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Alumnus Profile: Robert Chatwani

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Robert Chatwani

(BUS '97)

Residence | Fremont, Calif.

Occupation | I work for eBay Inc. as Senior Director of Consumer Marketing. I have the privilege of leading buyer and seller marketing for the world's largest online marketplace. We're a dynamic marketplace with over \$80 billion in annual trading volume and over 800 million listings of items for sale. More than 1 million people earn their part-time or full-time living on eBay.

Education | My education has been the single most important factor contributing to my career progress. I went to Maine West High School in Des Plaines, Ill. I decided to pursue a degree at DePaul due to the reputation of the school's business and economics programs. Attending DePaul also allowed me to continue helping my parents manage their small business. While at DePaul I took advantage of a foreign study program in Osaka, Japan, where I lived with a family and studied Japanese. Eventually, I was drawn to California and pursued an MBA at the UC Berkeley Haas School of Business.

Vital stats | After DePaul, I was fortunate to work in global management consulting at McKinsey & Co. After three years at McKinsey in Chicago and Washington, D.C., I moved to San Francisco to start a venture-backed Internet company. I eventually joined eBay in 2003, where I have been for the past 12 years. My wife (and best friend) and I have been married for 14 years and have three kids.

What I like best about my job | I work for a company with a very meaningful purpose, where we focus on creating economic opportunity for people throughout the world. I've been lucky to have five or six different positions within the company, allowing me to develop a broad set of leadership skills, as well as contribute to the company's growth across different functions. What energizes me most is building great teams and helping individuals develop their careers.

The biggest challenge I face in my job | Managing my energy and the energy of my team. I believe that the way people feel at work influences how they perform, and the way people feel is defined by their level of energy. Energy can take several forms—physical, mental, emotional and spiritual. I've found that helping my team manage their energy—not their time—helps improve engagement, focus and productivity. There are lots of ways to help them with this, but I've found the best way is to create an environment that fosters renewal, flexible schedules and decision-making empowerment.



Chatwani's advice for new alumni:

“Do what you love—every day—and enjoy the people you work with. If you don't love it, invest in making a change. Be authentic and be honest with yourself.”

“Take your best idea—and dream one size bigger. It doesn't matter if it's about your career, about starting a new venture or about serving your community. Make your plans as audacious as possible.”

“Don't get too comfortable. When you're early in your career, move around. Spend time working in a foreign country, changing roles or even changing companies. Doing so grows your capabilities and makes you a more valuable leader.”

“Take responsibility for your own development. Play to your strengths, find great mentors and take measured risks. Most great careers are discovered, not planned. Embrace those unexpected opportunities that occasionally come your way.”