

GREAT PEOPLE **MANAGERS**

# Premium on People

Simarneet Wahî's people skills have helped her team and revenues grow

By **SALIL PANCHAL**



**S**imarneet Wahî, at 28, is just about four years into her professional career as an insurer but she has already achieved several firsts. Working at private insurance firm HDFC Life Insurance—which is her first job—she was the first woman (and the youngest) to become a corporate sales manager (CSM) in the Bancassurance Alliances division in Delhi. This division included 16 other CSMs and three territory managers, all of whom were men.

Wahî helps drive sales and business through their back office for the entire Delhi-NCR region. She deals with HDFC Life's "channel partners" (which include corporate agents and banks, non-banking finance companies) to tap more customers by selling insurance.

Wahî currently has a ₹80 crore business target to achieve annually, which constitutes close to 10 percent of HDFC Life's Credit Protect business. Her clientele includes

NBFCs Bajaj Finance, Indiabulls, Indiabulls Ventures, Cholamandalam Finance, DCB Bank, Axis Bank and Orix Auto Infrastructure.

Wahî's entry into insurance was by chance. "I was approached by Infosys through a campus placement," says Wahî, who completed her engineering in information technology from Guru Tegh Bahadur Institute of Technology in Delhi in 2012. "But I realised this was not what I was interested in... analysing data was what I wanted to do," she says.

It helped that Infosys delayed issuing appointment letters, so Wahî chose not to join, took a break and then went on to complete her MBA in marketing from Delhi's Fore School of Management in 2015. On graduating, she was approached by HDFC Life, which she first joined as a management trainee in Mumbai. She excelled here too, overachieving targets.

A family problem brought her back to Delhi in October 2016, but she continued to double monthly revenues from channel partners

◀ **SIMARNEET WAHÎ | 28**  
Manager, **HDFC Life Insurance**  
**What makes her a great manager:**  
Since taking charge she has doubled monthly revenues from channel partners; strong people skills

"I set my goals for the short term, which have helped achieve my long-term targets."

Indiabulls and DCB Bank in FY17. "I addressed their apprehensions by allocating specific instead of shared manpower, and strengthened relationships," she says. This helped her get promoted to manager in July 2017.

It is not just clients who have shown confidence in Wahî. Her team in Delhi does, too, which has grown to 24 from four when she had first taken charge as a CSM in October 2016. Half her team was promoted last year. **F**