



Women in logistics strive for gender balance

Till some years ago, women leaders were not seen in logistics and air cargo industries. But now, smart and passionate women are well prepared to take heights, with their core strategies and growth plans in place.

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Ritika Arora Bhola

Traditionally, logistics industry was a male-dominated sector, and for a long time, women were not allowed to enter the "blue-collared" profession. But not anymore.

The international logistics and air cargo industries are now completely in 'awe' of the outstanding contribution made by the women leaders in the so-called male-dominated sectors.

The industries have witnessed an increase in the number of women appointed at senior positions.

With constant innovation across the international supply and demand chain, the logistics sector is no longer about lifting and shifting consignments. The logistics industry today offers a plethora of opportunities in varied domains such as technology, e-commerce, warehousing,

shipping, and multimodal operations, and research.

As part of this feature, **CARGOTALK** talked to smart, erudite, and passionate women business leaders, who are determined to take the international logistics with their strategies and growth plans in place and air cargo industries to the next level and also bring gender balance at their places of work.



'Accepting a woman entrepreneur is a challenge'

Reema Jogani, Director, Reema Transport

DEALING WITH FAIR SHARE OF STRUGGLE, GROWTH

The journey so far has been challenging and interesting. There is something new to learn. Success and growth require managing daily operations efficiently and constant adjustment to ensure we remain at the forefront of the industry that is competitive and rapidly evolving. Accepting a woman entrepreneur is a challenge, both externally

and internally. I had to prove my worth by working in the trenches and executing daily operations. Ever since I have become the director of the company, the areas of responsibility are much wider and require more effort.

TIME TO ENCOURAGE WOMEN IN LOGISTICS

When I joined RTPL it was almost an all-male company. I made a conscious effort to recruit women, wherever possible. This small change literally changed the environment at work: it is now more sophisticated, sober, and less loud. We have also tried to bring about a change in the

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mind-set of employees also by inculcating the attitude of 'we' from the earlier 'me.'

CREATING GENDER BALANCE

The women are empathetic and view situations compassionately; this adds maturity and also a human angle. This ensures that there are women at every rung of the organization. The companies in the past institutionalized processes and value systems to perpetuate male domination. However, replacing the existing work culture with fluid, transparent, and integrated workplaces will enable the talented women to grow. Diversity management programs will help establish positive work culture and introduce fair practices in recruitment, promotion, selection, training, appraisals, among others.



'Work climate must be sans gender bias'

Jessica Tyler, President, Cargo, and VP, Operations Innovation & Delivery, American Airlines

BE EMPOWERED TO GIVE YOUR BEST

I am focusing on cultivating an environment wherein my team represents a range of diverse characteristics. In addition to gender and ethnicity, there are many ways to have a broadly represented team. My

goal is that my team represents and ensures an environment wherein everyone feels a part of the team, and is empowered to bring their best. When you keep getting better at both elements, you achieve results in an organised manner. Ensuring work environment is one where all can thrive, it is a responsibility we all must own.

CREATING WORK EQUALITY

We all have strengths and weaknesses, no matter our make-up or background. Building one's strength is the path to growth, and our teams have been designed that way at American Airlines Cargo. For example, designing a job role around a team member's strength, rather than forcing them into a box. I believe when we capitalize on what we are good at, as individuals, teams, large organizations or even as an industry, we set the foundation for great things to occur. My achievements are those which belong to the people I work with.



'Women are at the forefront of logistics'

Sakshi Gupta, Country Manager, India, Air Logistics Group

Currently, when women equality and empowerment is rising steadily, women are making parallel footprints in all walks of life around the globe. In India and some countries, there are still some pockets where gender bias exists and it is with awareness, motivation and persistent efforts that this gap can

be reduced. The 'winds of change are blowing.' My journey started with Air Logistics Group (India) and my mentor, VS Ahluwalia, who always had faith in my earnest efforts and willingness to learn and explore, believed that with resilience, clarity, calmness, nerves of steel, everything is possible. Joining this group propelled me forward and there was no looking back. Besides, the cargo fraternity was supportive, which ushered conviction that women can carve a niche of being 'Astute Architects' in any industry.

A VISION

Regardless of gender, it is paramount there should be a level playing field where equal opportunities are given to both women and men. The future logistics workforce, we hope, will accelerate gender equality, curate special roles, and give opportunities to more women. Just mere words will not suffice, it should show in reality.