

In light of International Women's Day, as well as Saudi's 2030 vision, we talked to three inspirational women, who completed a Qudwah Program, about their leadership journey, their role models and what it means to be successful business women in Saudi Arabia



Amira Ali Mohsin

Amira has a strong passion for digital innovation and technology, and she currently holds the position of Digital Subsurface Solutions Business Development Manager.

Overall, Amira's deep understanding and passion for digital technology make her an invaluable member of her company.

Amira is proud to work for a very inclusive company that believes gender has no role in determining one's skills. The company provides equal opportunities for training and career advancement based on merit and work performance. Amira believes that her company's approach to inclusivity has played a significant role in her success and that of her team.

Amira believes it is important for women to believe in themselves and their ability to balance their career and family life. While societal and cultural factors can make it more challenging, progress is being made and it's important to continue striving for equal opportunities and representation in leadership roles.

"It's a global issue that affects women everywhere, but with the right support and mindset, women can succeed in both their personal and professional lives."

Amira found the leadership and communication tools shared in the Qudwah / DDI Leadership Programme



Hessa Al-Humaidan

Hessa has a strong passion for finance and numbers. She believes that women have the capability to exceed expectations, not just meet them. She has eight years of experience in finance, and despite the challenges faced by women in the oil industry field, she is confident in the abilities of Saudi women to succeed in all fields.

She notes that her company's culture is inclusive and provides equal opportunities for both genders, with recent initiatives like Saudi's 2030 Vision increasing the chances for women even further.

While Hessa acknowledges that it is natural for women to focus on family due to their motherly instincts, she believes that the culture in Saudi Arabia encourages this mindset even more. She notes that this is not just a Middle Eastern or Asian cultural phenomenon, but a global one.

"I do remain optimistic about the opportunities available to women in my country and believe that we are lucky to have access to them."

Hessa expresses gratitude for being nominated for the Qudwah / DDI Leadership Programme by her management. She feels that they have trust and belief in her abilities and are investing in her for a greater journey.

Hessa has gained personal and leadership skills from the course,



Duha Al-Shammasi

Duha started her leadership journey when she graduated from high school and left the Kingdom to pursue her studies. She had to learn to depend on herself and be responsible.

After graduation, she faced limited opportunities for women, which made it challenging to find a suitable position. However, she persevered.

As one of the first women to lead a sourcing team, Duha faced a unique and challenging journey. However, she proved herself and showed that women can successfully lead a large department. Her experience taught her the importance of perseverance and determination in achieving success, especially in male-dominated fields.

Duha has faced several challenges in her leadership journey. She had to come up with different strategies to ensure productivity while maintaining empathy towards her colleagues. She used a firm approach to ensure deadlines were met and made sure to meet their personal needs as well.

Despite the challenges, Duha feels fortunate to work in her organisation, where there is equal opportunity for everyone.

She clarifies that the company provides equal salaries, training opportunities, and support for women

to be incredibly valuable, particularly as she manages a team.

Through the course, she gained a deeper understanding of the power of preparation and planning, whether it be for a delegation plan or a conversation planner. By outlining her objectives and end goals ahead of time, Amira was able to approach situations with greater clarity and purpose.

"One key takeaway for me was the power of empathy. This lesson really resonated with me, as I realised the importance of putting myself in the other person's shoes."

"Overall, the course provided me with practical tools and techniques that I can use on a daily basis in my role as a leader, making it a valuable investment in my career development."

When asked her role models (Qudwah's) are, Amira admires three women who have achieved success through hard work, skill, knowledge, and empathy. The first is the former CEO of PepsiCo, while the second is a former colleague and the third woman is Oprah Winfrey, who, despite a challenging background, has managed multimillion dollar businesses with grace and poise.

When asked about what advice she would give to young women, Amira suggests surrounding oneself with strong and supportive women, trusting one's own judgement, and believing in oneself. She believes that these qualities are essential to achieving success and encourages young women to stay true to themselves.

Amira further encourages young women to be independent and strong, and to believe in their own abilities to succeed.

including self-awareness, empathy, and feedback management.

"I think it's very important to have diversity, especially in leadership positions. Diversity brings different perspectives and ideas to the table, which can lead to better decision-making and problem-solving. It also allows for representation and inclusivity for all members of the team or organization."

In Hessa's personal experience, she has seen the benefits of having a diverse team.

"We have people from different backgrounds, cultures, and genders, and it has led to better collaboration and creativity in our work. It also allows us to better understand and serve our diverse customer base."

"However, I do acknowledge that there can be challenges in promoting diversity, especially in certain industries or regions where there may be cultural or societal barriers. But I believe it's important to keep pushing for it and creating a culture of inclusivity and acceptance."

Hessa's role model is the Saudi Arabian Ambassador, HRH Reema Bint Bandar Al Saud. She admires her and follows her Twitter account closely. Hessa looks up to her and aspires to be like her one day.

When it comes to advice for young women, Hessa emphasizes the importance of self-belief. She believes that every woman is capable of achieving anything she sets her mind to and should not let anyone else's opinion affect her.

leaders. She considers herself lucky to have such a supportive workplace.

"I believe that women have the ability to make a significant impact and difference in their roles."

"Being nominated for the Qudwah / DDI Leadership Programme showed me that my management sees potential in me and wants to empower me to develop my leadership skills in a structured way."

"I believe that this training will help me make more solid leadership decisions and be better equipped to handle complicated situations."

Duha does not have a specific woman as a role model, but she enjoys reading articles and watching TED Talks about successful women leaders and the obstacles they faced.

She has read about many successful women and their stories. She does however remember a speech given by Huda Al Ghassan, where she shared advice and talked about how she overcame obstacles to reach senior positions at Aramco. Huda's story and advice have stayed with Duha.

Duha's advice for young women is to never give up and keep looking for opportunities because if one door closes, another one will open. This is a fundamental mindset for any woman to become a successful leader.

