



father and others which have helped you shoulder this responsibility?

My father's qualities and the values that he taught continue to guide me every day of my life. He encouraged me to become the best version of myself and wanted me to grow up into a strong individual who made her own mark in the world.

Working with him, I have learnt the nuances of business and what it takes for a business to be successful. The valuable lessons imparted by him continue to guide me and help me carry out my responsibilities as the chairperson. Though I have gained immense knowledge from him, the most important learning was the power of teamwork. He believed in team spirit and always said, 'Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much'.

His analytical thinking, decision making, problem solving and discipline are all qualities that were remarkable and I have imbibed these from him.

He was my mentor and his guidance encouraged me to take on various responsibilities in life.

I am determined to carry on the legacy of my father, by taking MHD LLC to greater heights of success.

In what ways are you steering MHD LLC in a new direction?

Starting at the grass root level helped me understand the business processes from close quarters. Though my father was my guiding force at every step of my career since inception, he also empowered me to take business decisions. These business decisions were a learning curve and helped me in my career growth.

As a chairperson, my vision for MHD LLC is to further its progress over the years, strengthen relations with our business partners, foray into new sectors and expand our footprints by acquiring new agencies, keeping a keen eye on our financial performance and helping young Omanis to grow and actualise their potential.

I am also trying to prepare ourselves for a future that is constantly evolving and

changing, which necessitates us to be knowledgeable and expeditious to the changes in the business environment. Critical thinking is important and I encourage my staff to question and analyse a business from different perspectives. We have to make space for new ideas and I encourage my staff to come up with new and better processes.

Diversification is important both for business growth and reducing risks. As a result we are planning to grow our business lines, and are constantly on the look-out for more products to serve our customers. Focus and discipline are critical to success and I am working on inculcating these values across MHD LLC.

I firmly believe that every challenge is an opportunity and the way an organisation faces them determines its success

The economic environment in the GCC has been challenging in the last few years. How has the Group negotiated these challenges without compromising on its core values?

Low oil prices over the last couple of years have adversely impacted GCC economies over the last few years. This coupled with intense competition has proved to be a challenge. However, we have managed to grow albeit at a slower pace by being prudent, enhancing efficiencies and diversifying our sources of revenue in line with the country's vision without compromising on our core values of focusing on community interests, employees and customers. We keep revisiting and updating our business plans regularly to keep pace with the changing market dynamics. I firmly believe that every challenge is an opportunity and the way an organisation faces them determines its success.

There are only a few women leading a company as large as MHD LLC in the GCC region. What are the qualities that have enabled you to reach such heights?

There are a number of factors that have enabled me to succeed. I grew up in a business family and I have seen my mother involve in business decisions. Seeing my mother play an active role, I realized that women too can be successful in their chosen field and balance their work and family life. Her positive influence helped me to pursue my goals and believe in myself.

I started and developed my career by working under my father. Having started at the grassroot level and gradually risen through the ranks gave me a good understanding of business across the organisation.

I learnt from him that there were no short cuts to success and that hard work, perseverance, honesty are integral to success.

Over the years, I have built on these values. The first and foremost quality that any entrepreneur needs to have is passion. The passion to succeed and excel in what I do is what paves the way for the future. Along with passion, being disciplined and focused on the objectives and achieving them despite all hindrances is equally important. I am an open-minded individual and for me every situation presents a business opportunity. Besides these time management, perseverance and determination are all qualities which have helped me succeed.

You have recently been ranked amongst Forbes Middle East's 100 Powerful Businesswomen in 2020. What are your thoughts on this achievement?

It's an honour for me to be listed in the Forbes Middle East's 100 Powerful Businesswomen 2020 and I am overwhelmed by this recognition which has been bestowed on me. This recognition inspires me to pursue my goals and walk the extra mile. It's also encouraging to know that the hard work is paying off.

I attribute this success to the wise



leadership of the Late His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said and his vision to lead Oman on the path of progress and to my father who was the architect and mentor of MHD LLC.

I would also like to thank the employees of MHD LLC for their contribution and support as they play an integral role in the company's success and are our true assets.

I am proud of the fact that Omani women are making a mark for themselves across different sectors. The Late His Majesty Sultan Qaboos stressed on Omani women playing their due role in Oman's society and economy and presented them equal opportunities in education, employment and social development. As a result, we have seen the rise in the number of Omani women playing an active role in government and private sectors. I am sure in the coming years more and more young Omani women will play an important role in the nation's development.

What are your thoughts on 2020 and its prospects for business?

Under the visionary leadership of Late His Majesty Sultan Qaboos, Oman has achieved remarkable progress and prosperity in every sector of the economy. Oman has lost an exemplary leader and the presence of Late His Majesty Sultan Qaboos will always be missed by the nation.

However, we are confident that under the leadership of His Majesty Haitham bin Tarik, the Sultanate will march ahead on the policies and path of prosperity and development laid down by the Late His Majesty Sultan Qaboos.

Overall, the Sultanate is steadily diversifying its economic base from hydrocarbons to sectors like logistics, manufacturing and tourism in line with Tanfeedh's vision. Oman's Vision 2040 strategy seeks to catapult the Sultanate into the ranks of the world's most 'developed nations' and its key goal is to make the business environment attractive to foreign investment.

With new laws and regulations, the business environment is becoming more favourable for business and this will definitely promote the Sultanate's position as an investment destination capable of attracting foreign capital.

As the country's youth are the future of the nation, their development is significant for the progress of the nation. The National Youth Commission plays an important role and a number of youth initiatives and activities are promoted by them. These initiatives give the youth an opportunity to develop and realise their full potential. More young Omanis are joining the work force and contributing to Oman's economy which is a positive sign.

Overall, the strategy and initiatives of the government augur well for Oman's economy. We are committed to the strategies and plans set by the government and I am confident that under the leadership of His Majesty Haitham bin Tarik we will achieve our objectives. **OER**