



ALICORN LEADERSHIP SUMMIT 2021-22

Leaders Today, Icons Tomorrow (December 16, 2021)

SESSION TAKEAWAYS

A panel of women leaders who have moved past male predominance to a leading position in their firms and created a lasting impression on the industry. Each has a uniquely inspirational story and below are nuggets extracted from the delightfully humorous and candid conversation.

- To succeed and grow as an investor, it is imperative to innovate and push oneself beyond the comfort zone - as an investor it is important to stay relevant and to be able to evaluate the merits of a business.
- One has to be intentional about what kind of investor you are. The choice to partner is not made only by the investors but also by the entrepreneurs, who like to evaluate investors to understand their investing philosophy and horizon.
- Key tenets of an early stage transaction include:
 - Entrepreneur's skin in the game and integrity
 - Following a trend versus passion
 - Entrepreneur's vision or the outcome of the business in place
- Unconscious biases and gender based discrimination are common in dealing with entrepreneurs. Male members of the team are often assumed to be the senior ones during meetings. Entrepreneurs often do not want to hear advice on what to change or do better, from a woman investor.
- Some ways to implement changes and build diversity:
 - The funnel only narrows. One has to consciously diversify the funnel early on and work on retaining talent
 - Create inclusive leadership who are able to drive outcomes and are able to bring positive change
 - Acknowledge and work on unconscious bias
 - Taking the tough steps and having the conversations early on is important to encode the concept of diversity in the organization
 - Customer feedback is the best evaluation of a business. Build diverse teams with representation from consumer groups from your sectors of investment
 - Invest in diverse businesses not just from a gender diversity point of view but also from diverse urban/rural areas and socio-economic categories