

Women Entrepreneurs

WOMEN IN BUSINESS Review

Women
Entrepreneurs Review *Top 10*
WOMEN LEADERS IN 2024
CONSTRUCTION & INFRASTRUCTURE



Women
Entrepreneurs Review
PROUDLY AWARDS

NAMRATHA RAO

FOUNDER, STUDIOAVY



The recognition of

'Top 10 Women Leaders in Construction & Infrastructure - 2024'

takes into account, the deep industry expertise of the chosen women leaders while also acknowledging their stellar professional achievements and the impact they have created on the Indian real estate landscape.

Rachita Sharma
Managing Editor



Women
Entrepreneurs
Review Top 10
WOMEN LEADERS IN
CONSTRUCTION & INFRASTRUCTURE 2024

NAMRATHA RAO

A MULTIFACETED LEADER
SPEARHEADING WOMEN'S
EMPOWERMENT IN THE INDIAN
CONSTRUCTION SECTOR

NAMRATHA RAO FOUNDER STUDIOAVY

An accomplished entrepreneur and multifaceted leader with over two decades of extensive experience across various sectors, such as Marketing, Advertising, Construction, and Interior design, Namratha started her career as a marketing professional and has worked across organizations in various senior positions as a Brand Manager, Marketing Manager, Product Manager, and Business Unit Head before venturing into her passion domain, Design & Architecture through her Bengaluru-based Interior Design & Construction firm STUDIOAVY.



WHEN STARTING A BUSINESS FROM SCRATCH, WHAT SETS THE STAGE IS TO BE PREPARED FOR THE LARGER ASPIRATION & THE PURPOSE YOU HAVE ENVISIONED

The Indian construction & Infrastructure sector has been predominantly male-dominated, with women barely making up around 12 percent of it. However, over the years, the construction & infrastructure sector has evolved rapidly with more focus on gender equality and diversity. A passionate Civil Engineer by degree, Namratha Rao realized the lack of opportunities for women in the sector, prompting her to test her abilities in other sectors, such as marketing and advertising. However, her passion for design and architecture eventually made her start her Bengaluru-based Interior design & Construction firm STUDIOAVY. Under her inspiring leadership, the firm has been providing end-to-end Construction & Interior Design services to its clients.

In an exclusive interview with Women Entrepreneur, Namratha sheds light on her prior industry experience and the inception of STUDIOAVY, the challenges she faces as an entrepreneur, and much more.

What are some important facets of your life and professional journey that you wish to highlight through the article?

I once read this quote; 'If you're brave enough to say goodbye, life will reward you with a new hello'. This thought is at the core of my functioning. I believe that

it is not only about individual occurrences in life, but also the overall attitude towards opportunities.

While deep passion and interest can urge you to move in new direction, the path is always laced with self-doubt and uncertainty. One must always carry a genuine motivation, an open mind, a strong conviction and willingness to learn before exploring possibilities.

Take us through your prior industry experience that you bring to the table.

I have been fortunate to work in multiple industries like construction, instrumentation technology, automotive spares and power tools. While understanding the nuances of each industry, my insights were further deepened with the different roles I held. As part of brand management, channel marketing, product management & retail marketing divisions, I have shaped communication strategies for business units, managed product portfolios, revenue & profitability targets and served as a Business Unit Head driving growth across India & SAARC. This exposure proved to be crucial for the shaping of STUDIOAVY. It also helped me understand my strengths and how I could leverage them while positioning ourselves as the right partner to clients.

What motivated you to take up entrepreneurship and establish STUDIOAVY?

My entrepreneurial journey can be summed up through the famous words, 'One meets his destiny often on the road he takes to avoid it'. My family was instrumental in leading me into this segment; my grandfather being a Civil Engineer from whom I drew inspiration and my parents who encouraged my interest.

Although I completed Civil Engineering earnestly, I was quite unprepared for the nature of work the stream demanded and the lack of opportunities for women in the sector. This prompted my move towards business management, leading to completion of MBA and later a Diploma in Advertising from London School of Marketing.

STUDIOAVY started out as a humble workshop in a garage where we designed & delivered customized projects to satiate our creative appetite. It was much later that we envisioned it as a business and started offering professional services. Four out of the seven years since its inception, the business was run as a side hustle. Eventually, it took shape and size where it demanded singular focus and dedication. It was then, with the support of Satish, my husband, that I switched to the entrepreneurial side.

In hindsight, it appears that all the knowledge, experience & education I gained over the years eventually led me into the same profession that I sought to distance myself early in my career.

Introduce us to STUDIOAVY and its key services and point of differentiation. How did your prior work experience help you in your entrepreneurial journey?

A design-build firm, STUDIOAVY offers end-to-end services in architecture, construction and interior design. Our vision is clear: to democratize design and make it accessible to all. In a highly competitive industry, what sets us apart is our co-curated approach, transparency and honest practices.

Firstly, my corporate exposure has been predominantly in male-dominated sectors. I have observed that good work is recognized, irrespective of the gender. This has given me a lot of confidence and trust in my abilities to foray into construction business and manage complex workforce. My second takeaway is the advantage of having a structured working plan. Even when starting a business from scratch, it is always beneficial to be prepared for the larger aspiration and purpose that one has envisioned.

In your opinion what are some of the most critical challenges you encounter as a business leader? What steps do you undertake to overcome these roadblocks?

A highly customized creative output is only possible when many hands work together towards a common goal. With multiple partners, distributors, sub-contractors, on-site teams; people are biggest asset in our industry. Driving this critical team to work cohesively was most challenging. Quite contrary to the belief that business owners have to display resilience at all times, I found that expressing my vulnerability to the team pushed them to rally together and work through testing circumstances. Such situations offer us a chance to foster trust, empowerment and empathy within the team.

Another challenge is empowering women in the industry; both in terms of skill & pay disparity. Majority of the workforce in construction comprises men. However, in my experience, I have observed that women too can excel as skilled workers in construction-related vocations. At STUDIOAVY, we do our best to change the pay disparity and provide equal working conditions for both men and women. [WER](#)