



“There Are No Unconquerable Forces - Only Bad Leaders”

Founded in 2005 as an eight-person family business by Redzo Bekto, Bekto Precisa has successfully established itself as a reliable and cost-competitive supplier of molding tools used in the automotive, electrical, and ski industries in Europe. Now fully owned by Bekto’s wife, Rasema, it is one of the few companies in Southeast Europe with a firmly established international reputation. Today the company has 450 employees, 40 percent of whom are female. This is higher than Bosnia’s overall female labor force participation, of 30 percent.

In recent years one person has emerged as the driving force behind Bekto Precisa’s success: Redzo and Rasema’s only daughter, Enisa Bekto.

A mentee and a mentor

Now the CEO of the company and a key strategic decision-maker, Enisa had to work hard to get to where she is now. *“More than others,”* she adds, *“because I did not want education or a career that I had not earned through hard work.”* She wanted to have the knowledge, skills, and experience necessary to lead a large company. Her father, who mentored her from the beginning, invested in her education and supported her in her career but gave her no special privileges. Before joining the management team, Enisa worked in every single department, including assembly hall, quality control, and administration. While Enisa is pleased with her professional success, she takes pride in her personal achievements as a mother of three. She values her family as the backbone

that gives her the strength to persevere when times are tough.

She cites her parents as her most important role models. They have shaped her as a person and a business leader. She has been most inspired by her father’s strength of spirit and simple yet brilliant solutions. She has adopted her father’s business philosophy: devotion, love for the work, and commitment to customers, who deserve the best. Her mother has inspired her by being what Enisa calls the *‘invisible energy that fuels my father.’*

Enisa also sees herself as a mentor, mostly to her own three children to whom she is closely connected. She also says the support of her



husband has been crucial to her success. She encourages her children to be ambitious, honest, and hard-working, and never give up on their dreams. At the same time, she is keen to mentor and help other youngsters – especially those in need. She sits on a parents’ council and a school board, where she awards scholarships to hard-working students.



Business acumen and social awareness

Enisa's leadership has undoubtedly contributed to Bekto Precisa's success. For Enisa, success requires diligent analysis, informed decision-making and careful planning. *"We started small and then expanded," says Enisa. "When we grew, we were very deliberate about it. Our decision was based on careful market and customer analysis."* She has no problem deciding against strategic moves if they might be difficult to sustain long-term. For the most part, her success comes from her rare combination of sharp business acumen and acute social awareness. For example, she is sensitive and responsive to customer needs. What others refer to as a commitment to customer satisfaction, she calls "a company cult." *"It's a deep commitment," she says. "Our business is very specific and highly technical, and we can only satisfy our customers if we provide the highest quality and creative solutions."* To do that, Enisa brings in workers who are young, educated, and full of energy. *"If I want to deliver quality and creativity to our customers, I need a workforce tuned to the latest technologies and market developments," she explains.* Enisa is able to attract and retain such a workforce by taking great care of her employees. *"It's important to be sensitive to the needs of workers," she says. "Overall workplace satisfaction is just as important as timely and adequate pay."* She believes in nurturing a workforce the same way she built the Bekto Precisa brand – patiently and carefully.

Recognizing valuable skills and mobilizing the female talent pool

While being a manager in times of economic crisis is already challenging, being a female manager in Bosnia and Herzegovina is even more difficult. This is a country where less than 14 percent of top managers are women, which is below the regional average of 20 percent. In BiH it is very difficult for women to move into managerial positions, despite the value they can bring.

Careful not to stereotype the skills of men and women, Enisa explains that in her experience, female managers have been more creative and shown more sensitivity to interpersonal relationships, thereby improving relationships with customers, suppliers, and colleagues. Enisa also believes her female managers have been more loyal than their male counterparts. She feels that bringing these qualities into the company's leadership has had a positive impact on strategic decision-making and growth.

This is not to say that Enisa has recruited or promoted managers based on gender. Career success must be driven by credentials and results. In Enisa's experience, the most successful managers in her company have been women, perhaps because of the skills and qualities she details above.

Enisa, who shared her experiences at IFC's recent regional conference on women in Boards and Leadership, proved 'gender-smart' by recognizing this talent pool and its impact on business results. Based on this recognition, she provided opportunities in the



company's managerial functions for successful women. But such decisions require commitment from company leaders. *"I am absolutely sure," she says, "that the number of women in our management team would be negligible if I were not leading the company."*

Providing legitimate career opportunities for skilled and ambitious women is only part of the story. Women's career prospects are still limited by traditional family roles, which prevail in much of the country, and the region. Despite legally mandated paternity leave, women are expected to stay at home and look after the family while men bring home the bacon. Men are, says Enisa, *"seen by society as born leaders."*



Through stories like Enisa's, women and men can be inspired to rethink traditional structures and ultimately help businesses and families alike.

In the meantime, Enisa is reaping the fruits of her hard work and smart decision-making. With 30 percent annual growth, Bekto Precisa plans to expand operations soon. The company expects to create 100 jobs in the next three years, many of which may well be taken by very capable women.

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