Diana Yousef has loved science and math for as long as she can remember. As the daughter of Egyptian immigrants with science-based careers — her mother a pharmacist, and her father a doctor — there was never a question of whether she would study science. Her parents’ influence, and Yousef’s deep-seated love for science, would both prove meaningful in her career as a scientist. In her final years of high school, having struggled with advanced math and science courses, Yousef began to notice that many STEM classrooms didn’t seem like they were meant for her. She found that young women were often treated as distractions in the classroom, rather than students themselves. However, after pushing through the challenges of high school, Yousef found that nobody in her 100+ person lectures at Harvard really cared who she was. It was in those classrooms that Yousef realized, without the external noise telling her that she was incapable, science actually did come naturally to her. In her second year at Harvard, Yousef’s interest in a career as a research scientist grew. This interest later motivated her to complete her PhD in protein biochemistry at Cornell University. Yousef recalls that without her childhood love for science, she may not have been able to put up with the early challenges of high school. Despite these challenges, Yousef excelled academically. In addition to her PhD in protein biochemistry, she also holds an MA and MBA in international development from Columbia University.

In 2009, while working as an advisor to a NASA and USAID initiative to help promote key solutions to challenges of the 21st century, Yousef came across an idea that would later launch her career as the CEO and founder of the company change:WATER. The idea was to use breathable materials, like the sweat-wicking materials we wear while working out, to passively pull water molecules away from waste. The ability to passively collect water from waste has applications off the grid, meaning that this material could function in locations that lack power or plumbing. Yousef was intrigued by this idea. She notes that issues of water accessibility have always been important to her, especially because of her Egyptian roots. She really cared who she was. It was in those classrooms that Yousef realized, without the external noise telling her that she was incapable, science actually did come naturally to her. In her second year at Harvard, Yousef’s interest in a career as a research scientist grew. This interest later motivated her to complete her PhD in protein biochemistry at Cornell University. Yousef recalls that without her childhood love for science, she may not have been able to put up with the early challenges of high school. Despite these challenges, Yousef excelled academically. In addition to her PhD in protein biochemistry, she also holds an MA and MBA in international development from Columbia University.

In 2009, while working as an advisor to a NASA and USAID initiative to help promote key solutions to challenges of the 21st century, Yousef came across an idea that would later launch her career as the CEO and founder of the company change:WATER. The idea was to use breathable materials, like the sweat-wicking materials we wear while working out, to passively pull water molecules away from waste. The ability to passively collect water from waste has applications off the grid, meaning that this material could function in locations that lack power or plumbing. Yousef was intrigued by this idea. She notes that issues of water accessibility have always been important to her, especially because of her Egyptian roots. She really cared who she was. It was in those classrooms that Yousef realized, without the external noise telling her that she was incapable, science actually did come naturally to her. In her second year at Harvard, Yousef’s interest in a career as a research scientist grew. This interest later motivated her to complete her PhD in protein biochemistry at Cornell University. Yousef recalls that without her childhood love for science, she may not have been able to put up with the early challenges of high school. Despite these challenges, Yousef excelled academically. In addition to her PhD in protein biochemistry, she also holds an MA and MBA in international development from Columbia University.

In 2009, while working as an advisor to a NASA and USAID initiative to help promote key solutions to challenges of the 21st century, Yousef came across an idea that would later launch her career as the CEO and founder of the company change:WATER. The idea was to use breathable materials, like the sweat-wicking materials we wear while working out, to passively pull water molecules away from waste. The ability to passively collect water from waste has applications off the grid, meaning that this material could function in locations that lack power or plumbing. Yousef was intrigued by this idea. She notes that issues of water accessibility have always been important to her, especially because of her Egyptian roots. She really cared who she was. It was in those classrooms that Yousef realized, without the external noise telling her that she was incapable, science actually did come naturally to her. In her second year at Harvard, Yousef’s interest in a career as a research scientist grew. This interest later motivated her to complete her PhD in protein biochemistry at Cornell University. Yousef recalls that without her childhood love for science, she may not have been able to put up with the early challenges of high school. Despite these challenges, Yousef excelled academically. In addition to her PhD in protein biochemistry, she also holds an MA and MBA in international development from Columbia University.

In 2009, while working as an advisor to a NASA and USAID initiative to help promote key solutions to challenges of the 21st century, Yousef came across an idea that would later launch her career as the CEO and founder of the company change:WATER. The idea was to use breathable materials, like the sweat-wicking materials we wear while working out, to passively pull water molecules away from waste. The ability to passively collect water from waste has applications off the grid, meaning that this material could function in locations that lack power or plumbing. Yousef was intrigued by this idea. She notes that issues of water accessibility have always been important to her, especially because of her Egyptian roots. She really cared who she was. It was in those classrooms that Yousef realized, without the external noise telling her that she was incapable, science actually did come naturally to her. In her second year at Harvard, Yousef’s interest in a career as a research scientist grew. This interest later motivated her to complete her PhD in protein biochemistry at Cornell University. Yousef recalls that without her childhood love for science, she may not have been able to put up with the early challenges of high school. Despite these challenges, Yousef excelled academically. In addition to her PhD in protein biochemistry, she also holds an MA and MBA in international development from Columbia University.

In 2009, while working as an advisor to a NASA and USAID initiative to help promote key solutions to challenges of the 21st century, Yousef came across an idea that would later launch her career as the CEO and founder of the company change:WATER. The idea was to use breathable materials, like the sweat-wicking materials we wear while working out, to passively pull water molecules away from waste. The ability to passively collect water from waste has applications off the grid, meaning that this material could function in locations that lack power or plumbing. Yousef was intrigued by this idea. She notes that issues of water accessibility have always been important to her, especially because of her Egyptian roots. She really cared who she was. It was in those classrooms that Yousef realized, without the external noise telling her that she was incapable, science actually did come naturally to her. In her second year at Harvard, Yousef’s interest in a career as a research scientist grew. This interest later motivated her to complete her PhD in protein biochemistry at Cornell University. Yousef recalls that without her childhood love for science, she may not have been able to put up with the early challenges of high school. Despite these challenges, Yousef excelled academically. In addition to her PhD in protein biochemistry, she also holds an MA and MBA in international development from Columbia University.

In 2009, while working as an advisor to a NASA and USAID initiative to help promote key solutions to challenges of the 21st century, Yousef came across an idea that would later launch her career as the CEO and founder of the company change:WATER. The idea was to use breathable materials, like the sweat-wicking materials we wear while working out, to passively pull water molecules away from waste. The ability to passively collect water from waste has applications off the grid, meaning that this material could function in locations that lack power or plumbing. Yousef was intrigued by this idea. She notes that issues of water accessibility have always been important to her, especially because of her Egyptian roots. She really cared who she was. It was in those classrooms that Yousef realized, without the external noise telling her that she was incapable, science actually did come naturally to her. In her second year at Harvard, Yousef’s interest in a career as a research scientist grew. This interest later motivated her to complete her PhD in protein biochemistry at Cornell University. Yousef recalls that without her childhood love for science, she may not have been able to put up with the early challenges of high school. Despite these challenges, Yousef excelled academically. In addition to her PhD in protein biochemistry, she also holds an MA and MBA in international development from Columbia University.