

## SELF-AID BOOK

# ‘Spouse of general manager not at all to be envied’

**The wife of a CEO sometimes lives in the shadow of her husband, Sadhna Meijer-Gopalrai noticed. She wrote an ebook about it, for ‘fellow-sufferers’.**

Confronting was therefore the incident during a trade mission to the Chinese Changzhou. Sadhna Meijer-Gopalrai (49) was being approached as the ‘companion’ of Henk Meijer, at that time, General Manager of Bierens Machinefabrieken in Tilburg (the Netherlands). For years she was wife of the CEO and at Bierens responsible for international affairs. In China she was part of a trade delegation from Tilburg. Sadhna, in the past active as executive secretary at the Efteling and Amgen, is using the incident now mainly for entertainment value only. But there is also a serious component:

“Because... that is as a wife of a CEO is often seen, especially in Asian countries”. The position as spouse of the general manager is not enviable. “It may sound fine to the outside world, but it’s not always fun to be lived by the busy schedule of your husband.”

### E-book

In order to support women in such a position, she wrote the bilingual e-book ‘Wife of CEO’. In addition, she takes care of an online or personal training program for ‘fellow-sufferers’. With her website and trainings the,

**‘Don’t live in the shadow of your husband, but determine your own agenda’**

from origin, Surinamese counsellor aims to support as many wives of entrepreneurs “in growing in their own strength”. Sadhna: “Thanks to my own experiences and frustrations I have come to the conclusion that you should choose for your own position. So, do not live in the shadow of your husband but develop your own agenda and activities. It is important to find a place and position of your own. I would like to help women in finding their way to more fulfilment.”

### Traps

Sadhna focuses specifically on women of general managers and other executives. “Many recognize the traps I have come across. There are a lot who feel like an appendix. That frustrated me in the long term to a large extent and that applies to more women I think. I want to strengthen their self-reliance; in the long run that is much better.”



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