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## Illuminating the path for women in business and innovation



**Her story is one of perseverance, innovation, and an unyielding commitment to excellence. Her journey spans continents and industries, all driven by her passion for transforming the world around her.**

**S**harmila Kumbhat, Director of K-Lite Industries Pvt. Ltd., Chennai, didn't just step into the lighting industry—she illuminated it with her vision and determination. As a trailblazer breaking barriers for women in business, her journey is a testament to perseverance and innovation. From navigating complex industries to championing excellence, Sharmila's story unfolds like a beacon, inspiring change not just in the marketplace but in the lives she touches. Through her relentless drive, she's proven that passion and purpose can transform not only businesses but also entire communities.

**The Beginning**  
Sharmila Kumbhat began her business journey at age sixteen, working in Metal Craft, a fabrication unit, where she honed her technical and leadership skills. At nineteen, she earned the prestigious 'Best Female Entrepreneur Award' from the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, marking a significant milestone in her career. Keen to expand her knowledge, Kumbhat pursued design studies in New York. During her decade in the U.S., she founded and operated two successful export-oriented companies, gaining deep insights into global business dynamics.

Driven to contribute to India, she returned to Chennai to join her family business, K-Lite Industries, a leading manufacturer of luminaires and decorative poles. She introduced innovative design concepts and streamlined operations, transforming K-Lite into a modern, system-driven entity. Her emphasis on quality, modularity, and design excellence strengthened the company's position

in India and expanded its global footprint.

Under her leadership, K-Lite has supplied custom lighting solutions to prestigious projects, including the Indian Parliament area, the Parliament complex in Cairo, and renowned religious sites like the Golden Temple in Amritsar, Ayodhya, and Varanasi. Kumbhat's journey reflects her ability to blend design with innovation, driving K-Lite's local and international success. Her cherished memory is spending time with Ratan Tata, whose leadership and values profoundly impacted her.

**Champion of Innovation**  
Kumbhat's visionary approach to business led her to focus on smart lighting solutions, which are increasingly important as cities worldwide move toward energy-efficient and intelligent lighting systems. She recognised the role lighting plays in urban planning and smart city development and led K-Lite's expansion into this space. Her leadership resulted in the creation of K-Lite Europe in London, which serves the growing European market with advanced lighting solutions. This expansion has positioned K-Lite as a leader



**Sharmila Kumbhat**  
Director  
K-Lite Industries Pvt. Ltd.



**As a changemaker, Sharmila Kumbhat's leadership in smart lighting and women empowerment is transforming industries and inspiring new generations. She is revolutionising the lighting industry with innovation and empowering women to lead with purpose and vision.**

in smart lighting, catering to the evolving needs of modern urban environments. Collaborating with international designers and consultants, Kumbhat continues to push the boundaries of what lighting can achieve. Her philosophy of "taking one step at a time and giving the best" has guided K-Lite's growth, ensuring the company stays at the forefront of innovation while maintaining sustainable business practices.

**Empowering Women**  
Kumbhat's impact extends beyond the success of K-Lite. She passionately advocates for women's empowerment and believes in creating equal opportunities for everyone. At K-Lite, over 50 percent of the workforce is female, which is remarkable in an industry traditionally dominated by men. Her commitment to fostering an inclusive work environment stems from her belief that everyone has unique strengths and potential. She leads with a collaborative and empowering style, encouraging her team to embrace creativity and innovation. Her journey, marked by resilience and determination, serves as an inspiration to women across industries. By breaking barriers in a male-dominated sector, she has shown that women can succeed and lead in highly competitive industries. Kumbhat actively mentors young professionals, both within and outside her organisation. Her leadership has become a hope for women aspiring to



enter entrepreneurship and business leadership.

**Vision for Future**  
As she continues to lead K-Lite, Kumbhat remains committed to innovation, excellence, and empowerment. Her vision for the future is clear: create lighting solutions that meet today's needs and anticipate tomorrow's demands. Her work in smart city lighting, sustainable design, and global expansion has positioned K-Lite as a leader in next-generation lighting solutions. Yet, what truly sets her apart is her unwavering commitment to empowering others and promoting diversity.

In a constantly evolving world, Kumbhat's leadership reminds us of what can be achieved through determination, vision, and a focus on business and social progress. Sharmila Kumbhat remains a guiding force in the lighting industry and a role model for aspiring businesswomen worldwide as she expands her horizons.