

# I'm In! *This is my story*



**‘***I worked in retail since I was 16 to support my education. I am a first generation university graduate and I am determined to make it a success’*

**Kapish Jitendra Dave**  
Trainee Solicitor

**Q: Tell us a little bit about yourself**

**A:** Having been brought up in a traditional Indian family in London, I have the joy of being both a British Indian and a through-and-through Londoner! I have spent my entire life in the capital and you can often catch me exploring the city by foot after work. I am in the first generation of my family to attend university, having studied Law at the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE). My interest in law is longstanding as I was inspired by a distant relative when I was 13. I can also speak three languages fluently (English, Gujarati and Hindi).

Sports is a big part of my life and I am a devout Liverpool FC and India Cricket Team fan. I completed my black belt in Karate when I was 9 and I also enjoy trekking and subsequently completed my Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award at the age of 17. Being a big fan of nature and the outdoors, I would love to spend a few months travelling in Africa and exploring the various national parks across the continent.

**Q: What does diversity and inclusion mean to you?**

**A:** To me, diversity and inclusion is about being able to work in an environment where everyone feels genuinely accepted, valued and welcomed. This goes beyond the business needs aspect of the organisation, as I believe D&I should focus on supporting every employee in their work and wider life within the firm.

**Q: What sparked your passion for social mobility and diversity within the corporate industry?**

**A:** My passion for promoting social mobility and diversity within the corporate industry comes primarily from my personal experience. Being BME, a first generation university student and having worked since the age of 16, I have experienced what it is like to enter the corporate industry from a 'non-traditional' background and therefore appreciate some of the challenges faced by those entering 'the unknown'. With our clients and our business becoming more global, I believe diversity in the workforce is integral, as a wider range of views and approaches can help us cater to the varying needs of our clientele. I have been involved in a range of initiatives supporting diversity and social mobility throughout school, university and during my Training Contract and I hope to continue this throughout my career.

**Q: How do you feel you are perceived by people and how would you like to be perceived?**

**A:** I believe I am generally perceived as a hard-working and ambitious individual. At times, I believe I may be perceived as less social than some of my peers as I can appear less keen for after-work socials. I would like this not to be the case as I am definitely a team player and enjoy work socials. However, as I live at home, I very much look forward to spending time at home with my parents and siblings when I have the opportunity to do so.

**Q: How have you found forming close friendships at CMS?**

**A:** I have found it fairly easy to form friendships with my colleagues. Everyone at the firm is friendly and approachable and this is something I definitely found to be useful in my first few weeks as a trainee. Having been at the firm for 2 years, I feel like I know a lot more people now and often meet with colleagues outside of work.

**Q: Do you believe CMS is a diverse and inclusive firm – how could it improve?**

**A:** Yes, I do think that CMS is a diverse and inclusive firm, but I think we can always do better. Something I think the legal profession can improve on in general is role models and mentoring. In my view, D&I is heavily focused on entry level roles but I believe firms need to do more to encourage and motivate those from 'non-traditional' backgrounds to aspire to get into the most senior positions. I believe having someone to speak to that has been through a similar process is both helpful and aspirational and therefore definitely something the firm should explore in the future.