



OUR PEOPLE

The right to be yourself at work

October 11 was the International Coming Out Day - a reference to the second Gay Rights March, which took place on October 11, 1987 in Washington. On this occasion, Modis, presents an initiative that points out the effects of a focused work with diversity and also show Modis vision of the importance of “being yourself at work”. An initiative that points out the effects of a focused work with diversity and also show Modis forward-looking approach.

This edition of Modis Insights features Laurent Graciani, President of Modis France and Northern Europe, and Mathieu Motillon, Director of Recruitment, Careers and CSR to hear about the importance of diversity and inclusion at work.

Laurent, why is it important to “be yourself at work”?

In my opinion, being yourself at work means being able to be aligned with your values, and to assume your differences, especially in terms of sexual orientation or gender identity.

It means, for example, not needing to hide oneself or one’s spouse’s identity. We can deplore that in France, only half of LGBT+ community claim to be visible at work*, that is, not to hide their sexual or gender identity. This means that half of the LGBT+ people dread the ordeal of the coffee machine on Monday morning with their colleagues, torturing their minds to construct “neutral” sentences that do



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not allow them to guess whether their spouse is female or male. We spend most of our time at work. If we can't be ourselves, it's hard to be fulfilled in our jobs. All employees, regardless of their sexual orientation in particular, must feel confident.



Laurent Graciani President of Modis France and northern Europe and Mathieu Motillon, Director of Recruitment, Careers and CSR.

Laurent, how can managers help their employees to be themselves at work?

Senior management must be exemplary and state loud and clear that all forms of discrimination are forbidden in the company. Taking an interest in employees is an essential part of our management culture. To put an employee at ease, we must learn to ask more inclusive questions. For example, if a man just got married, instead of saying "congratulations, do you have pictures of your wife?" you can say "congratulations, show me pictures of your wife or husband". Being more open and inclusive in what you say allows employees who are still hesitant, who have questions about revealing their sexual orientation, to feel reassured.

Mathieu, can you tell us more about the concrete actions implemented by Modis to facilitate being yourself at work?

Modis is committed to an active and non discriminatory approach to diversity in Smart Industry, with the guarantee for everyone to flourish in their professional careers by being themselves at work.

In 2019, Modis signed the LGBT+ non-discrimination charter from the Other Circle, the French reference association for the inclusion of LGTB+ people at work, and affirms its strong values through its commitment to their inclusion in the workplace.

In France we drive a Modis Inclus'Up program, which focuses on 4 main themes: gender equality, disability, Modis Pride and social diversity, was launched this year. The aim of this community is to create a space for discussion between LGBT+ people and their allies. The main objectives of Modis Pride are to foster recognition and respect in order to create an inclusive environment for LGBT+ people and to allow everyone to be themselves at work, to free up speech and avoid the isolation of LGBT+ people in the company, to attract all talents by managing a proactive and committed diversity policy.

Our employees do not hesitate to commit themselves to the LGBT+ cause. In 2020, for example, we had several employees making a video testimonial on May 17, the international day against homophobia and transphobia, to express what it means to them to "be themselves" at work.



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Mathieu, does the strong commitment made by Modis to allow LGBT+ employees to be themselves at work have repercussions from an HR point of view?

Yes, it does! To be successful you have to be aligned with yourself. We believe that by showing our willingness to welcome all diversities, we will allow our employees to be themselves, which means they will also be more fulfilled, and therefore perform better. These diversity values are an element of pride and commitment for all our employees, not only for those directly concerned. In a context of talent shortage, affirming our commitment to all forms of diversity also means encouraging everyone, regardless of their uniqueness, to join us by being themselves.



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Laurent, how can we reassure our employees that there will be no negative consequences to their professional Coming Out?

Today, 1/3 of LGBT+ people consider that revealing their homosexuality to their professional entourage can have a negative impact on their career*. We need to demonstrate that this type of behaviour has no place in our company. By displaying an inclusive policy, we want to reassure all LGBT+ employees. In 2020 I was honoured to be named an LGBT+ Role Model in the Leadership category by the Other Circle, and saw this nomination as a great opportunity to send a message to my employees and peers. I wanted to show that you can be yourself at work and have great career prospects.

Laurent, a final word?

Modis' vocation is to build a better future with all its stakeholders; let's make sure that this better world is technologically innovative and above all much more inclusive to engineer a smarter future.

Veronique Rodoni, Global Head of HR at Modis concludes, "Modis wants to champion a culture where talent matters, not labels, and where everyone has a chance to be part of the Tech world with the right to be themselves every day."

**Source: IFOP 2020 barometer*



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