



The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India
(Set up by an Act of Parliament)



Women & Young Members Excellence Committee

Organises

यशस्विनी - An IDOL- Live Webinar



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SMART WAYS FOR WOMEN CAs TO GEAR UP AFTER BREAK

— CA NEHA SHAH

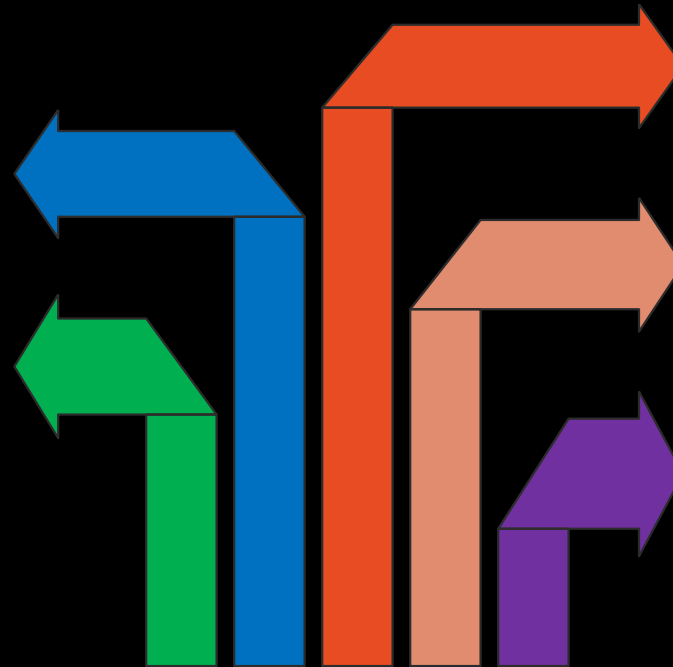
Why women take a career break?

Family Responsibilities

Allows undivided attention to caregiving roles, reducing stress.

Health and Well-being

Necessary for healing and regaining mental clarity, ensuring long-term success.



Reevaluating Career Goals

Helps assess alignment with values and aspirations, uncovering new directions.

Personal Growth

Enables pursuing passions and exploring new skills, enriching perspectives.

Relocation or Life Changes

Provides time to adjust to new environments and settle in.



The biological clock and the career clock are in total conflict with each other.

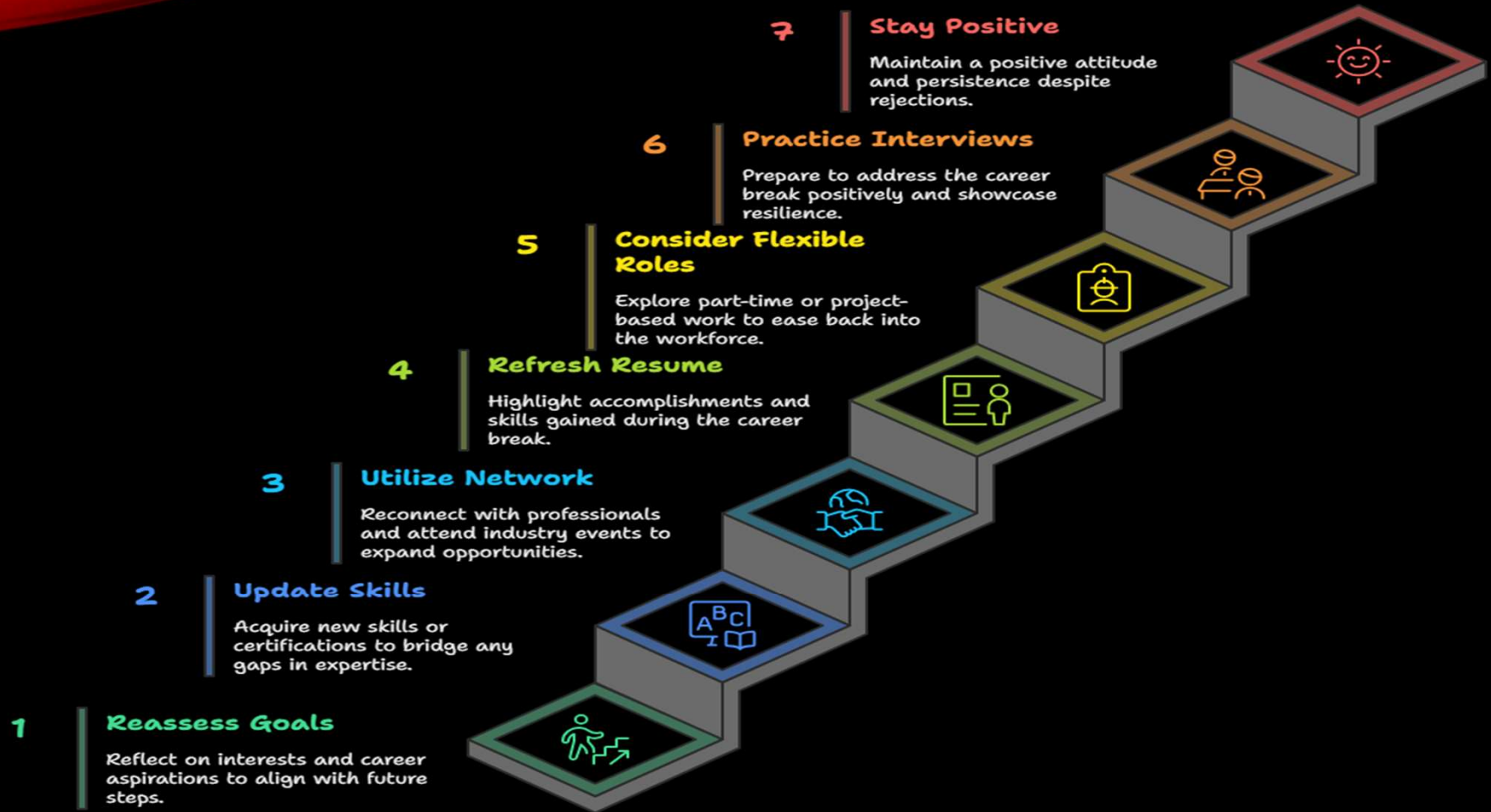
— *Indra Nooyi* —

AZ QUOTES

Challenges for women after career break



Steps to Re-enter the Workforce



Softer aspects

- ❑ Build support systems : Spouse, househelp, day-care, trustworthy relatives etc.
- ❑ Set boundaries – At Work, at home, in relationships,
- ❑ Start Slow : Don't change everything on day-1. Mountains are not moved in one day. Be consistent in your effort. Take each day separately. Not all days will be same.





Identify Your Skill Gaps

- ❑ Look at your target role or industry and note which tools, certifications, or skills are commonly required.
- ❑ Talk to peers, mentors, or recruiters to understand what's currently in demand.
- ❑ Separate gaps into two types:
 - Core professional skills (e.g., financial reporting updates for accountants, coding languages for IT, digital marketing tools for creatives).
 - Soft/transferable skills (e.g., communication, leadership, time management, adaptability).



Re-Skill Through Online Learning

- ❑ You no longer need to commit to full-time college courses. Flexible online formats mean you can learn *on your schedule*.
- ❑ Skill Courses & Certifications
 - *Coursera, edX, Udemy, LinkedIn Learning* → for structured certifications in areas like project management, Excel/Power BI, coding, or finance.
 - *Industry-specific academies* (e.g., HubSpot for marketing, Google Analytics certifications, Microsoft training paths)
- ❑ Creative Learning Platforms
 - Skillshare, MasterClass → build presentation, design, or creative problem-solving skills.
- ❑ Workshops & Bootcamps
 - Short, immersive formats that simulate workplace challenges so you can “practice before you return.”



Build Digital Fluency

- ❑ Even outside your direct role, digital skills are now essential:
 - Comfort with collaboration tools (Zoom, Teams, Slack, Asana, Trello).
- ❑ Understanding data-driven decision making (e.g., Artificial Intelligence, Excel dashboards, Power BI basics).
- ❑ Familiarity with remote/hybrid workplace etiquette.

This not only closes the skill gap, but also positions you as “future-ready.”



Take Part in Professional Associations

- ❑ Professional bodies such as ICAI regularly invite CAs to participate in committees, board roles, mentoring programs, and event organizing, helping maintain professional networks and exposure. These activities often award CPE credits and build leadership credentials

- ❑ Lean-in chapters across the globe

(<https://leanin.org/circles-network/lean-in-network-Mumbai>)

Companies promoting women returning to workplace program

- ❑ HSBC – Power2Her Returnship Programme
- ❑ Axis Bank – Re-Connect
- ❑ Accenture – Career Reboot Program
- ❑ Hindustan Unilever – Career By Choice
- ❑ PWC
- ❑ Razorpay - '[returnship](#)' programme
- ❑ Godrej – Careers 2.0
- ❑ IBM, SAP etc.



Flexi working options

For a few years, opt for

- ☐ flexi working hours,
- ☐ hybrid working
- ☐ work from home opportunities

Entrepreneurship

The Economic Survey underscores how women-led businesses are thriving under government support.

As of October 31, 2024, over 73,151 startups with at least one women director have been recognized under the Startup India Initiative—nearly half of all registered startups in India.

₹3,107.11 crore has been invested in 149 women-led startups through Alternative Investment Funds (AIFs).

The Startup India Seed Fund Scheme (SISFS) has approved ₹227.12 crore for 1,278 women-led startups since April 2021.

The Credit Guarantee Scheme for Startups (CGSS) has secured ₹24.6 crore in loans for women-led ventures.





Conclusion

- ❑ Multiple pressing priorities
- ❑ Equality – reality or myth
- ❑ Organisation readiness
- ❑ Change is slowly being reflected
- ❑ Visibility – a must
- ❑ Be kind to yourself
- ❑ Be patient – this is just a phase and this too shall pass !!

THANK YOU

