

Meet Mumtaj – the girl who went the distance.



Mumtaj Ahmed hails from Lonavala, a green hill station in the Pune District of Maharashtra. She lives with her mother, father and two brothers. She came to enroll into Tata STRIVE, Pune following mobilization activities at Lonavala. After the requisite interest inventory process (that assists prospective students to make informed choices about the courses on offer), she enrolled herself into the BFSI- Business Development Executive course in the April of 2017.

“My family?”, exclaims Mumtaz, when asked about them, and she is quick to respond, “orthodox and conservative!”

Many “How’s” cropped up. How did she manage to convince them? How did she manage the commute from Pune to Lonavala and back? (For those unfamiliar with the place, Pune to Lonavala is a 90-minute-long journey – one way – and that too from station to station; the time from residence to station & station to Tata STRIVE Centre is not included) Amidst so much commotion, how did she manage her daily chores and how did the learning happen? How? She answers them all, patiently. Fondly.

The train to Pune City leaves at 6:45 AM [IST]. So I woke up at early. Really early. I would then cook for the entire family, since my mother isn’t in a position to. She was sick and ailing. I would, on my way, then practice the Hello English App – since little knowledge of the English language was the major barrier in way of my fluent communication. Further my confidence was boosted with the role play activities at Tata STRIVE that helped improve my Business English.”

All of this seemed too much to handle already. Mumtaz then says, “I would then reach the Centre.”

“Domain Knowledge,” she says, was imparted down to the minute details. “About work dynamics, consumer behavior, everything; and

the Youth Development Module(YDM) ensured that I shed all inhibitions and develop a professional attitude. The more I got along with facilitators and other learners through daily sessions and coaching; the more my morale increased. I became more aware of my self-potential and developed a positive mindset to never look back! I was transformed – was now more vocal, confident and self-motivated.”

“During the placements,” her facilitator Revati Raulwar says, “Mumtaz made us even more proud.”

How? The girl got selected in interview rounds of both HDB Financial Services Ltd. and Star Union Dai-ichi Life Insurance Co. Ltd.

Today she is working with the former as a Sales Executive in the Consumer Durables Department. She says, “Meri field ke baare me mujhe sab kuch sikhaya, ye main aaj bol sakti hun.” which translates to “Today that I am employed, I can say with my experience that I was taught almost everything about my chosen field.”

Her parents, initially hesitant towards her pursuing a job in Pune city, are now supportive of her. But that is not simply because of the monetary incentive of a new earning member in family, but also because, as Mumtaz puts it, “the transformation in my personality after joining Tata STRIVE” that convinced them to support her even more.

As for Mumtaz, she lent, and is still lending her support too – what she humbly calls “her dream” – to support her ailing mother.

The phrase “go the distance” literally translates to completing a fight, without being knocked out. Despite her countless challenges, she successfully completed the course in what is a clear display of passion, grit and perseverance.

Mumtaz went the distance – both literally and figuratively.