



VIDEO TRANSCRIPT

SCHIRA LILLIS

My name is Schira Elizabeth Lillis. I work at the Accenture Research group. I'm the Global Financial Services Research Lead.

I was very lucky growing up. I was the daughter of a mother who was the only girl in her family to go to university, so she was university educated. That meant a lot for me when I was growing up. I mean, her influence and her positioning as a role model for me was really important.

My father was very much a strong supporter of women and, particularly given that his first child was a woman, he did everything he could to ensure that I had the same opportunities as a guy would have.

My first interview was at Goldman Sachs. I really wanted that role, and, at the end of the day, I had the job. The trading floor was really exciting, though granted one of the things obviously is that when you looked around the room, there were women certainly, but most of them were executive assistants.

You didn't necessarily as a woman get the same level of mentoring or sponsorship and so on. I worked with some great guys, and they were very nice, but there wasn't automatically an assumption that, "Let's invest in this girl, let's invest in this woman" to allow her to achieve, just as we would do the same with the guys.

I think mentorship is very, very important to get greater equality at senior level positions in any firm.

Learning is essential. You need to continue learning throughout your life. We all go to school, but some people, once they leave the schoolroom, they don't want to have any more to do with it. In fact, life is all about continual learning. There's so many things we need to know.

I guess if I was writing to my mom about gender equality I would first of all thank her for everything she has done to support me in achieving what I want to achieve.

Because that's the important thing—that we can all choose our own paths. I think it will be really important, and, hopefully I will play my role with my daughter and with the people I work with, in showing both men and women that it is very important that each sex has the opportunity to benefit, to do what they want to do, to grow, to shine. And it's not just a woman's issue, it is an issue for everybody, and together we can learn.