



**ZAINAB ABBAS,  
CFO,  
GEEKS TECHNOLOGY**

*As a leader Zainab emphasizes that it is crucial to always put our values and integrity above money; while keeping a healthy balance between work and life, to have a fulfilling career in any role.*

**THROUGH DEDICATION,  
HARD WORK & A FIRM GRIP  
ON LOGIC & NUMBERS,  
FINANCE FOR WOMEN IS  
A VERY FRUITFUL CAREER  
PATH**

# ZAINAB ABBAS

## UPPING THE FINANCE GAME WITH RESULT-DRIVEN STRATEGIES

**T**he opportunities for women as leaders are a result of centuries of effort. Especially, in the Middle East, which is considered to be one of the male-dominated cultures, today's women have started witnessing honourable space in the Board Rooms after years of working like Trojans. However, the false notion that women are not strong in finance still exists. The areas in which women have acquired grip are many and finance is not left behind. We have started witnessing big nations and conglomerates having women manage their finances; however, there is still a long way to go. Even with this welcoming gesture, it takes volumes of perseverance, grit, determination, and most importantly passion to make a mark. Zainab Abbas, the CFO of Geeks Technology is one such inspirational, passionate and successful businesswoman, who currently outshines as an amazing leader in financial services.

Women Entrepreneur India engages in an exclusive conversation with Zainab to deduce more about her journey.

### **Take us through your early journey and experiences.**

For as much as I remember, I have always been fascinated by numbers and number crunching. Excelling in school due to a keen interest in mathematics, I found my way into the world of finance and fell in love. Initially planning to do a master's in mathematics I switched to Finance and received a Gold Medal from Karachi University, Pakistan for my First Position while securing the highest score in Advance Accounting. I also cleared the ACCA certification effortlessly because of my love for the subject.

My career kick-started as a Chief Accountant for Saifee Hospital Trust, which allowed me to put my learnings into practicality and bring great value to the table through my work. After relocating to the UAE, I worked with the Pan Emirates Home Furnishings as a Management Accountant and continued gaining industry experience and growing at a fast pace in my role. The knowledge and experience gained over the years, really helped me excel in my current role at Geeks Technology and

allowed me to quickly climb up the success ladder and attain the position of CFO in a short span.

**What are some important features and expertise a business leader should have?**

To be successful in the finance sector, I believe it is important to have vision and foresight that can translate into a more streamlined and profitable organization. Moreover, adapting to the constantly evolving financial market is the hallmark of a good leader and team player. Having worked with multiple organizations, I constantly strive to improve on ways, through my experience, that can create a strong financial foundation for the organization while maintaining sustainable growth and profitability.

**What are some of the most pressing challenges that you encounter in your current role?**

We, women, have cumulatively evolved by breaking multiple barriers. Since I am in a male-dominated environment, I often find it difficult to navigate day-to-day workings and maintain efficiency and authority without alienating my team. As a woman in finance, this work-life balance then becomes difficult to achieve and there is a constant expectation of availability which may be tough to manage. However, I keep my head high and my voice strong because I am not just representing myself but women who aspire to have careers in finance as well. Also, as the financial head of the company, my job is not just to increase revenue for the organization but to make sure that efficiency and work satisfaction within the organization also increases. To achieve this, I have always kept communication lines open and made sure the work culture is positive, optimistic, and friendly without being slow or inefficient.

**In your opinion what are some of the most significant milestones that you have achieved throughout your professional journey? What has been the driving force behind your success as a professional?**

It all started with the gold medal I received during my university days, which gave me a great sense of achievement and helped me understand my love for numbers. It really gave me the confidence I needed to take strategic decisions with confidence and always try new ways of working through business problems. Also having a learner's mindset throughout my career, helped me excel in all designated roles and achieve growth in a short duration. Securing the Chief Accountant position within two years in the healthcare sector and when I am laying the foundation for MIS

Reporting during my tenure at the Pan Emirates while continuing to pursue my ACCA are some of the milestones, I hold pride in.

Later, at Geeks, I became the Finance, Admin, and HR Manager and then within a year, I acquired the CFO position. I am always thankful to God and my parents for all my achievements and grateful that my family have always kept me grounded and focused on my vision.



**How do you foresee the financial services landscape evolving in the near future? How do you keep yourself aligned with industry and technology trends?**

In my opinion, in the contemporary world markets are quite unpredictable, and volatile and the smallest ripple can move a system forward or backward. However, I try to stay on top of news and happenings in the industry by attending seminars, and financial forums and reading up on the latest political and financial news. To be successful in any field it becomes important to be well informed which in turn reap wise decisions. I try and keep in touch through newspapers and books and look forward to trying and adapting to shifting patterns of development. [WR](#)