

## New Paths

Manjusha Mohan represents change at G'sons Apparels, where she has promoted the development of women and revolutionised the way her company handles waste. She is also driving the firm's internationalisation.



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### New mindset

Mohan was impressed by the quality of dialogue in Germany on diversity. "When I started at the company, it was the traditional male domain. Our seamstresses were at the bottom of the hierarchy and were supervised by male colleagues. Management, my father with his three brothers, was above that," she recalls. "New male colleagues were always recruited from outside. So, I asked: Hey, why aren't we using our own people?" Mohan began promoting female employees and preparing them to move up the ladder. This was how she slowly broke down the traditional hierarchy. It has proven to be a very wise move, as the women who, with her help, have risen up through the ranks are successful and committed to the company.

### Information

#### Countries

India

#### Industry

Textile industry



The company headquarters of the textile business G'sons

Mohan leads a very environmentally conscious life. "I try to avoid plastic whenever possible." The issue of sustainability is only just starting to take hold in this populous, emerging nation. So Mohan was especially pleased to see just how important a sustainable lifestyle was in Germany. Many German companies have already included fostering sustainable business practices in their corporate strategies. "We always used to burn our waste," Mohan recalls. This was something she was determined to change. Along the way, she discovered that not everyone was enthusiastic about the idea. People would often remind her, "that's the way we've

is located in the South Indian city of Kannur.

always done it.” And not just staff either. She prevailed though and has found ways to either reuse or sell the valuable textile waste and production by-products. As plush filling for cuddly toys, for example. She won over even the most obstinate doubters once the income began coming in.

### **Business success overshadowed by the coronavirus**

During the Manager Training Programme, Mohan successfully established a new business contact in Germany. She was making and delivering t-shirts with a company logo for cruise line. Then the coronavirus pandemic hit. Due to the cruise industry’s precarious position, the business partner struggled to weather the crisis and the business relationship ended. Still, Mohan says, working with that first client in Germany and Europe was a valuable experience. She hopes G’sons will be able to maintain the thread she spun to Germany once the situation gets back to normal. Either way, training definitely helped her improve her international business skills, she says.

### **Rosy outlook for business**

The coronavirus crisis has hit the textile industry hard. “People are not spending money on clothes,” Mohan says. The severe lockdown in India meant G’sons had to close down for months. Management was unable to cover payroll, and employees had to be paid the emergency wages imposed by the government. In 2020, the company lost about 50 percent of its revenue, which meant dipping into its reserves. The situation is slowly easing now though. In 2021, Mohan expects a 75 percent return to pre-crisis sales. Nevertheless, she has decided to move to Dubai and take a new job there for personal reasons. Now the computer scientist is working in “her” industry again. She still feels loyal to her company in India though, and is now responsible for business development in the Middle East for G’sons. It is going well. She is leveraging the skills she learned in Germany to enter new markets and has already landed two projects. A container with work clothes will soon be on its way to the Persian Gulf.

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