

Master Your Craft and Continue to Move Forward #Women's Day 2020

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In conversation with Naomi Okazaki, Shimadzu (Asia Pacific), Head Marketing Innovation Centre, Singapore to applaud her inspiring journey through Asian Healthcare industry



International Women's Day 2020 embraced the world with its new campaign #EachForEqual, aiming to draw attention to the difference each woman can bring out. Gender equality is essential for economies and communities to thrive. The campaign is expected to bring about change by raising awareness of bias and calling out inequality and to cheer women's achievement. Asian Women have always pioneered in the healthcare sector with venturesome women heading the most influential positions in the different domains of health and medicine. Biospectrum Asia has always been mesmerized by our courageous women leaders in the healthcare industry and is celebrating this women's day with one such spectacular achiever Ms Naomi Okazaki, Head & Senior General Manager - Marketing Innovation Centre (MIC), Shimadzu, Singapore.

Ms Okazaki, with her strong leadership skills, started heading the Marketing Innovation Centre (MIC) at Shimadzu in Singapore since 2017, first as General Manager and then as Senior General Manager after effectively serving the role of Manager in Japan.

Ms Okazaki has been in analytical business for more than 20 years. She has the experience, knowledge and a thinking circuit that is different from others which fuel her daily cascade of thoughts, for doing things in a better fashion and improving her business and team continuously.

The marketing activities conducted by MIC over the past few years under the leadership of Ms Okazaki has established Shimadzu as a formidable global brand in the Analytical Instrumentation industry and has fueled the organisation's growth to Rank 2, as per the recent c&en.

On this special occasion of Women's Day, **Ms Naomi Okazaki** gracefully shared her views and journey with **BioSpectrum Asia** to inspire millions of women in healthcare.

What is your opinion on the lower percentage of women leaders in the Life sciences industry?

I'm a firm believer that leadership is not a function of gender. It's a skill set and frame of mind which one develops in the course of their life- both personal and professional. Irrespective of industry, a very small ratio of women in Asian society have been part of workforce or business operations. So, it comes as no surprise that we have fewer women who are really leading at the forefront.

Men and women are naturally endowed with some natural skill set which suits certain jobs. For general jobs, talent is the deciding factor. Being in analytical business for more than 2 decades, I have come across a sizable portion of female scientist as customers. At Shimadzu, we certainly respect their inputs and their insight for details and operations help us design better products.

Share your experience as an achiever in the Life Science industry and how you excelled to reach your goals.

My idea all through has been very simple and straightforward. When I was young, I focused on achieving the best result for every task assigned to me. It did not matter how big or small, new or regular the job was! This way I learnt a lot and I realised that being a woman does not mean that I should be on the backfoot. When I moved up the business ladder as manager and beyond, I learnt that appreciating and respecting your team members for their strength, irrespective of any bias, was potentially the most important factor for achieving success with varied missions. It helps you to play to the strength of individual members and plug in the gaps- which is our primary role as managers and leaders.

What would be your suggestion to encourage women towards leadership roles and how a prolonged change can be achieved?

Leadership is gender-neutral. If you have the opportunity and passion, being a woman should not hold you back.

Leadership is based on an individual's quality and orientation. If you are ready to take challenges, bring value on the table, see the world through different angles, meet and work with people of different thoughts or beliefs and essentially deliver with your team by fair means, then I think you are on the right path. In my mind, the best way to achieve your goal is to master your craft and continue to move forward. There is no stopping a person- man or woman, with such an attitude.