

*The manufacturing industry has always been dominated by men, however, Vedanta Ltd is trying to break the stereotype by providing the right ecosystem to acknowledge and support both men and women professionals*

**OUR CORRESPONDENT**

The manufacturing industry with its stereotypical imagery of 'gear and grease' has traditionally been a man's world. Social conditioning and lack of exposure had pegged manufacturing companies as a low-skilled, dull, rugged, strenuous and male dominated sector. For decades, regressive socio-cultural constructs and psyche had deterred women professionals from actively considering a meaningful career in manufacturing.

However, in a heartening trend of increased gender inclusivity, education and the great equaliser known as technology, we are witnessing the emergence of many women professionals opting for careers in the core manufacturing sector. Several women have paved the way, and others are continuing to follow the suit.

Continuing to encourage and empower women to work in manufacturing, Aluminium and Power Business, Vedanta Ltd is providing the right ecosystem to acknowledge and support both men and women professionals' unique needs at different life stages, while keeping work content meaningful and fulfilling.

# Women of 'metal'



women professionals to work in different shifts. In fact, some of our central security and surveillance teams in our largest operations in Jharsuguda in Odisha and BALCO in Chhattisgarh are managed and operated by all-women teams. Our central control room (the brain of the factory) that is responsible for running our refinery in Lanjigarh in Kalahandi, Odisha is operated by all-women teams and aided by digital technology. Even our plant operations use digital technology and world-class robotics and automation to ensure safe operations, minimal human intervention and mitigation of risk. In addition, the usual practices of high-end physical safety that involves using safety gear, security systems and guards, self-defence trainings, etc are also in play.

**Vedanta's work-culture has the excitement of a start-up and the stability of a large global conglomerate**

and women professionals' unique needs at different life stages, while keeping work content meaningful and fulfilling. "This is evident in the fact that many of the company's women employees are either handling or being groomed to handle significant portfolios in shop floors," says Ajay Kapur – CEO, Aluminium and Power Business, Vedanta Ltd.

The company's approach is to look at every role, no matter how non-traditional it is. Ajay Kapur believes women can and should be considered for every role from plant operations, security, R&D, marketing, maintenance, HR, PR, right up to fire-fighters, literally. There is a need of diverse thought processes and capabilities around the table to devise strategy, combat complex problems and chart new territory. Women leaders bring in perspectives different from men – on the technical as well as non-technical side.

Ajay feels what makes Vedanta stand out is the job content and meaningful responsibilities that the employees have when they work for Vedanta. "That really is what attracts them here and goes a long way towards tal-

ent retention. Roles are designed to be empowering and in addition to that our business is at a remarkable inflection point. This allows for a lot of innovation new ways of working and a truly diverse and inclusive workplace for unprecedented learning and a ringside view of global best practices."

"Since the company is constantly growing, developing new products and expanding its operations, Vedanta's work-culture has the excitement of a start-up and the stability of a large global conglomerate, both at the same time," he elaborates.

Throwing light on the safety measures that Vedanta as an organisation implement to uphold the rights of women at workplace, Kapur says, "Most of our operations are in self-contained industrial townships with all facilities. Our commitment towards safe and sound working conditions has made it viable for

we close the talent gap with women employees.

When asked about increasing the proportion of women leadership, Ajay Kapur said, "We need diverse thought processes and capabilities around the table to devise strategy, combat complex problems and chart new territory. Women leaders bring in perspectives different from men – on the technical as well as non-technical side. Without generalising, in addition to technical prowess they bring empathy, compassion and attention to detail to problem-solving and breaking new ground."

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