

INTERVIEW/PARUL SHUKLA, IMAGE 4 U CONSULTING, MUMBAI

Have passion to bring out creativity

By K.V. Rajasekher

After graduating in business administration from Cardiff Business School, UK, Parul Shukla did her MSc in International Employment Relations from the London School of Economics. She then worked for Merrill Lynch, UBS and Standard Chartered before deciding to go it alone. She took a course in image management and has set up her own image consultancy. Excerpts from an interview:

Having worked for some of the world's best known corporates, what made you shift to image consulting?

I wanted to start my own business and embark on a career in image management, which lets me combine my personal interests and passions with my job. My experience helped me a great deal.

What is image consulting all about?

It involves advising individuals on various aspects of clothing, etiquette, grooming, communication skills and body language. It is a one-stop solution for enhancing one's image for personal, professional or social reasons.

What is the course content?

The course is split into two sections, the first being professional development, which includes communication, selling, training and public speaking skills. The second is technical knowledge, which includes clothing, lines and designs, colour analysis, body and face types, fabric and pattern selection, skin care, make-up, weight management, etiquette and fine dining.

Is heavy investment needed to set up a consultancy?

The main investment is the course. As my work is consultancy-based, I do not have to incur the costs of office rent/purchase, staff or overheads which is typically the case when starting a new business.

What is the scope and future of image



management in India?

Image consulting is a sunrise industry and there is tremendous growth. Many MNCs are expanding their activities to India. There is a lot of scope as individuals and companies are looking to update and upgrade themselves.

What is the activity of your consultancy?

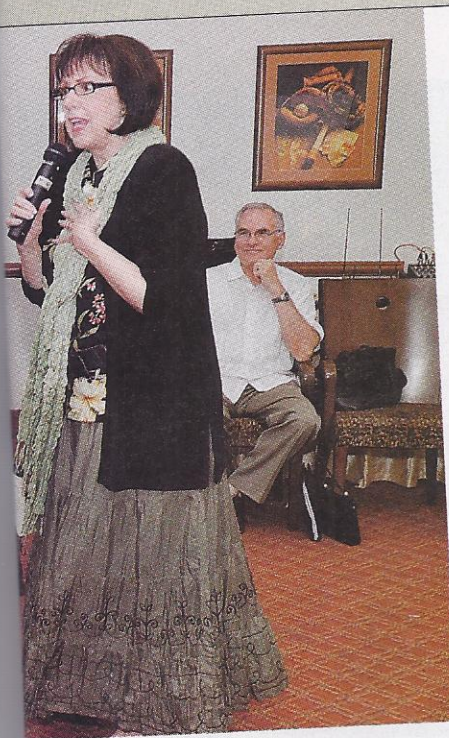
I work with individuals on a one-on-one basis, run training programmes for corporates and hold regular workshops and seminars. I have tie-ups with retailers and hotels for personal shopping services. I will also look at educational institutes shortly.

What are the challenges in this field?

The main challenge is the lack of awareness in India about image consulting. It is a very widespread concept in the west. But it is only a matter of time for it to become more recognised here.

What is your advice to aspirants?

I would definitely recommend it to enterprising individuals seeking to be part of a very exciting industry. It requires a creative mind and passion to interact with people from varied fields and make a difference to their lives.



Web site: www.manipal.edu

DSMS College, West Bengal

Bachelor of Media Science

Duration: Three years

Eligibility: 10+2

Web site: www.dsmsindia.com

Apeejay Institute of Mass Communication, Dwaraka

PG Diploma in Advertising and Marketing Communication; PG Diploma in Public Relations and Event Management

Duration: One year

Eligibility: Bachelor's degree

Admission: Entrance test and interview

Web site: www.apeejay.edu

Mudra Institute of Communications, Ahmedabad

Post Graduate Diploma in Management (Communications)

Duration: Two years

Eligibility: Bachelor's degree with 50 per cent marks

Admission: Admission test, group exercise, personal interview

Executive Post Graduate Diploma in Management (Communications)

Mode: Online

Duration: Fifteen months to two years

Eligibility: Around five years of relevant work experience