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As a veteran in the airline and parcel delivery industry, Karen Reddington describes her association with FedEx Express as "a marriage made in heaven" in many ways.  
The executive, who helms the Asia-Pacific division of the express delivery giant, did not have a blueprint for the future in her early 20s, as she wasn't too interested in a particular subject.  
She decided to go for a doctorate, placing her faith in any education of value at any stage in life. Eventually, she got her PhD in operations research from the London School of Economics and Political Science.  
Doing the degree certainly helps in fomenting discipline, working independently and driving oneself, says Reddington.  
Originally from the United Kingdom, Reddington started her professional career as an operations research analyst with UK letters and parcels delivery company Royal Mail. She later had a stint with Hong Kong flag carrier Cathay Pacific, which brought her to the Asia Pacific and Hong Kong.  
"There's always something about parcels and airlines (for me). With FedEx, I've been able to bring the two together," she notes.  
Reddington joined FedEx Express in 1997, initially as an operations research adviser, on the strength of her academic background and took the helm as president of FedEx Express Asia Pacific in 2015. To date, she has been with the company for more than 20 years.  
"I had never imagined I would spend a great portion of my life in Hong Kong and the Asia Pacific," she says. "I think the more important thing is what makes me stay with FedEx."  
As a leader, she's quite a devotee of the company's people service profit philosophy. "If you treat your people well, they'll deliver great service. That will, in turn, return profit for the shareholders and so we can invest that back in our people."  
Reddington is an ardent believer in the importance of investing in staff. She reckons they're the company's strengths, so it s vital to give them the opportunities to grow and develop.  
Her people-oriented concept also applies to her attitudes toward a group of the company's customers — small and medium-sized enterprises.  
As her father and husband are both owners of small businesses, she feels like living among SMEs though working for a multinational corporation, she said in a speech at an APEC SME summit three years ago.  
In fact, FedEx has taken off to help SMEs expand their businesses globally for years, especially in reaching the globe with new routines and lowering trade barriers by simplifying customs clearance processes.  
"SMEs often don't have a lot of people who can help navigate the world of regulations," she adds. "So anything that could reduce their cost of trade can be done to promote growth on a global basis."

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