

# Kapur created a profitable aerospace division

**BY ZACHARY COMEAU**

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**R**ita Kapur grew up working in the family business, but nothing was handed to her.

She started working at Aimtek, first as a filing and accounting clerk.

“I started from the bottom,” she said.

Fresh off a MBA from Bentley University, she had dreams to move to California, but opted to stick it out with the family business.

Her family’s business, Aimtek in Auburn, was founded in the early 1970s and provides metal joining products and services to several verticals, including aerospace, power generation, industrial gas turbine, oil & gas, and defense.

Manufacturing has been dominated by men for decades, with few women on the shop floor. However, Kapur is a common sight on the floor and even will wield a welding machine, like she did years ago at Aimtek so she could be well-versed in the product she was selling.

That same willingness to roll up her sleeves brought Kapur to her current position as the leader of Atech Turbine Components, an Auburn shop repairing and overhauling aircraft engines manufactured by Pratt & Whitney Canada. Aimtek acquired it in 2003, and Kapur helped turn a promising but mismanaged firm into an asset for her family.

The business was essentially in hardship when Aimtek made the purchase, and it was bleeding money every month.

“It needed a lot of TLC,” Kapur said. “That’s exactly what we gave it.”

After 18 months, it was profitable again. The business has doubled both its sales and profit, and its headcount is not far behind that trend, Kapur said.

“Since then, it’s been one of our most profitable divisions,” she said.

Robert Komlosi, a former aerospace manufacturing expert at P&W Canada, said Kapur is as technically well-rounded as anyone he’s ever worked with.

“She really understands the customer and service side of the business,” he said.

Komlosi, based in Canada, was able to tour the facility or request special orders at will, and Atech was more than willing to accommodate any request.

Komlosi said it was evident in his visits Kapur was concerned not only about her customers, but also her employees.

That’s best exemplified in her dealings with shop workers, like the male welder who Kapur leaned on to learn more about technical specifics.

She can still be found on the shop floor, bouncing ideas off of employees of the aerospace industry governed by agencies like the Federal Aviation Administration and industry standards.

“We make decisions as a team,” she said. “I rely on them to give me the information to make a sound decision.”

In the niche market of aerospace engine repair and manufacturing, there are few women. While at Aimtek, Kapur would attend conventions and trade shows where she was one of five women in a group of thousands.

Atech’s unique market isn’t much better, Kapur said,

“I was always up for a challenge,” she said. “It never really bothered me that I had to work harder to get recognition.”

Add Komlosi to the list of people quick to realize Kapur was a force to be reckoned with, in an industry where she’s by far in the minority.

“Anytime I’ve had to call her, she’s been very accommodating and puts forces together to deliver on what we’re asking for,” he said. **W**



PHOTO/MATT WRIGHT

**Rita Kapur**  
Vice president,  
operations  
Atech Turbine  
Components, Inc.,  
Auburn

**Residences:** Natick  
**College:** Bentley University

**What has been the key to your success?** Happiness, discipline and focus. My solid family foundation and healthy living have given me the energy and determination to remain focused and disciplined. I treat Mondays like it’s the start of a new year by setting new goals and resolutions for the week ahead.

**What is your advice for women in the business world?** Invest in yourself, set goals, remain focused and be confident.

**What is the future for women in the workplace?** The future will continue to be a journey. We will face obstacles and challenges along the path to success, triumph and victory.