, some employees had poor working conditions that resulted in illnesses which affected productivity of the company. For instance, some employees were not provided with work leave and they were working under direct sunlight which affected their health and ability to work to their potential.

Q: What advice can you give to women starting out in the career?

A: I would like to tell women that they have equal potential as men and no one should deter them from achieving their goals. They should believe in their principles and ensure they have a strong conscience, which would enable them to determine what is right or wrong for them.

Thus, any women who experiences stereotypes, such as lack of suitability for being a leader due to her sex, should dismiss such ideas as less important towards achieving their goals. They also need to report any person involved in seeking sexual favors from them before they can be provided with promotions.

In addition, women need to ensure them attain modern education and training so that they can be as competitive as men in a number of

instances. They also need to implement the knowledge obtained during academic studies and during training to achieve the goal of being effective leaders in organizations.

I would also like women to seek services of mentors and counselors whenever they experience stereotypic opinions regarding their efforts to become top managers in organizations. They can obtain advice they can apply to ensure their focus towards being top managers is not affected.