

Meeta Wasan - Story of Meeta Wasan

By **Ridhima Sikka** - Aug 03, 2012

Published by - **Atelier diva**
www.atelierdiva.in

Meeta Wasan started Doon Consulting, a gurgaon based boutique-marketing services firm from her home. To be more precise from her dining table, since it was the largest table in the house and had plenty of chairs and plug points in proximity.

The self-funded venture is now in its eighth year of operations and has been profitable every year of its growth. Doon Consulting specializes in technology lead generation and sales force effectiveness measurement, a market it virtually created in India

Who is Meeta Wasan?

I am 39 and married with one daughter. I was a bit of an afterthought for my parents, after two sons, a fact that I resent to this day. Outgoing and gregarious, it was almost inevitable that I should end up in sales, and twenty years later, I have not left. I started by selling advertising space at a dating website (very fun) to high end clothing (which has very important lessons for sales in B2B space) as well as stints representing technology service and product companies. I started Doon Consulting in July 2004. This is the eighth year of Operations for Doon Consulting and I continue to head the company.



We know Meeta Wasan as an entrepreneur and founder of an IT company, what is the other side of Meeta that the world should know?

I am a terrible cook but hopefully a good host, a striving athlete, a lover of good wine and food.

What is your company all about?

Doon Consulting is a 60 strong boutique marketing services firm based in Gurgaon. We provide companies which sell high-ticket technology and services – think databases, CRM systems, ERP systems etc. with qualified leads and meetings with C or V level people.

How was your childhood? Where were you born? When?

I had a wonderful childhood. I was born and brought up in Delhi. I studied at Manav Sthali School and later went on to study English Literature. Since I am the youngest of three children and the only sister of two older brothers, I was thoroughly loved and spoiled. I have great memories of playing in the street, climbing trees, being scolded for getting home late from the neighborhood garden and breaking windows while playing cricket with the boys.

Tell us a bit more about your family?

I am married and live with my husband and daughter aged 11. My husband is the CTO and Co-Founder of a company based out of Boston, USA. My daughter is in class 6 and goes to a school in Gurgaon. We live in a quiet and a peaceful neighborhood.

What are your interests and hobbies?

This is a tough one to answer. I am a true Gemini in that I am interested in a whole lot of things and not one thing defines me or completes me. But, let me make an attempt to answer your question. (laughs) I love my work and am very passionate about what I do. But besides that, I love to spend time with my friends and family especially over dinner parties that are held in our kitchen over food and drinks made by my husband. (He is a fantastic cook!) I am also very interested in the theatre, music, dance, travel, and books and let's not forget shoes.

Passion makes one's life exciting. What are you passionate about?

I am extremely passionate about my work and that defines a whole lot of me. I look forward to going into work and doing what I do best and enjoy most. But, like I said, I am also passionate about other things in life.

Any obstacles you have faced. If yes, then what are they? And who was your support system?

I moved back to India with my daughter in December 2003 and started Doon Consulting in July 2004. I had never worked in India so faced numerous obstacles on several fronts. My life turned into a serious struggle. But, I had a great support system in my parents (my husband was still in the US). There were days I wanted to quit Doon and just be home. But, my parents, especially my mother encouraged me to not give up. I also found great support in my clients who encouraged, mentored and guided me along the way. And on my part, I was determined to be polite, persistent, focused, punctual and deliver a high quality product.

Tell us about your plans for Doon Consulting?

This should be a very interesting year for Doon. We plan to add a few more services to our repertoire and work on adding more value to our clients. Doon will also look to take its services to the International Market.

What changes did you notice in your life after your started your company and is it difficult to maintain balance between work and family?

The demands of our job and the industry can be very taxing. And yes, it can be very hard to juggle between the two roles sometimes.

How difficult is it for women entrepreneurs to run an IT company in India?

It is difficult to be an entrepreneur. It is even more difficult to be a woman entrepreneur. But, I can't say that it is any tougher because of the IT space that we are in. In fact, I often feel that it is quite to the contrary. I find that the IT space has many professionals and they understand and appreciate the value that Doon offers. It is competitive and a demanding Industry for everyone and not just for women.

Have you faced any obstacles in the initial years?

Yes. I faced many obstacles in the initial years. These obstacles were both at the home front and on the professional front. As we had just moved from the US, I had to struggle with basic things like finding a decent nanny for my daughter, to finding a good school and a neighborhood to live in. And, I am sure you know what a task this can be!

On the professional front, since I had never worked in India – I did not know anyone. So I started by making cold-calls and setting up meetings. I recall sitting outside offices for hours, days and sometimes even weeks to get the purchase order and to get the contract signed. In the initial days, I struggled with funds to pay my bills and staff. I struggled with finding a good team to work with. I had obstacles in various places and found glass ceiling at the oddest places.

Having said that, I also found great mentors along the way who made this struggle worthwhile.

Do you think being a woman is a boon or a bane in this industry? Or is it just inconsequential?

Despite facing many hurdles as an entrepreneur, I will say that being a woman in the IT Industry is inconsequential.

How well do women fare in this industry?

I cannot generalize. But, the women that I know personally have done very well.

What are your suggestions to budding entrepreneurs?

Maintain focus, be persistent, committed, honest and be sure to deliver the best quality product and in time. Most importantly, in my mind, never make a false commitment.

Are working conditions for women better abroad?

It appears so. However, having said that, I also know that there are many organizations in India that promote women workforce and give them the appropriate support needed to function well.

What inspired you to come up with the name Doon Consulting?

My husband grew up in Dehradun and suggested this name. So, I willingly accepted it.

How many women work in your organization?

This was not planned but it just so happens that all of our Senior Management are women at the moment. Besides that, almost 60% of our workforce is also a woman.

How do you empower them?

Essentially, I recognize that women have a different value system than men and provided one is respectful towards that, understand and encourage them to put family and other social obligations above work; they respond by reciprocating and are far more committed than men.

They have the flexibility to design their own schedule; they are allowed to bring their kids to work if needed (we have a crèche at work). My only pre-requisite is that the work needs to be par excellence and delivered in time. Till date, none of my female team members have disappointed our clients just because they are juggling two roles