**Arab Ad July 2014**

1. **What are your career path aspirations and where do you see yourself in five years?**

*I have been working in different fields of banking for 18 years now. I am passionate about what I do and this is key to one’s success in my opinion. 5 years from now? I hope I will still be doing something I like and that makes a positive difference in community; the same way I did it for the We Initiative at BLC Bank (the Women Economic Empowerment Program launched in 2012) which is at the origin of my position of Vice Chair of the Global Banking Alliance for Women.*

1. **What specific advice would you give younger executives to advance their career? Or what’s the best advice you have received in business that you wish to pass on to our readers?**

*There are many elements that allow one to thrive in this field. There is a not a single specific thing you must focus on, but rather the combination of those elements is key to success. Thus, I personally believe that hard work, constantly striving for excellence, and good networking skills are all essential. I found as well that having someone believing in you gives you wings. The support of someone you trust, believe in, or look up to can be a motivating element that will push you to persevere through the harder times. Finally, as in most things, luck does come into play, but one may as well “push” it, despite it being an unpredictable element.*

1. **What or who has been your greatest influence in business and why?**

*This might look surprising but every person I work with is for me a source of learning, be it their do’s or don’ts. This includes collaborators, peers, bosses or even other business people, including my husband. You can always learn from others in business, be it the positive trends of your peers and higher ups, or seeing the failures of others and finding out what to avoid in your future. I believe this is a large part of what shapes your skills and behavior in the workplace. You must know others’ history in order to avoid falling into the same pit traps, and use that knowledge to develop yourself, your skills and find self-improvement.*

1. **If you had to write a book about business, which topic would you write about and why?**

*The Lebanese Economy has very large potential towards growth, one that can be far more competitive on a local and global scale provided the right framework is implemented. All the elements for a thriving, successful economic system are there, but in the face of constant local and regional turmoil, it becomes difficult to further develop these elements and persevere. So much talent and resources are wasted, or otherwise sucked up and whisked abroad, where more attractive prospects lay. I truly wish Lebanon can regain its role as a hub for the Middle East as it was back in the past, as I would love to my see country at its best. If writing a book about that would change things, I will gladly do it☺.*

1. **Given the current market turbulence, what skills are especially important in today’s business women and how do you strive to add to your skillset through different methods?**

*Today’s business world is probably the fastest changing ever* *given the profound changes triggered by new technologies, worldwide economic crisis, etc… A business woman requires the right mix of skills: she must be professional, authoritative, and ambitious, while also avoiding being technically flawed, bossy or careerist. She must do all this while also maintaining her femininity. In addition to this, there is the challenge of balancing both her professional and personal lives…*

*I am a true believer in women’s talent and competence. They can expand their skillsets through self-learning, training, mentoring, and advice from experts all of which are offered by the We Initiative program launched by BLC Bank and targeting women in business.*