

"Gen-Next Entrepreneurs Have Taken the Best Lessons of Today and are Adding New Ideas for the Future"



Tara comes with a sense of gratitude and not entitlement," says Anand Singh, chairman emeritus of the \$2-billion Max Group, about his youngest daughter Tara Singh Vachani. She has broken the myth, Singh lets on, that a family member can work only with father or a patriarch.

Tara Singh Vachani heads Antara Senior Living, a residential community for senior citizens in Dehradun, which will see the first batch of residents moving in by the end of this year.

Vachani joined the Max Group in August 2008 as part of the corporate development team and worked there for a year. Over the next three years, she did

extensive research on the concept of a residential community for senior citizens, which included multiple overseas trips to the US, Japan, the UK, Australia and China to understand how it worked in developed countries. The result was Antara Senior Living.

The idea, says Vachani who studied politics and South Asian studies at the National University of Singapore and strategy management at the London School of Economics, is based on creating communities for like-minded people over the age of 60. The vision is to make them feel that getting older is a joyful thing, she says, adding that the first community in a 150-acre project in Dehradun will have over 200 apartments.

Vachani reports to Max Group President Rahul Khosla, and consults her father periodically but only on matters that she has first discussed with Khosla.

So what are the qualities that she admires in her father? His ability to build relationships and sustain them, she says.

For his part, Singh reckons that women entrepreneurs are less complicated, usually task-oriented and functionally driven. "This is definitely the case with Tara," says Singh. She is an open-minded and fair individual who is neither territorial nor arrogant, says Singh, adding that succession becomes possible and smoother when a family member demonstrates capability and passion.

Today's entrepreneurs, says Singh, work in a more straight forward environment with relatively easier access to capital and talent.

Vachani is conscious of this fact. The opportunity to have the support and benefit of the success created by the previous generation is a privilege very few have, she says. But the sense of responsibility to uphold the values of parents is far more challenging than being an independent entrepreneur, she says.

So is it easy being a second-generation entrepreneur? "It is quite challenging to ensure that you carve out your identity and leadership skill set. It is easier when you are compared with no one," says Vachani.

Tara Singh Vachani, 29

CEO, Antara Senior Living, a residential community for senior citizens

Joined Max Group in August 2008 as part of the corporate development team

Worked for a year and then started working on the concept of residential community for senior citizens

Antara Senior Living, part of the Max India Group, will see residents moving in by end of this year