

SISTER ACT!



Sitara Shipping Ltd.

SONS OF THE FAMILY RUNNING A FAMILY BUSINESS IS SOMETHING THAT WE HEAR ABOUT EVERY DAY. DAUGHTERS DOING SO, BIT RARE & DAUGHTERS RUNNING A FAMILY BUSINESS IN THE SHIPPING ARENA - NOW THAT'S A NOVELTY!



Capt. Sahi with his daughters

Ever thought about doing business with your sibling? As kids, the two were partners in crime, the two Sahi sisters never thought that one day they would be working together! Here's what Sumi Sahi and Sanjam Sahi Gupta have to say on their 'Sister Act'.

Both the sisters are the Directors of Sitara Shipping Ltd. and Astral Freight Forwarders [Pvt.] Ltd. and are heading the Non-Vessel Operating Common Carrier (NVOCC) business for the Indian Subcontinent and Middle East business.

Having joined the family business as trainees in 1997 and 1999 respectively, they have helped establish Sitara as one of the key players in the ODC and project cargo market handling projects for the US Defence Forces at Diego Garcia, a naval base.

They both draw inspiration from their father who has taught them to excel with determination, hard work and willpower. They have seen how he raised the company with his sweat, blood and toil, and are committed to follow his vision to take Sitara from strength to strength.

It was their joint effort that won their company, 'Outstanding family Managed Business 2013' Award at the S.P. Jain Institute of Management and Research (SPJIMR) Award ceremony on February 9, 2013.

It's all in the family!

Sumi and Sanjam took the plunge into their family business over 15 years ago and spent these years wisely-fulfilling their childhood dream. Enthralled by the shipping industry, from when they were two little girls in pigtails, they recall visiting all the ships that their father handled as a shipping agent.

They wanted to follow their father's - Capt. Satnam Singh Sahi's footsteps, as he had instilled the love for sea and the passion for Marine Industry in his girls.

The sisters agree that they have big shoes to fill, those of a father who is a stalwart, having been in the industry since the past 50 years and whose humility has kept them grounded.

They chose to join him in the family business which is under the name of 'Sitara Shipping Ltd.' Sumi who was first contemplated to take up teaching as a profession; and Sanjam having nursed a desire to foray into the field of education, finally followed their heart and joined the family business in 1999 and 2001 respectively.

They agree that working together has been the best thing they've ever done, despite the boardroom bickering, they spend nearly 24/7 in one another's company.

They stress the importance of trust and being able to read each other's minds.

Sumi and Sanjam play on their strengths and complement each other very well. They always rely on each other and trust each other's advice!

Sanjam Says "We can still finish each other's sentences and second guess what the other one is thinking, which is highly beneficial for both of us and our business. There is the trust and loyalty that only shared genes can buy!"

Sumi says: "Family get-togethers quickly turn into business brainstorming sessions, but it's great to work with someone who knows you so well and can offer the right support or a good kick in the right direction, without offending you!"

They both agree that things are far more efficient and get done a lot quicker due to the work chemistry they share as sisters - there is no tip-toeing around each other and if they don't agree with something, they don't hesitate to say, "We're loving every minute of it!"

They always have each other's company while travelling for work and develop new ideas whilst getting the opportunity to spend quality time with each other. They know each other well enough to use their strengths to their advantage and peruse their passion for shipping together.