

Academy for Women Empowerment

If you look at India's population, about 50% are women.

However, when you consider all professions and walks of life the participation of women is not yet at the level that corresponds to their percentage in the population. When you start looking at how much hiring can be done for the existing women, only 18% of the women are available. So, one starts thinking, okay, what about the women who are not working, or who were working?

We could realize that women who take a career break due to family, marriage, or other reasons find it very difficult to re-enter mainstream roles, particularly in the fast-changing technology industry.

Therefore, it's important to provide a helping hand to this brilliant talent available in the country and bring them back into the mainstream.

So, what we thought is, can we create a program where any woman who has worked in the field of technology in the past—given that we are a technology company—and if they want to come back to the corporate world or at least give it a shot, what can we do?

That's when we created the AWE program. The Academy for Women Empowerment is a space that invites you to come, train, prepare, build your confidence, and go back to becoming the person you may have forgotten you were. So, what really excites me about the AWE campaign is the role that it plays in bridging the gap between societal requirements and business needs, all the while keeping the future in mind. It's not just a check in the box for us; it's a real business enabler. A gap in a woman's career can cause her to forget her corporate identity. It gets buried under so many other priorities and tasks. The longer the gap, the deeper it is buried. However, NTT is now providing women with an opportunity by being a support system, a platform where you can reclaim that lost identity, dust it off, and start shaping it into what you want it to be tomorrow. There are multiple ways they supported us. We never felt that we were on a break when we resumed again. The passion they exhibited about their roles is evident in their eyes. For them, this job was far more important than it would be for somebody else coming from the market. They valued that opportunity, and it was very much visible. Six months before joining NTT, I lost my father. At the time of my joining, I experienced a boost in confidence. NTT provided us with a platform to demonstrate our capabilities, allowing us the opportunity to prove ourselves. You could say that I faced challenges and overcame them with their support as they give us many chances to prove ourselves. This comeback has been really important for me because it has helped me overcome a lot of obstacles in my life. I was given the option to choose any of the profiles, which was a significant opportunity. Nobody else would give you this option; that advantage

was not available elsewhere.

Many companies offer internships, but they don't guarantee jobs. This is not the case with NTT. They provide training along with job assurance. NTT will always have a special place in my heart. They gave me the opportunity to get back to work, which is a rare thing.

You don't get this opportunity easily, and as I said, it holds a special place in my heart. When the program details first came to me from the HR, I was a bit reluctant to accept women in operations because the technical field requires 24-hour shifts. We receive calls at any time, and it's challenging to ask women to work during midnight. During interactions, I discovered that they were highly energetic and enthusiastic about returning to work, ready to tackle any challenge. From that group, I selected nine females, and some of them outperformed my male counterparts. Currently, my team boasts the highest number of females working in operations. The whole approach is about holding their hand all the way. So, the purpose was not to offer them a job. The purpose is to make them successful in the job.