

Passion for Success Drivers, Attitude, and Perseverance in the New Age of Opportunities and Distractions

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Today's learning environment is full of great opportunities for the next generation of math and science leaders and innovators. However, continuous distraction from social media to games and videos as early as elementary and middle school years not only hinders the ability to assimilate the foundations, but also defines self-esteem by the entourage instead of developing inner confidence and drive. Women in particular are vulnerable because of peer pressure and desire to belong to mainstream as they meander through teen and young adult years. In this presentation, I will share my experience as a woman theoretical physicist and mathematician, engineer, founder, and CEO, and reflect on the coming decades of opportunities and the desperate need for self-driven thinkers, innovators, and contributors with inner insights and instincts that are independent from their entourage.



Bio: Dr. Maha Achour brings more than 25 years of proven success in the design, development, manufacturing, management and marketing of RF, microwave, and optical communication systems and subsystems. She is currently the founder and CEO of Metawave Corporation, a startup focusing on high performance radar for highly automated vehicles and mm-wave 5G solutions. She also co-founded and led Polyceed Inc., a startup company that is focusing on commercializing cutting-edge technologies in sensing and mobile communication markets. Previously, she held key management and technical positions at Rayspan Corporation, where she was founder and Chief Technology Officer, and also worked in

leadership and technical positions for San Diego Research Center, UlmTech, Optical Access, LightPointe, and Tiernan Communications. Her responsibilities spanned from working closely with top university professors to advance research labs, and was deeply involved in advanced technologies to build Intellectual Property portfolios of 120+ patents. At Metawave, Rayspan, and Lightpointe, she secured funding from tier one Venture Capital firms such as Khosla ventures and Sequoia Capital, and from strategic investors including Toyota AI Venture, Hyundai, Infineon, and other leading companies.

During her professional experience, Dr. Achour created, developed, and marketed technologies and products to consumer electronics and telecommunication system providers using direct sales and licensing business models. Her strong analytical, engineering, and physics skills have allowed her to solve challenging problems from channel modeling, coding, and modulation, to advanced RF and optical front-end optimizations using single and multiple propagating channels. Dr. Achour holds a doctorate degree in Physics from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), and she completed the Master Degree Program in Wireless Communication Theory and Systems, at University of California at San Diego (UCSD). She has authored over 30 publications in electrical engineering and physics and holds more than 50 granted patents and 70 pending applications.