

Brilliant Read

Interview with Rachana Chowdhary | Entrepreneur | Leader | Founder and CEO of MVW Network

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At BrilliantRead Media, we always strive to bring meaningful and powerful stories from India and around the world to empower and motivate our growing community. As part of this endeavour, we invited Rachana Chowdhary for an exclusive interview

with us. She is an Entrepreneur, Leader and Founder & CEO of MVW Network, a leading PR & Digital Communications Agency. Let's learn more about her incredible journey, background and advice for our growing community!

Excerpts from our exclusive interview with Rachana:

We are aware of your contribution to the ecosystem, talk us through your background and your journey as a women entrepreneur, please;

I did my schooling from the respected Atomic Energy Central School, Anushakti Nagar in Mumbai and further pursue my Bachelor of Commerce from SIES College of Arts, Science and Commerce, Mumbai University. A creative Kidpreneur at heart, I was an active school and college student and soaked myself in organizing and leading most extra-curricular activities.

Indian classical dance was a major part of my school life, as I learnt Bharatanatyam dance for 7 years from primary till middle school, and completed my post-graduation from Akhil Bhartiya Sansthan.

I had a great interest in drawing and painting and have received certifications in both the Elementary and Intermediate Drawing grade examinations of Maharashtra Board in middle school. I was also an active member of the National Cadet Corps (NCC), which gears you up for high-grade military services in future and was selected as the Best Cadet for my squad, 5 MAH Girls.

I had also been a part of the rigorous military training, for over 6 weeks to qualify to be one amongst the top five girl students who represented Maharashtra at the national level. Besides, I loved sports and played Hockey. I represented our high school team as a Hockey captain.

I maintained an extremely busy schedule and managed my way with academics with a goal to achieve distinction (75+) marks in my exam. I had decided to pursue Commerce studies and was clear to not pursue Engineering or Medicine, as most Indian students opted for.

I also remember conducting art and crafts home tuitions for many toddlers and pre-primary children, along with my elder sister, Rashmi Choudhury. On weekends, I used to refer to a few international magazines and used to create structural sketches of home furniture for a few interior designers. All this also gave us means to enjoy our time and earn some pocket money.

I had so much to do with so little time. In Grade 11, along with my elder sister, I had joined the Rotaract Club of Deonar, (a part of the Rotary International, Dist. No. 3140), to be amongst the youngest members and got actively involved in various social and community projects of the club.

During my first year at college at SIES College at Sion, Mumbai, I had decided to take up a part-time assignment with a leading market research firm at Dadar, Mumbai. At the job, I thoroughly enjoyed meeting and interviewing hundreds of people to gather their views about different brands or products. This was the pre-internet era, and we had no laptops or mobile phones. Data was collected in physical paper A4 sheets and then it was manually input in excel formats.

I grew up as a free bird and am lucky to have parents who never stopped me from doing more. I was determined to do two things on my 18th birthday. Apply for my driving license and apply for my passport. I had learned to drive and ensured I could appear for my driving license test exactly on August 13, my birthday and

had been to the old passport office at Worli, Mumbai to apply for the passport.

While I was appearing for my final Bachelor of Commerce graduation examination in March 1996, there was a vacancy advertisement we read in The Times of India (TOI) newspaper. Prestigious TOI Group was looking to hire Response Executives for their Satellite offices.



With no access to computers, my father recommended me to submit a handwritten application. It was to my luck that despite receiving thousands of resumes, my profile was shortlisted at the TOI office and I had to be invited for a series of selection interviews. I was selected and offered the job at 19 years old. Even before I received my graduation results, I had already started working at The Times of India, at Mumbai headquarters.

I started working at this large and dynamic media house and started admiring the role of

media. I joined a Diploma in Mass Communications, PR and Journalism, an evening program for working professionals at the reputed Xavier Institute of Communications, Mumbai.

What attracts you towards entrepreneurship instead of a corporate career?

I did spend over 12+ years working in different organizations in different roles. My role demanded meeting a minimum of ten-twelve new people every week, and over a period of time, I had met with over 3000+ professionals from different companies and had spoken/met with their CEOs and Marketing Managers.

I observed businesses of all sizes and learnt from every interaction. Since internet penetration in the country was taking place at a rampant pace, traditional business models had started to feel the grunt. I was soon working to understand how to relate to the universal task of businesses, but my corporate role often limited my conversations.

This symptom over years guided me to think beyond boundaries and maybe enabled me a creative mind to do business. In those years, there were no incubation centres or co-working spaces to explore your dream.

I had set up an earlier venture, which offered brands with analytics and reports on competitor's ad spends and growth strategies. In this venture, we were largely serving the IT Education market as a category and were doing fairly good. Due to the Y2K issue and technologies setting in globally, there was an exponential demand of IT workforce.

Millions of Indians enrolled their sons and daughters to learn computers to find a job in the US. Due to this demand, hundreds of computer institutes, across India's Tier I, II and III cities had emerged. India witnessed the franchisee business model for the first time, and computer education became a big business.

However, due to the unfortunate incident in the US, 9/11, suddenly saw a sudden decline of IT Education and people started to withdraw their children from computer institutes. Though we catered to a few more categories including consumer durables and retail, our dependency was more on the IT Education clients and within no time, we had to wind up our business.

Ironically, the day we were vacating our office premises, we received a letter confirming a huge business order from a prestigious governmental health institution to subscribe to our reports to track the Ads that were promoting the non-FDA approved drugs in India. Back then, I did not subscribe to the theory of having investors to grow and scale businesses.

But, by then our family situation had changed and we had decided to move on.

'MediaValueWorks' is such a unique name; talk us through more about it, please. Our audience would also love to know what kind of problem you are solving?

MediaValueWorks (MVW) represents the value we offer to clients by the works we carry in media. Our tagline 'Communicate globally' signals our expansive reach across India and Global media.

We communicate with over a million+ Influencers, penetrate 100+ ecosystems in 125 countries, in 45+ languages.

We handhold and mentor clients to develop laser-sharp marketing strategies to grow business in new markets.

What does your company specialize in?

MediaValueWorks, registered as MVW Network International Pvt. Ltd in India, and MediaValueWorks LLC in the US selects to work with global clients who are able to align, resonate and leverage the power of organic marketing to influence customers.

The rise of non-moderated content, backed by greedy algorithmic paradigms being consumed by active audiences has almost resulted in a societal fallout.

Most traditional methodologies, findings, best practices and recommendations seem to be not delivering sustainable marketing ROI, especially in the post-pandemic era. Businesses irrespective of their organizational structure are almost facing the same set of challenges.



An effective organic content marketing strategy thrives on building real connections with prospects and generating engaging conversations.

MediaValueWorks specializes in enabling clients with outreach strategies based on customer lifecycle, across four stages:

- > Build Your Brand**
- > Accelerate Demand**
- > Nurture Stakeholders**
- > Generate Demand**
- >**

How do you manage to keep going despite the challenges? What drives you?

I am a passionate entrepreneur. Imparting truthful guidance to people drives me. Life teaches many lessons, it's only learnt by people who choose to reflect.

A progressive and go-getter attitude has helped me bounce back from my many challenges; emotional, financial or health. While there are small day-to-day and operational challenges that one needs to live with and navigate, a few instances make you stronger.

Exactly a month prior to our wedding, I had a near fatal train accident in Mumbai, resulting in me to be in a life-threatening situation with a head injury and being in a coma and stay hospitalized for a few weeks. Time healed me and I could manage to walk and talk and get myself back on track with a positive attitude and determination.

Who do you believe has been the biggest source of motivation in your daily life?

Simple living and high thinking were taught to me by my parents. Courage and action, I learnt from my in-laws. Perfection and discipline, I learnt from my husband, Vikrant Chowdhary.

Since childhood, I have attended many workshops or have had the opportunity to listen to eminent and inspiring personalities from different walks of life. Global management lessons imparted by leaders like Simon Sinek, Ram Charan, Sadhguru, and Late Sumantra Ghosal are a few I have grown up watching.

Knowing people, their background, their thinking, how they live, where they come from, what they do, why they do and small actions carried out by people often move me. They could be helpers, community workers, strangers, co-travellers, doctors, nurses, or sometimes even tele-callers who strike up a conversation. I get inspired by very simple things.

My innate desire to excel drives me each morning to take on new challenges. I strive to pass on my Oorja (Energy) to my two sons, Oorjit Chowdhary, 19 years and Udayan Chowdhary, 14 years to do more each day.

What are some of the strategies that you believe have helped you grow as a person?

The overall growth of an individual is a combination of his/her personal, professional, spiritual, emotional, social and mental journey. Over my life journey, I have tried to accumulate a wealth of experiential learning, which often may not be taught in B-schools.

My relationship with people and how they reciprocate back to me in person (not in public) helps me understand my true self. Since I grew up measuring and auditing thousands of news media clips and have worked on many Online Reputation mandates across industries, I am often able to gauge and read between the lines and draw out conclusions on issues, not just local, but also on global subjects.

Over the years, at MediaValueWorks we have communicated and engaged with over 0.5 million International Journalists across 68 countries and published over a million International PR Stories.

This penetration and handling of several global clients have helped me develop a global and forward-looking outlook.

In your opinion, what are the keys to success?

While there are no standard recipes to become successful, one needs to have the basic discipline of having streamlined daily chores and routines.



A calendar to maintain your appointments, a brief summary preparation on the agenda prior to the meeting and a conclusive note post the meeting help a long way in winning situations and growing business.

Professional success drives personal motivation and both together make one believe he/she is successful. Also being successful is a state of mind, and it's a journey and not an end goal.

What advice would you give students and young professionals who want to have a successful career?

We are at a time which offers an abundance of opportunities. Never before in the history of mankind, has there ever been a moment where you have so much information readily available with access to people across the world.

We truly are an inflexion point, where young professionals, small and medium businesses, entrepreneurs can leverage the power within the intertwined ecosystems. Students and young professionals today by default have everything that the previous generations accumulated, maybe by investing a decade of hard work.

If you can back it up with a little bit of:

- (1) Deep thinking**
- (2) Detail plan**
- (3) Basic risk-taking ability**

You may soon start believing in saying even 'sky is not the limit'.

Last but not least, what are the three most important lessons you have learned in your life?

- (a) Reflect on your actions**
- (b) Withdraw and don't regret**
- (c) Respect people to earn respect**

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