

"DREAMZZ UNLIMITED": STORIES THAT INSPIRE



CA Amit Haria
CFO Shemaroo
Email : amith.ca@gmail.com

Firstly, I would like to sincerely thank CVOCA for giving me this tremendous opportunity to share my journey so far. It's a privilege for me to go back in time and experience the important life events and fruitful lessons learnt which in turn has helped me re-live my olden days. These moments of life in flashback till present day is making me feel nostalgic about the how far I have reached and will even give me more clear insights on the road ahead to future. Let's rewind a bit and take you through my life in a movie called "Lakshaya" solely written, directed and produced by me but sportingly acted and promoted by my crew members. Let's start the movie from beginning and take you thru my experiences.

Flashback: 30 sal pehle from where it all began!

I have always grown up admiring my dad and I vaguely remember somewhere when I was in my 8th grade, he used to consult our CA for many things which involved investments, returns, etc and somehow, I gave a thought that a Chartered Accountant has all the knowledge and can address to any financial requirements. My inquisitive mind pushed me to visit a CA every time my dad went to meet him. By the time I reached my 10th boards, I was very sure that I want to get into the commerce stream and pursue CA and as time passed by, I started noticing my inclination and interest growing towards numbers. Maybe playing with numbers runs in my DNA hence I listened to my inner voice and opted to pursue CA.

I can't thank my parents enough who have raised me, showed me the right path, corrected me when I was wrong and supported me in whatever I wanted to do. They have paved my way to self-learning by teaching me to do things on my own starting with something as simple as tying shoelaces to achieving bigger educational and career goals. Everything I am is because of them and I heart fully thank them for being my daily inspiration. However, despite being always surrounded by people in the medical field, there was much pressure on me from the society to pursue medicine, I still choose to opt for commerce stream moving towards achieving my dream of being a CA.

My entry into commerce was not that great, from being a school topper in maths to just passing marks in my junior college exams, totally broke me down in standard 11th.

Main Story: Some months later, started my CA Journey!

Unfortunately, the series of poor performance continued till F.Y.B.Com and CA Foundation (which I failed to clear). This was probably the lowest stage of my educational journey. It was an eye opener and a turning point for me. Hence in S.Y.B.Com, I gathered myself-up, reignited faith in my abilities and started studying from the basics. While studying all the subjects from 11th standard onwards, I focused towards Accounts and Economics. This in turn helped me gain confidence and ace these subjects. Surprisingly even my parents were totally amazed seeing my exponential progress and performance. This made me bounce back with extreme dedication, commitment and planning.

Few Stunts: Stints and achievements in my professional journey!

Everyone agrees with the fact that, as an art to perform, stunts goes hand in hand with many risks, but in order to accomplish this act, one must dare to take risks. Same is with life, in order to execute and grow, one must have the ability and willingness to take risks. So let me put some light on the few stints / stunts that I performed during my journey:

- I joined back CA course in June 2000. In the first year of my articleship I was lucky enough as the other two existing articles who were working at the same firm as me were on study leave. Fortunately, I was lone article trainee for the entire filing season and this gave me immense practical experience and exposure. The workload that normally every article gets in their third year; I was lucky enough to get the same in my first year of my articleship. And I am really thankful to my then boss CA Hemraj Chheda for the same.
- Finally, I cleared CA final in Nov 2003 attempt, this was achieved by very hard work & dedication towards my goal.
- With a good study plan, progressive mindset and faith in myself, I successfully passed my CA inter in first attempt and CA final in second attempt.
- My first job as a CA was with a CA firm in Khar. I remember this was the first year of E-TDS returns and we struggled at the time of filing. However, since I had penchant for technology, helped me to guide the firm in filing returns. My boss was extremely delighted and satisfied with my performance and within a short stint of 2 months, I was then shifted to another firm called Gala Haria & Associates. Here I was working as the Audit-Manager, this gave me hands on experience in handling team and getting the work done.
- Post this, I joined Shah Group Builders Limited located in Vashi as a Manager-Accounts & Finance. Here I got immense experience in setting systems, taxation and raising finance, as I was heading entire accounts and finance team there and was reporting directly to directors
- In August 2007, I joined my present company Shemaroo Entertainment Limited. Initially entrusted with handling Corporate Finance as a one-man team.
- My first year into my job was very eventful, as at home my family expanded and I also got my first major project in the company. I was able to get the same completed in the record time. Also, at the same time one of my colleagues, who was handling PE fund raising quit the company and I was given this additional responsibility. On the other hand, I also got experience in the new fund raising medium.
- Somewhere in 2010, our company decided to go Public. In the process for IPO my team expanded. I drew the entire IPO filing process with my juniors and we filed IPO application with SEBI in 2011.
- However, the company was finally listed in 2014. This was one of the landmarks I am proud of. By now I had the entire Corporate Finance and Company Secretarial team reporting to me.
- My team started getting bigger and in 2018, my responsibilities expanded to handling of accounts team as well.
- And, finally in May 2022, all my hard work paid off, my efforts were recognised and I was promoted to CFO.

As its appropriately said that the road to success is not always easy, one has to pass through various rough patches and similarly there have been ups and downs in my CA journey as well but I have sailed through smoothly with support from family, friends and above all almighty. The whole journey of studying late nights, to writing exams, to getting the results, to achieving targets, implementing ideas, handling a team, taking decisions etc has been with its share of ups and downs, but these are the memories which I will cherish forever. All in all, I must say this entire journey has been quite eventful.

Background music of my life:

What is a movie without music? And my journey has also been harmonious with many selfless human beings who have melodiously tuned my journey. By helping me, staying with me and supporting me to reach where I am today. Firstly, I thank my wife who has been there with me through thick and thin. A professional life is like a wife whose demands are never ending. Both need equal amount of time and attention to make things work. I don't know whether I did justice to balance both my professional and personal life, but I feel I am lucky enough to have a life partner who understands my goals in life. Secondly, I am grateful for the flawless support from my team members and my colleagues. Without them, I would not have been able to implement my ideas smoothly. And lastly, I am obliged to have met such inspiring bosses and mentors in my life who have not only believed in me but have also inspired me and guided me at each and every turning point in my professional life. I am fortunate enough to have lived my life with such understanding crew members who have knowingly or unknowingly given a soothing background music to my movie and without them my journey would not have been a blockbuster.

Climax: Lessons learnt during this journey

As its rightly said that "Build your life on your own dreams because dreams never have bad endings". And some of my simple life mantra to achieve a successful and fruitful climax are:

- One of the greatest Japanese proverb is, "Fall Seven times, stand up Eight!" Never get discouraged when the things do not go as per expectations. Always remember that the greatest glory in life is not winning, but rising every time we fall.
- Never give up! If you have a dream, pursue it, no matter how big or small your dream is.
- One should always have willingness to learn. Always keep in mind that an investment in knowledge pays the best interest.

In a nutshell our life is like a movie, it looks meaningless without action, humour, stunts, thrill, emotions, drama, climax and of course music. Similarly in order to live a meaningful life and make your career a Box Office Hit, one must stay strong, do proper planning and strategizing, do not compare yourself with others and have a positive mindset whenever you have a doubt creeping in. Lastly if you are pursuing a CA course or in finance background, you are already running a marathon, therefore consider yourself worthy enough to face any challenges that come your way.

Congratulate, Celebrate and Motivate yourself and don't forget to Keep Going. At every step keep reminding yourself, "picture abhi baaki hai mere dost....!"

(PS: Special thanks to my Sister-in-law Khyati for helping me penning this article)

