

## From Fashion to Pharma - Priyanka Chigurupati



**B**orn and raised in Hyderabad, Priyanka did her undergrad in the US with a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Management. Post that, she pursued a fashion marketing course at Parsons and started her career in fashion via her own label that she retailed through e-commerce, but soon switched to Pharma when she saw the growth potential of her family business, Granules India Ltd. She now shuttles between New York and Hyderabad, and looks after the US business of Granules.

### What is your role as the Executive Director of Granules US?

I am responsible for the US business which is roughly about 60% of the revenue of the company. Within the scope of my current role, I am responsible for the commercials of our OTC and Rx B2C and B2B businesses and also for a site which includes operations, finance etc amongst all the other divisions a business would typically have.

### You're the second generation of leaders in this business. What have you learnt from your predecessors?

Just a few points actually. This is something I started to learn seven years into the job. 1) Delegate, but just the right amount 2) Hire the best talent possible - especially people who can do your job better than you 3) Be aggressive while being empathetic 4) Make mistakes.

### Did you always want to join the family business or was it something that grew on you?

After finishing undergrad in the US, I pursued a degree in fashion marketing. I came back to India without too much clarity on what I wanted to do. I was an active blogger at the time and had my own label that dwelled in e-commerce. While that was taking time to pick up, Granules was spreading its wings to say the least and being the ambitious person I am, I decided to pursue a career in Pharma. It was an option which then turned into ownership.

### What does it take to be a woman entrepreneur in the pharmaceutical field?

Gender diversity is prevalent across all industries and pharmaceuticals is no exception. In a recent article I read, out of 49.5 million workforces in Pharma only 11% is represented by women. And when it comes to the leadership role, the numbers are even bleaker. Though we have some prominent leaders in the Pharma industry a lot should change to address the gender gap issue. I firmly believe that a change must start within us and for the same reason, we do things differently at Granules. We provide equal opportunity for women. You can see women working in our shopfloors, warehouses, head office— every vertical.

Granules also have a skill development program in association with the National Skill Development Corporation and Swarna Bharat Trust. We provide specialised courses in pharmaceutical manufacturing for students. We make sure that in a batch a certain portion of the intakes are women. I feel it is only through providing an opportunity to perform that we will be able to bridge this gender gap.

### What are the challenges you face, and what is the most rewarding part of your job?

Challenges in my opinion are taxing but are also opportunities to learn. There is a new challenge everyday which you have to overcome. The biggest challenge for me is that I can't look at my job as a job. It's my life to a large extent, so not being able to isolate it is the biggest challenge. Most rewarding as in any case is the progress you make.