


Goldman Sachs 'rising star' who was told 'he sounded too gay to be on a call' files lawsuit

 [dailymail.co.uk/news/article-7108735/Goldman-Sachs-rising-star-told-sounded-gay-call-files-lawsuit.html](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-7108735/Goldman-Sachs-rising-star-told-sounded-gay-call-files-lawsuit.html)

A former Vice President of Goldman Sachs filed a lawsuit against the bank on Thursday after he claims he was actively discriminated for being gay and then later fired for raising complaints, court documents show.

William Littleton, 31, claims he was once excluded from a conference call because 'sounds too gay', which he says is only the beginning of how his sexual orientation became the subject 'office fodder'.

Across a period of two years, Littleton – who was one of the company's highest ranking LGBTQ advocates – says he was severely mistreated by colleagues at the bank because of his sexuality, naming his bosses Rachel Schnoll and Sirion Skulpone as Plaintiffs along with Goldman.

Despite working at Goldman for eight years and conducting 'outstanding' work, Littleton claims he was fired from the firm for complaining about the alleged homophobia to his two supervisors, documents filed in Manhattan Supreme Court show.

'William Littleton...[was fired] directly after he complained to Employee Relations that he had been subjected to numerous incidents of homophobia and discrimination, including being excluded from a client call because "he sounded too gay" and being asked "What's wrong with you? Do you act this way because you're gay?";' the suit claims.

William Littleton, 31, claims he was once excluded from a conference call because 'sounds too gay', which he said proves that the topic of his sexual orientation became 'office fodder'

'Despite years of "Outstanding" performance reviews filled with near-endless praise regarding Mr. Littleton's bright future at the Bank, he was abruptly fired by those who he complained engaged in discriminatory conduct.'

According to court documents obtained by DailyMail.com, the alleged conference call incident took place in March 2014, where Littleton was about to loop into a call with a client before suddenly being kicked off by the moderator of the conference.

He was later told the reason why but when he flagged the allegation to Skulpone, Littleton says she just brushed the incident off.

'That sucks', Skulpone reportedly told him. Later reluctantly added that she would report the incident to Employee Relations (ER) because it would 'look bad if she did not do something'.

'That is, for her own benefit,' the lawsuit emphasised and 'not out of any genuine sense of ethical obligation.'

Littleton himself said he opted to not take the issue any further at the time, through fear of retribution from ER, citing their 'reputation for taking little action to support employees.'

For the next year, Littleton claims the discriminatory comments kept on coming, noting one particular incident after the LGBTQ Pride parade in Manhattan in 2015.

Littleton had booked the day off as annual leave, but Managing Director Rachel Schnoll is said to have questioned aloud 'Oh, Will's not in? He must be hungover from Pride festivities.'

A year later, Schnoll allegedly used Littleton's sexuality against him against, asking in the midst of a workplace disagreement, 'What's wrong with you? Do you act this way because you're gay?'

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Finally deciding to file an internal discrimination complaint with ER in 2018, the 31-year-old believes Schnoll and Skulpone retaliated against him by giving him a negative annual review.

Apparently the pair had told him his performance had been 'inconsistent'. He was then fired altogether for a series of perceived 'performance issues' which had 'manifested [that] year'.

Summarising the chain of events, the suit reads: 'In short, Mr. Littleton was retaliated against for finally having the courage to pursue his complaints of discrimination internally with Goldman's ER.'

Littleton is suing Goldman Sachs Inc., Schnoll and Skulpone for unspecified compensation and punitive damages.

'Mr. Littleton was well aware that being openly gay at a financial institution could lead to discrimination and ridicule,' the suit continues, adding that the claimant's personal experience demonstrates 'larger institutional problems' at Goldman.

'Wall Street continues to struggle to create an environment that is inclusive and accepting of LGBTQ+ employees,' said David Gottlieb, one of Littleton's attorneys.

'Mr. Littleton's experiences demonstrate that Goldman Sachs in particular has failed to embrace this important responsibility.'