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VINITA GUPTA
CEO, Lupin



38 |

Resilience in Leadership

The path to the top is rarely smooth, but Lupin's Vinita Gupta says women leaders must lead with conviction and a global mindset

BY NEETU CHANDRA SHARMA

FOR VINITA GUPTA, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Lupin, leadership was something she grew into. Her vision was shaped over the years by the values she learnt watching her late father and founder of Lupin, Desh Bandhu Gupta, who built the company from a single-room operation into a global pharmaceutical giant.

"From him, I learnt that leadership is not defined merely by authority, but by the ability to inspire, empower and connect authentically," she tells *Business Today*.

Those early lessons continue to anchor her worldview and reveal why, even today, she begins most conversations by asking questions rather than giving directions.

FOR THE PEOPLE

Gupta does not speak of leadership in abstractions. Instead, she emphasises clarity, conviction and long-term

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thinking. "I strongly believe in the power of authentic engagement and the importance of listening, both of which are fundamental to my leadership philosophy," she says.

Her leadership is not the charismatic style that dominates headlines. It is steady and measured, built on consistency, trust and the belief that teams thrive when they feel genuinely supported. "Ultimately, even the most robust strategy depends on the collective strength and alignment of the people who bring it to life," she says.

This philosophy also shapes her approach to building an office culture. Gupta believes business decisions are not influenced by gender, but she is clear about the imprint it leaves. "It influenced how I viewed the opportunity to shape the culture at Lupin," she says. "It inspired me to foster a sense of family, a workplace where every Lupin-it feels valued and supported."

40 |

She believes that employees should know the company will stand by them in "both strong and difficult periods." For her, that is "the foundation of sustainable growth and shared purpose." According to Gupta, the company's commitment to supporting its workforce has been most evident during periods of industry-wide and global disruption.

Lupin's FY25 consolidated sales grew 12.9% year-on-year to ₹22,192 crore. The company's EBITDA margin rose to 24.7%. "What has contributed most to professional success is staying deeply aligned with Lupin's growth strategy." Her emphasis is not on the numbers themselves but on the organisational clarity behind them. Gupta believes enduring success comes from unwavering dedication to a larger mission. "In our case, advancing global health and improving patient access."

Gupta sees business as an extension of responsibility. "The commitment to care and belonging is, to me, the foundation of sustainable growth and shared purpose." It is also why she invests deeply in digital tools, compliance systems and research capabilities, not as corporate initiatives but as enablers of long-term trust.

"We are scaling up innovation across the organisation," she says, describing digital and artificial intelligence (AI)-led programmes across manufacturing, quality, supply chain and commercial functions. But the focus is always on what it enables: better decisions, safer products, stronger systems.

THE GENDER LENS

Gupta's reflections on gender are grounded in her experience. She credits her own journey to strong mentorship and the example of women who led before her. And she is candid about the fact that women still face barriers in leadership. Her message to women aspiring to leadership is among the most personal parts of her profile. "Embrace challenges as opportunities for growth," she says. "The path to the top is rarely smooth. Learn to be resilient. Lead with conviction and a global mindset."

She says Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) is an integral part of the company's business and people strategy. "Our current gender diversity in the workforce is 9%, with a goal of increasing it to 15% by 2030." On management composition (which includes junior, mid- and top-management), as of FY25, women occupy 6.8% of all management positions in India; for top-management (two levels below CEO), the share of women is 11.5%. On the board side, as of 2025, Lupin's board has four female directors.

Does a woman-led company bring a different approach? Gupta does not claim that women are better leaders. But she does argue that women bring a distinct lens, one that blends analytical rigour with empathy and context. "Women leaders are driving progress through breakthrough ideas and empathy," she says.

Her belief is backed by the pipeline she is helping build: more women entering STEM, more women in technical and business roles and structured programmes at Lupin designed to help them rise faster. Healthcare, she says, naturally creates space for women because it

aligns with purpose, precision, patient outcomes and human connection, values that resonate with many women professionals. But she is also clear that progression into leadership will require continued intentionality.

Lupin today is in a strong phase, building complex science capabilities, expanding into new geographies and strengthening digital foundations. But behind those milestones is a leader who measures success not just in earnings or approvals, but in how many people feel empowered to drive the organisation forward. "It is good to be ambitious," she says in another context. **BT**

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