



ACCENTURE LIVE: ENABLING BOUNDARYLESS OPPORTUNITIES

VIDEO TRANSCRIPT

Pallavi Kapoor: Hi, everyone. Welcome to Accenture Live, a platform where we showcase the talent within Accenture and also help accelerate an equal and inclusive culture. My name is Pallavi Kapoor, and I work with Accenture as a people advisor, H.R.

I'm currently living in Noida, hoping to move to Bangalore very soon.

Even as we celebrate the international week for the deaf, I have two very special colleagues with me who will share their experience of overcoming their physical/medical disabilities to triumph and living life to the fullest.

I'm very happy to introduce you to Sweta Poddar, who's been with Accenture for the last five years, and Sanjay Gupta, who's been with us for 17 years.

Sweta has built a very successful career in design despite being deaf, and Sanjay has been battling an invisible disability for many years now.

He's a chronic diabetic with an autoimmune condition. Despite living with this disability, Sanjay has built a successful career.

Welcome, Sweta and Sanjay. I hope you both are doing well.

Sweta's Interpreter: Hi, Pallavi and Sanjay.

Sanjay Gupta: Wonderful to be here, Pallavi. Hi, Sweta.

Pallavi Kapoor: Okay. Let us begin by understanding what your job is.

I want to start with Sweta. I am a CODA myself, a child of deaf adults. Father, mother are deaf. I understand the world, so I'll start with you. I proudly accept sign language. I've been using it since my childhood.

Sweta, could you please tell us about your work at Accenture?

Sweta's Interpreter: Wow. That's really nice. So, as far as my role at Accenture is concerned, I help teams with their PPTs, with their documents, other deliverables in North America, Europe, and Far East.

Sanjay Gupta: I lead ATCI Growth Markets India resources CG on the technology front and deliver solutions to Indian clients. It's been almost 17 years that I'm working with the firm and witnessing continuous changes for the good in the organisation.

Pallavi Kapoor: Wow. Given your situations, how do you both manage?

Sweta's Interpreter: Technology has been a really good assistance.

You know, Microsoft Teams, e-mails, WhatsApp. Various apps like Net Banking, WhatsApp, Net Banking, they're all useful tools that have helped me maneuver the daily doing.

I think Accenture has been really helpful



themselves, seen an inclusive culture here. My colleagues, my team is very accommodating.

They always make me feel included, never make me feel excluded out of the team, either during meetings or daily interactions.

Sanjay Gupta: I agree with Sweta. And thanks to the technology driven and an inclusive work environment, most of the organization, they have a support structure in place to understand the physical disabilities which are visible.

Accenture has got specific policies and processes that even the disabilities which are not visible, like mine, are also taken care of. And there's a proper support structure in place. In fact, it is through the HR campaign that I got to know that my problem, my health issue is also considered as part of a disability, and that's how I disclosed it very recently.

Pallavi Kapoor: Okay. So, do you both agree that Accenture gives you a very supportive environment for both visible and invisible disabilities?

Can you both share some stories of how, you know, this support has been shown to you?

Sanjay Gupta: Well, there's a definite support structure in place, and employees are encouraged to disclose their disabilities with all confidentiality maintained.

Now, Accenture promotes a career where, largely, it is an individual that matters, it's not the disability or a health condition that matters. I've been working with Accenture for the last 17 years, so I joined almost as an analyst 17 years back, and I raised up to this level, so I think there are definite policies in place.

Pallavi Kapoor: Okay.

Sweta's Interpreter: So, I remember when I first joined Accenture. I was very nervous. You know, how will I fit into such a large organization?

I've been overwhelmed with the support that I've got from the organization.

My team, they never -- never, you know, made me feel left out or different, so they always included me in all the conversations in the team, important meetings.

We always turn on the live captions in the team. So, I constantly interact with several -- several people, stakeholders from across the world.

Pallavi Kapoor: That's wonderful to see. So, I want to ask you, which of Accenture's policies do you think are most useful to you?

Sweta's Interpreter: For me, you know, it's the pre-COVID work-from-home pilot. My managers realized that I was, you know, having a little difficulty balancing my personal life, my professional life.

I have a son. And so, they suggested that I be part of the work-from-home pilot, and I agreed, and today, I'm such a better parent and employee.

Pallavi Kapoor: Sanjay?

Sanjay Gupta: Yeah. So, I think, for me, it is the flexible flyback policy that has guided me throughout my career because I have -- there's a lot of travel involved in my role, and this flexible flyback helps me.

Pallavi Kapoor: Sanjay, could you elaborate a bit on this policy?

Sanjay Gupta: So, Accenture's flexible flyback policy allows you to take any travel at any location rather than onto your home location, and at the same time, the flybacks are so frequent that are available for employees that we don't face any problem.

I used it from the very beginning of my career in Accenture, and I could do my job because of that.

Pallavi Kapoor: Okay. Sanjay, I want to ask you another question. Have you ever felt excluded at work because of your disability?

Sanjay Gupta: On the contrary, I never felt like I couldn't do a given role because of my health condition and have always been encouraged for



Any assignment by my leaders, and I've been able to work in different workforces, as well.

Pallavi Kapoor: Sweta?

Sweta's Interpreter: Thanks to Accenture, I feel like I've got the opportunity to work with the best of technology, work with best people across the world.

My perspectives have expanded due to this exposure at work.

Pallavi Kapoor: Okay. So, Sweta, I would like to ask you, what outside of work do you do?

Do you want to tell us?

Sweta's Interpreter: I love meeting my friends, you know, going out with them, having conversations with them. We go party, we play, so I enjoy that.

Pallavi Kapoor: Okay. So, Sanjay, I want to ask you the same question.

Sanjay Gupta: So, I think, outside of work, I do a lot of things.

So, I do -- I think the most important hobby that I have is reading, so I continue to read.

I have joined a gym, so I go for that, for the health purposes. And then, obviously, I do play badminton, as well.

Pallavi Kapoor: Okay. Thank you. And, Sweta wants to add, she likes doing yoga, as well, on a daily basis.

Thank you.

Thank you, Sweta. But, yes? But she's not regular for it.

She's trying to be regular with yoga. Good.

Sanjay Gupta: And I also --

Pallavi Kapoor: Yes?

Sanjay Gupta: I also do --

have started -- have taken an interest in cooking.

Pallavi Kapoor: Nice. She does not like cooking.

Sanjay Gupta: That is good.

Pallavi Kapoor: Dislikes cooking. Okay. Are -- Are there any, you know, challenges that you're facing still you feel you have to overcome?

Sanjay Gupta: I think the travel portion, in my role, and its -- and its effect on my health has definite concern from my family. But of late, I've used this Accenture flexible travel arrangement policy to choose the right travel arrangements for myself.

You know, 17 years back, when I joined Accenture, I was not knowing or I was not diagnosed with any kind of such a chronic problem.

But while I was -- some 15 years back, when I had this --

The first thing that happened was when I was in Seoul on a project site, and there, you know, I got a pancreatic attack where I had to get hospitalized on an emergency basis, and there was three days of a huge emergency that got created.

And then, when I came back to my home, they noted a further diagnosis, given a clear understanding to the doctors that, because of this pancreatic attack, my pancreas got damaged, and I am going into a diabetic situation.

So, since then, I am taking insulin.

But then, what I could always look at it is I was having my own ambitions to grow.

And a typical problem at an age of 29 years, when you get diagnosed with such kind of problems, your mind or your family's mind is not such that you accept it and then you start to compromise a lot of things.

The first thing that I did, and my family



supported me, was that we accepted that there is a problem.

We need to manage this problem without having any kind of compromise anywhere else. So, that was the start of the whole thing, and then, afterwards, obviously, you know, I did not move into a different roles where, you know, I can be at ease or anything, and I continued -- I joined as an analyst, so I think I've got five promotions since then.

And in 2019, I became a managing director, so it went like that.

And, obviously, my Accenture leaders always supported me well when I had any issues that might present on the job or absence on the job.

I could manage a lot of things at home, also.

Sweta's Interpreter: The pace at which assisted technology is growing, things are only going to get better.

I am very hopeful that the larger world for persons with disabilities will be more inclusive and supportive.

Pallavi Kapoor: I agree. The future does look hopeful.

Do you both have any messages to say to the audience?

Sanjay Gupta: Oh, yes. If you look at the latest report from Catalyst, it shows that diversity and inclusion benefits both the organization as well as an individual.

One should not make the disability or health conditions an excuse for a failure.

Pallavi Kapoor: Sweta?

Sweta's Interpreter: Like Accenture, the world should also shift its focus to people's abilities and strengths instead of their disabilities.

Pallavi Kapoor: Well said. So, thank you, both, for joining us today, sharing your journeys. This has been truly, truly an enlightening conversation. Goodbye.

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