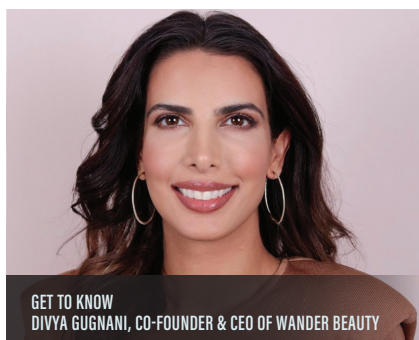


WOMEN IN AESTHETICS



The Groundbreaking Original Series from Industry Vet Wendy Lewis



GET TO KNOW
DIVYA GUGNANI, CO-FOUNDER & CEO OF WANDER BEAUTY

Divya Gugnani, CEO and Co-Founder of Wander Beauty, is the ultimate multitasking mom, serial entrepreneur, and beauty aficionado.

After earning her BS from Cornell University and MBA from Harvard Business School, Divya began her career in investment banking before moving on to private equity and venture capital.

She later left the finance world after selling her first business, and went on to co-founding multiple companies. Her busy lifestyle necessitated high-performance makeup and skincare, and thus, her fourth entrepreneurial venture was born. Wander Beauty was launched in 2015 with Co-Founder supermodel Lindsay Ellingson; Wander Beauty - effortless everyday essentials.

The mission behind the brand was to create multitasking innovative products, co-created with the brand's community, that are enriched with clean, globally sourced ingredients, and designed for women on the go to look their best with ease. Divya's concept took off and Wander has won more than 37 prestigious beauty awards, and has earned a loyal following.

Divya's other passion is cooking. She attended the French Culinary Institute

and is the author of the book *Sexy Women Eat: Secrets to Eating What You Want and Still Looking Fabulous*, published by HarperCollins.

Her next creation was Concept to Co., an early- to mid-stage fund that partners with extraordinary founders to launch and grow new brands and businesses.

She is passionate about helping fellow entrepreneurs build and scale their businesses and provides mentorship through various groups including HeyMama, Female Founder Collective, and *Entrepenistas*. She also guest lectures at Harvard, Wharton, Kellogg, Cornell, Columbia, and NYU.

WL: Who were some of your mentors throughout your career?

Divya: I was fortunate to have had a wide range of amazing mentors who have helped me along the way. I believe that peer mentorship is underrated.

For Wander Beauty, I have learned so much from friends and colleagues, especially from dermatologists like Drs. Kavita Mariwalla and Marisa Garshick. We also consulted with several chemists about our skincare formulations and talked with founders and CEOs of many other brands in color cosmetics, skincare, and other beauty categories.

I learned a lot about product development, marketing, packaging, branding, and retail along my journey. My philosophy is to always be learning from everyone around me. I don't think that a mentor must be advanced in their career beyond where you are to learn from them. I have learned so much from all the people who have been around me at different stages and levels, as well as from brands of all sizes.

How did you get your start in the aesthetics field?

I sold my last company, Send The Trend, an e-commerce site for accessories and beauty, to QVC. While I was at QVC, I spent a lot of time on the beauty businesses, and I always had a strong passion for beauty. Since I was a kid, I did makeup for my girlfriends and on my mom and sister. I have always loved a skincare routine. It has always been a dream of mine to have a beauty business. With Wander Beauty I made that dream come alive.

What advice do you have for women who are rising stars in this industry?

As you are growing and learning, the most important thing is to always be humble and kind and pay it forward. At Wander Beauty, we have won more than 37 beauty awards and have become a globally distributed brand. However, I always make sure to treat every customer, every vendor, and every business associate with kindness and humility. I do my best to really understand their perspective in whatever situation we are in. This is something that is very important to me. Even when you're building a business, you can sometimes lose sight of these things. I believe that it is essential to pay forward all the knowledge that people have shared with you along the way.

How would your colleagues describe your management style?

I think people refer to me as someone who is very visionary and always has ideas. I am an idea person. I can't sleep at night because I have so many ideas coming into my head. I keep a journal next to my bed to write ideas down as they arise so I can get some sleep at night.

My colleagues know that I really believe in hiring the best talent we can find and empower them to execute on my vision. I strive to make it a very collaborative process and I am always open to hearing our team's feedback. ■

Read this at ModernAesthetics.com for more, including the quotes that best describe her philosophy.