



Women
Entrepreneur India Top 10

ALUMNI WOMEN LEADERS
FROM IIM CALCUTTA 2023

NAAZ SHAIKH

A TRAILBLAZING JOURNEY
OF LEADERSHIP & EXPERTISE
THROUGH SUCCESS &
INNOVATION

NAAZ SHAIKH VICE PRESIDENT SMARTSTREAM

Naaz Shaikh's expertise lies in successfully managing and delivering complex enterprise-level applications across BFSI Industries that include global delivery management, global support, product lifecycle management, transition, and transformation management, information security management, software development, and customer relationship management. Receives accolades for ensuring customer satisfaction and transparency.

Business leaders you admire.

- *Haytham Kaddoura (CEO of Smartstream) - An exemplary leader, embodying creativity, empathy, and a strong presence. He makes us feel seen, heard, and valued—an inspiring role model for me every day.*
- *Bharat Malesha (EVP Smartstream) - A genuine leader, consistently active and remarkably engaging. Amidst chaos and adversity, he shines as a guiding force, harnessing his strength and energy to seize opportunities. A true powerhouse.*

Recording, summarising, analysing, and documenting financial transactions contribute to assessing a company's economic well-being for owners, managers, and investors. This knowledge aids in making more informed and strategic business choices. Smartstream is a well-established frontrunner in solutions and services for the entire lifecycle of post trade financial transactions. Naaz Shaikh, Vice President of Smartstream has played a crucial role in establishing a smooth and cohesive business model for the organisation.

During a personal interview, Naaz shared insights into both her professional and personal life, shedding light on the journey that paved the way for her success.

Walk us through your educational history and the previous industry expertise you bring to the forefront.

During my formative years in school, I was resolute in my decision to embark on a path within the realm of technology, and as a result, I opted for Engineering as the foundation for my career trajectory. As I transitioned into the professional sphere, my commitment to growth led me to enrol in the highly esteemed Senior Management Program at IIM Calcutta, renowned as India's premier institution for Management education. This distinguished program proved to be a transformative experience, endowing me with advanced proficiencies spanning

diverse facets of management. It served as an invaluable platform to further refine and amplify the competencies I had amassed over more than two decades in the field. The amalgamation of hands-on experience and the insights I gained formed a tapestry of learning that enabled me to engage with and glean wisdom from seasoned peers in the industry.



NOT ONLY WOMEN, BUT I WOULD LIKE TO SAY, THAT CAREERS JUST DO NOT HAPPEN. ONE MUST BUILD IT. ONE HAS TO BE DELIBERATE ABOUT IT, HAVE LASER FOCUS, & BUILD SELF-AWARENESS THROUGH MINDFUL CONTEMPLATION

Share your evolved expertise in the BFSI domain over the last two decades and how it strengthens your leadership today.

For two decades, my journey at Smartstream has been instrumental in shaping my leadership growth. Commencing in Professional Services, I capitalised on relationships across teams to secure diverse roles, encompassing delivery, support optimisation, innovation, automation, and continuous enhancement. From Product Management to Sales and Project/Program Management, I expanded proficiencies through strategic programs, fostering mentoring skills and process establishment in transformation, transition management, and security compliance. My profound aptitude for navigating intricate landscapes empowered me to represent the company across the BFSI and ERP sectors. The dynamic BFSI realm demands evolving expertise, yet the foundational skills remain pivotal in navigating this ever-changing industry.

Provide an introduction to Smartstream and elaborate on the primary areas of expertise the company specialises in.

With an extensive four-decade history, Smartstream has evolved into a reliable partner catering to the world's leading banks, capital markets, corporations, and buy-side firms, providing automation and oversight. The company's continuous growth and introduction of innovative solutions during transformative industry phases have garnered multiple industry recognitions. Pioneering the integration of advanced technologies through dedicated innovation teams and substantial R&D investment, Smartstream maintains its status as an efficiency-focused, reliable technological leader. Smartstream's comprehensive solutions, incorporating

AI and machine learning, cover a broad range of asset classes in post trade processing operations, and can be accessed through diverse means such as APIs, micro-services, managed services, and cloud environments. The company's specialised services encompass diverse areas including Cash and liquidity Management, Collateral Management, Corporate Actions Processing, Digital Payments and Investigations, Fees and Expense Management, Trade Processing, Reconciliations, and Reference Data.

Share your top three significant career achievements and your guiding principles for success.

Throughout my career journey, I've been fortunate to collaborate with inspiring leaders who believed in my capabilities, propelling me to strive for excellence. Overcoming challenges as a working mother of two, I shattered glass ceilings and defied conventional norms by skillfully balancing work, childcare, and responsibilities. This feat, fueled by determination and unwavering support from both my employer and family, shattered gender-based limitations. As my daughters grew independent, I achieved the remarkable feat of completing a rigorous management program at IIM Calcutta alongside a full-time job. My firm conviction lies in the significance of persistence and resilience as pivotal traits for professional accomplishment.

According to your perspective, what are the key obstacles you face in your present position? How do you approach addressing these challenges effectively?

Addressing critical challenges in my current role involves effective management of a sizable team, ensuring seamless cross-departmental communication and collaboration, strategic decision-making, and meeting financial targets. To surmount these obstacles, I establish transparent communication channels, nurture a positive work environment, allocate essential resources and support to my team, stay abreast of industry trends, and actively seek input from both employees and stakeholders. Another significant challenge lies in retaining crucial knowledge within a product-oriented company like Smartstream, where maximizing human capital's potential and motivation is paramount. By identifying team members' potential, fostering growth, and implementing cross-functional training strategies, this challenge is being gradually mitigated. Managing diverse stakeholders and their varied expectations requires approachability, empathetic problem-solving, and active listening. [WFA](#)