

Ethnicity conversations: Nancy's story

Speaker: Nancy, Commercial Banking, HSBC

One of the questions I used to hate people asking me is, "Where are you from?" They won't stop when they are given the answer, "New York." They will keep on asking, they will keep on pursuing. They will say, "No, no, no. But where are you really from?", "Where are your ancestors from?" To which then I would of course answer, "I was born in Taiwan, I am from Asia, I moved to the States when I was nine." And then they feel relaxed, like they have gotten the answer they were looking for.

[Text on screen] Nancy's story

I joined HSBC because I was looking for an opportunity to have a global career. After a couple of years in New York, I was offered a position in Shanghai, in China. And I walked into the office on day one and of course the office was, you know, largely Chinese. So I thought, "Here I am, I am home, I fit in now." But I very quickly found out that I was labelled as a foreigner. I looked a different way, I dressed a different way, I speak English in a different way. So I became an expat in China.

So I think it has been a journey of constant self-discovery and self-exploration. I think it took a long time for me to really be comfortable in my own skin and realise that it is OK to be an influence of two different cultures. And that's made me unique. And it is part of why I am able to do what I do today. So, in hindsight, I am grateful for having had that experience.

The other thing it has given me is the courage to pick up my life and move halfway across the world. I think without having had that experience as an immigrant and knowing that I could be thrown into a completely foreign environment and still succeed, I never would have moved from New York to Shanghai, to Hong Kong, to Kuala Lumpur and now to London. And I have been very fortunate in having found the bank that supported me in this journey. It is exactly what I wanted when I joined HSBC, and it has been an amazing ride.

We can have all the right policies, hiring guidelines and principles in place, but if we don't bring them to life in what we do, then we will never be able to effectuate change.

[Text on screen] We have been listening to our people's voices, learning and taking action. Go to [HSBC.com](https://www.hsbc.com) to learn more about our race commitments.