

TRANSCRIPT

Voices of Change

The thing about trail running is that you are always faced with new situations. The weather can be different. The ground is different. You always have to adapt to new situations and that's what motivates me in my daily work, helping people take the next step.

I am Leroy Mabikounou, 30 years old. I'm a Scrum Master at Accenture Technology, where I'm responsible for organizing and supporting teams that tackle IT solutions.

Growing up, there were always situations where it was perhaps already obvious to be ostracized. These were obvious name-calling or the use of the N-word towards me. I was aware of what it meant even then, but it never gained entrance into my consciousness. I have never struggled with it much, but over time have observed things coming my way. I once had a critical situation on the soccer field with the referee who used words that were simply inappropriate. My reaction to that is always to address it on the one hand, but also not take it personally. I always remember that a lot of people who act in a racist way just don't know any better at that moment. We have to remember that, on the one hand, it's not okay, but on the other hand, we have to make people aware of how to use words.

A big matter of heart is ethnicity. My father is from the Congo. I was born and raised in Germany. That's why the topic has a higher profile for me than it does for many other colleagues, and I think it's absolutely important to engage in an exchange, so that it's no longer just a topic in marketing support, but that it's actively addressed. How can we live more diversity? How can we integrate it into everyday life?

The African-German Employee Resource Group is a community of black people within Accenture ASG, as the DACH region. We are now over 100 colleagues who support each other, because for many black people who were not born in Germany, for example, but came to Germany to study, it is always a challenge to find their way in a new environment. But on the other hand, we also want to position within the company, that we are a kind of an interest group that wants to challenge the status quo.

We also want to make the diverse image, which is always talked about, which we talk about, visible, not only within the company but also to the outside.