

SHAHNAZHUSAIN, Founder, chairperson & MD of the Shahnaz Husain Group of Companies

'Beauty is a people's business, so communication skills along with tact and diplomacy are important'

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The beauty and wellness industry in India has seen steady growth over the last few years. According to ASSOCHAM, the size of the beauty products business in India is over Rs. 5000 crores. Given the scope of opportunities in this field, noted expert Shahnaz Husain shares some tips for those aspiring to enter the wellness industry. Edited excerpts:

Is this a good time to pursue a career in beauty? Does a beauty training open up other avenues for growth?

The beauty business is booming, with tremendous potential for growth. If we take the beauty salon service industry into consideration, it includes the spa business, as many salons are including spa treatments, as the "total well being" concept steadily gains ground. With the growing demand for beauty care, there is a corresponding demand for professionally trained personnel. A high school certificate opens the doors to training and skills and to career opportunities as beauty / spa therapists, masseurs, hairstylists, make-up artists, manicurist / pedicurist, laser therapists, aromatherapists, beauty advisors, product consultants, salon and spa managers, beauty school and yoga teachers and freelance beauticians and make-up artists. Our sales counters in malls and stores have trained beauty advisors. Make-up artists and hairstylists are in demand in the fashion, television and film industries, as well as for special occasions, like bridal make-up.

What tips and advice can you give young people looking to enter into the beauty business? First and foremost, it is necessary to get professional training in beauty. The days of apprenticeship training are over. If one can acquire advanced training in a particular field, it can be an added advantage. For example, laser therapists are required for hair removal and some skin treatments. The desire to learn and ability to adapt to change are important, because this is one field where



• Shahnaz Husain

trends keep changing and new products, treatments, techniques and innovations are constantly being introduced. Beauty is a people's business, so communication skills are extremely important, along with tact and diplomacy. It helps to build up a client base. For those who wish to take up advanced make-up, I think a special aptitude helps. A colour sense, with an aptitude for colouring and contouring can also help. Of course, it is also possible to learn the techniques and acquire skill through practice.

Tell us something about Shahnaz Husain's Beauty Training Academy and the courses it offers.

I started my beauty training academy in 1976. At that time, mainly apprenticeship training was available. I realized the need for a comprehensive professional training programme, comprising of both theory and practice. Preparing students for beauty entrepreneurship, in terms of starting one's own salon, was also a part of my vision. In fact, it led to our franchise system. A minimum school leaving certificate is enough to start training in beauty, yet it gives the opportunity to complete courses right upto an advanced level and go into related fields. The courses are flexible in terms of duration. Students can choose from a

diploma, advanced basic diploma, as well as advanced diploma in skin, hair design, make-up, ayurvedic treatments and yoga. Certificate courses are also available in make-up and hair styling, yoga and ayurvedic treatments, nail art / body art and personal grooming. As part of corporate social responsibility, we offer free beauty courses for the speech, hearing and visually impaired. In fact, I have written a book on beauty, which has been put into Braille. We are also contributing to the government's skill development projects in the field of beauty and wellness for underprivileged women. Over 40,000 beneficiaries have been trained and certified till now by the Shahnaz Husain Beauty Training Academy. After the training, a complete tool kit is provided free, for home-based businesses and freelance beauty care.

What are the opportunities available in India and abroad for those wishing to be a beautician?

There are several beauty training courses and polytechnics where it is possible to get professional training in beauty. In fact, there are many government polytechnics in several cities in India, which have beauty training courses. Some salon chains also run their own schools. In the UK, there is the London

College of Beauty Therapy. Some cosmetic companies abroad also have their own beauty training schools, like Lancome, Christine Valmy, Helena Rubinstein, etc.

What have been the highlights of your career as an entrepreneur in the beauty space?

In 1971, I started my own herbal salon in a small way in my own home and adopted the principle of "Ayurvedic care and cure" devising my own salon treatments and formulating my own products. In 1979, I adopted my own business model, based in a Franchise System and opened my first Shahnaz Herbal franchise salon in Kolkata (then Calcutta). I adopted this franchise system to open salons in India and abroad. I established customized beauty care, based on the client-card system, with diagnosis and prescriptives. I did not rely on commercial advertisements and followed the "word of mouth" system. Shahnaz Herbal became known for treatments of specific skin and hair problems and therapeutic products, based on Ayurveda. They became breakthroughs in salon care. Entering the international market was our major achievement. I participated in the Festival of India and got a counter in Selfridges. We broke the store's existing sales record and were given a permanent counter. I entered Galleries Lafayette in Paris and my Flower Power range was launched there by Barbara Cartland. I became the first woman to receive the World's Greatest Woman Entrepreneur Award in 107 years, from the New York based Success Magazine. I was also honoured with the Padma Shri Award and received the Golden Peacock Award in London from Theresa May.

At Harvard Business School I spoke on how I established an international brand name without commercial advertising and subsequently became a Harvard Case Study on Brand Creation. Now I am a Harvard subject and part of the curriculum on "Emerging Markets," in recognition of the international market for Ayurvedic beauty care created by me.

Assocham pitches for privatisation of public sector banks

The 'crisis' in the Indian banking sector, particularly in the public sector space, should be used as an opportunity to privatise the banks, industry body Assocham said. But it must be done in a manner that the exercise gets "wider acceptability," it said. For starters, the government equity, which is as high as 80 per cent in some public sector banks, should be brought down to below 50 per cent. "The moment the government equity is below 50 per cent, the banks would be out of the clutches of the CVC, the CBI, and the CAG, giving more autonomy and confidence to the top management to lend freely without fear of being haunted," said Assocham secretary-general DS Rawat.

PTI

Assocham pitches for privatisation of PSU banks

PRESSTrust OF INDIA
HYDERABAD, 27 MARCH

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Besides, the boards would then be much more professional and the independent directors would be truly independent, according to him.

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ministry, although the Reserve Bank of India should and would continue to play the role of a regulator, but in a much more effective manner," he said.

However, Mr Rawat said, privatisation of the banks should not be done in a harsh manner and be done in a way that is acceptable to the "political leadership."

"No signal should go as if with privatisation, the priority sector lending norms would be diluted. The narrative must be built to the effect that the government can use both PSU and private sector banks as the agents of change, without hurting the interest of the lenders," he added.

ASSOCHAM pitches for privatisation of PSBs

AGENCIES

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