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The year was 2003 when I received my first phone invitation for my first real job interview ... and I was terrified. I wasn't scared because it was my first real interview; I practiced so much public speaking on campus as a student that meeting with a few people at a bank seemed easy. I was terrified because, though that employer thought that I may be a "good fit" on paper, they would soon learn at our meeting that I was a Muslim. In 2003, the media had really begun to create a scary narrative as it relates to Muslims. Muslim = terrorist, un-American, oppression, extremist and a host of other untruths that were completely unrelated to the Islam that I knew and loved and practiced. I hated myself for being afraid! I wanted to be an advocate and fight the stereotypes and the rhetoric, but I was in such a vulnerable position. So, even in my embarrassment, I called my parents for guidance. My parents encouraged me to be myself and recognize that in my career, an organization should fully accept who I am, or they are not a "good fit" for me. Even today I am very aware when meeting new people that the first thing that they see is my hijab, which no longer gives me the same level of fear, but instead an opportunity to openly educate.