

MY FIRST JOB EXPERIENCE!



Radhika Balasubramanian,
Chief Operating
Officer, Sparsh BPO
Services Ltd,
Intelenet Global
Services' domestic
business subsidiary

MY FIRST JOB WAS AS AT A COMPANY CALLED DHL, which was then a division of AFL Limited. I used to work in the sales division and reported to V A Ibrahim, who used to head the western region. In those days, there were neither mobile phones nor computers/workstations, so you had to learn to take decisions on your own and think on your feet; you could not keep going back to your boss for every little thing. Since I was new to corporate life, he provided a lot of guidance, yet the freedom to operate independently which led to a lot of learning. And I apply those lessons in my current corporate life too.

I STARTED AT RS 1000. I received my first increment only after 13 to 15 months of joining as I missed the first appraisal cycle immediately after joining and had to wait for the next one, which was 13 months later.

ALWAYS STAY RELEVANT, WAS ONE OF THE LEARNINGS DERIVED. My first goof-up occurred when on a sales call with a key client; I talked about how large my organisation was. It did not have any impact on the client. I later realised that the pitch that I made had absolutely no relevance to the client. This experience taught me the importance of highlighting the benefits that my

organisation could deliver, which were of relevance to the customer.

MY ABILITY TO INFLUENCE PEOPLE WAS MUCH APPRECIATED...I had been assigned a key task of reducing the company's (DHLs) outstanding. Through constant follow up and co-ordination, I managed to bring down the outstanding balance from 20 lakh rupees to just nine lakh rupees. This was much appreciated as it was not done as a 'boss' but as a team member who took on the responsibility. It also highlighted to my boss and senior colleagues, my ability to influence people, in a positive way.

IN MY FIRST JOB, I DID NOT HAVE A WORKSTATION/ DESK AS MY BOSS BELIEVED THAT SALES PERSONS SHOULD BE OUT OF THE OFFICE selling and not in the office. So while in office, I operated out of a carton containing my stationary. One day when I returned to the office, I was extremely upset to see my colleagues use the carton to sort out bills. Then I had an argument with them to communicate that I did not appreciate them using my "space". I think they understood that and stayed away from the carton from then on!

- Viren Naidu