



BOWMANS

Lerato Thahane

Partner

Q *Where did your journey begin and how did you end up where you are today?*

A While studying, I had my sights set on becoming a human rights lawyer. I spent my university breaks volunteering at the Human Rights Commission and subsequently at Lawyers For Human Rights. During that time, I discovered how challenging it can be to make a significant societal impact through organisations that are generally under resourced.

For years I worked to find another way to marry my love for the law and desire to give back. When I joined Bowmans I discovered how this could be done. As a junior lawyer, I worked on some incredible cross-border M&A deals and got to witness first-hand how large-scale transactions could be catalysts for massive transformation and contribute to the growth of SA's economy. I have found it deeply satisfying to have been a part of the deal teams that achieved this. This set me on a path that I have not looked back from since.

Q *Were there any women who helped you on your journey?*

A I was supported by many remarkable women who are trail blazers in their own rights. Some I met at Bowmans, others around the deal table, and others through my own networks. One thing they all had in common was their willingness to offer their time, experience, networks and gravitas to lift me up. I have been deeply honoured to have been mentored, sponsored and propelled forward by them.

Q *What is the most valuable thing you have learnt from another woman?*

A To be mindful of where my energy and time is invested. It is so easy as a lawyer to get involved in anything and everything that appears to be important to the life of the firm. A woman I admire immensely noticed that I would do this frequently and warned me to re-evaluate my approach. I started making a big impact within my firm when I started only investing my time and energy into things that strategically supported my purpose, goals and plans.

Q *What advice would you give to other women thinking of entering the M&A industry?*

A Make sure that you have a very good understanding of how the legal industry works and stay abreast of economic, social, political and environmental developments. Our clients rely on us to give sound legal advice that has strong commercial resonance. 

