

I am Sohini. But this name was not given to me at birth. My gender too was different. At a very young age, I realised I wanted to be a girl...that it was my true identity. Before coming out, I was shy and uncomfortable about being different and encountered many inconvenient situations. It was awkward for me to use men's washroom. I couldn't even be in the company of men or be open about my LGBTQ+ identity.

But in 2019, I decided to come out of the shell and transition into a woman. My first acceptance came from strangers on social media who whole heartedly supported me. My family, although initially reluctant, now stands with me. They haven't treated me any differently. For them, I am now a daughter and a sister!

What was difficult to maintain after my transition was financial independence. Companies are reluctant to hire people from the transgender community and they have no idea that they are missing out on incredible talent!

But I have been lucky! I now work as an Associate at Mahindra Logistics. My office is a safe space where I can be my authentic self! My superiors are supportive and only focused on my growth. My co-workers are open-minded and welcoming. They have made me feel like an integral part of the team since the beginning! I even received Women's Day wishes from the organization and my colleagues and even a gift! I hadn't celebrated this day earlier and it couldn't have been more perfect or special!

I do believe that times are changing and there are organizations working towards equal hiring of LGBTQ+ community in workforce. But we need more and more employers like MLL to have a holistic Diversity & Inclusion policy. This is important for the empowerment of my community as it will provide us with much needed monetary support and dignity that has been taken away from us for being different!

I want my story to be heard and I hope my corporate journey will inspire others, especially my friends in the LGBTQ+ community. To live a happy, healthy, and respectful life is our right too! I have found my Allies here at Mahindra Logistics and I hope you too get a chance...to meet them and work with them!