



# Diversity

Establishing the value of inclusion  
 Issue - 4

In Conversation | Off the Map | Self and Spirit | Relatively Speaking | Quiz | Employee Resource Group

## In Conversation with Jennifer Jones



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Every time I am able to work with a new group, I feel very fortunate for the opportunity to learn about another culture and encourage others to bridge communication and cultural gaps.

**About me** – I was born and raised in Canada. After completing a Masters degree in Business Administration I started family and business. I went on to working in import with Asian and European based organizations. Learning to respect different professional cultures was the key to my success working internationally. I joined Mphasis a year ago to head our newest near-shore centre based in PEI, Canada. The experience so far has been very positive. Our diverse team is tight knit and always eager to learn others' cultures. We are ramping up and I plan to continue to foster this environment as we grow. I enjoy coming to work each day.

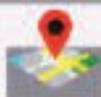
**Hobbies and interests** - When my 3 children were young my extra-curricular activities revolved around them. I was actively involved in school committees, the school board and coaching and convening youth soccer. Now that the children are grown (aged 22, 21 & 19), I have taken up golf and continue to scrapbook and journal our family events and milestones.

**Balancing work, family and social life** - Balancing work and raising 3 children took extreme organizational skills. Like other professional women, I believe in giving 100% to my work as well as my children. It was always tricky when a child got sick or the school closed unexpectedly. Sometimes the only option was to bring kids to work which was frowned upon by the employers. Luckily today working remotely is often possible for professional women; they also have flexible schedules.

**Cultural Diversity** – Embracing diversity is a core value of a strong organization and it helps build cohesive teams. I promote sharing of various traditions and customs in the workplace rather than pretending that we are all the same. I have found that encouraging colleagues to understand their differences as well as the value of four diverse backgrounds is what brings us together. I am a big believer of respecting and celebrating differences.

**My mentor** – Although I am a Canadian, I would select Hillary Clinton to be my mentor if I ever had the opportunity. As former US Secretary of State she holds the record for most countries visited during her tenure. I think this is testament to her dedication and success in bridging diverse cultures. She has said "What we have to do... is to find a way to celebrate our diversity and debate our differences without fracturing our communities". Just as important as the diversity mandate is her missions of the global empowerment of women". As ambassadors within Mphasis, we are trying to achieve this in our own way.

## Off the Map



With a Masters degree in Technology, more than a decade in IT domain and having been associated with BSc, IIT and ISRO for Engineering projects, **Hema Narayanan** gave up a high paying career in the Technology Consulting Division of Wipro Technologies to pursue a dream.

**Travel and shutter bug** - When my corporate job took me to Europe and I travelled extensively through the countryside around England, Scotland and Wales I realized travelling and photography were not just hobbies but passion of my life. My experiences were different from other travelers. I observed more intently and patiently. I recorded things about the local essence, the people, their lifestyle etc, both in my mind and on paper. While others shopped for clothes and bags, I bought maps and guidebooks (my home is filled with them).

**Moving out of the comfort zone** - "Where do I go to work tomorrow?" was a disconcerting thought to deal with. My zest in chasing a dream with courage and confidence helped me move forward. I do not overanalyze problems but believe in the approach 'cross that bridge when you come to it'.



**New career** - Since 2007 I have been writing for Indian national newspapers (TOI, The Hindu, DNA), Travel magazines, online blogs and portals. Additionally, I undertake professional photography assignments, teach photography and work on photojournalistic themes. In 2012 I was chosen to be one among the Indian Authors for Lonely Planet to work on their Indian edition of Travel Books. I have also been chosen to license images for sale to Getty Images, one of the world's largest image stock agency.

**Achievements** - I registered a proprietorship firm named *Wider Angles* as a Woman Entrepreneur. I was shortlisted for the worldwide National Geographic and World Nomads travel photography scholarship in 2011. I am often invited to critique and judge photography contests.

**Message to individuals who wish to do something new but are not able to take the plunge** – Like they say, the worst question is the one that is never asked; the worst risk is the one that is never taken! I believe that passion without perseverance is inconsequential. Don't over think problems, start small and gradually aim for higher goals.

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