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Personal reflections and integration

The phrase, 'work-life balance' can feel mythical in transactional finance. How do you personally define and manage the integration of a demanding career with your personal life?

I don't believe 'work-life balance' is a fixed state, especially in transaction diligence, where deal cycles naturally come with periods of intensity. For me, it's about work-life integration and being intentional with my time. Setting boundaries is important, but equally important is knowing when to be flexible. During critical phases of a transaction, when deadlines are approaching and clients depend on us, work often needs to take priority. I've learnt the importance of protecting time for family, friends and personal wellbeing once those peak periods pass, and having a supportive network as these are all important. As a leader, I also believe it's important to create an environment where high performance and personal wellbeing can coexist. Sustainable success comes from knowing when to lean in, when to step back, and being fully present in whichever role I'm playing at that moment.

When the deal closes and the adrenaline drops, how do you intentionally disconnect, recharge, and protect your mental well-being?

When a deal closes, I make a conscious effort to switch off, both literally and figuratively. In a profession that's always connected, I make a conscious effort to step away from my laptop and phone, and give myself permission to disconnect. I recharge by spending time with my husband, family, friends and my cats, exercising, and getting out into nature. I also enjoy the occasional retail therapy, but my biggest reset is travel. I love experiencing new cities and cultures, as it gives me fresh perspective and renewed energy.

I've come to realise that mental wellbeing is not something you can afford to neglect in a high-performance profession. Looking after it isn't a sign of weakness; it's what enables you to perform at your best, make sound decisions under pressure, and show up fully for both your career and the people who matter most. Protecting my mental wellbeing is about creating intentional space for the people, experiences and activities that bring me joy.

How has your definition of 'success' changed from when you were an ambitious graduate to who you are today?

As an ambitious graduate, I associated success largely with achievement, career progression and reaching the next milestone.

While those things are still important, my definition of success has evolved significantly over time.

Today, I see success much more holistically as it's about delivering value to clients, developing and supporting others, continuing to grow, and maintaining the balance needed to sustain a long and fulfilling career. I've learnt that success isn't just measured by titles or transactions completed, but by the impact you have, the relationships you build, and the life you create alongside your career.

When your career in this industry is eventually complete, what is the lasting legacy you want to leave behind in the South African financial sector?

When I look back on my career, I hope my legacy will be measured not only by the transactions I worked on, but by the people I helped develop, and the impact I had on the profession. I'd like to be remembered as someone who upheld standards of integrity and quality, built trusted relationships, and contributed to a stronger, more resilient South African financial sector. Equally important, I hope I have inspired and supported other women entering the industry, showing them that it's possible to build a successful career while remaining authentic to who you are. If I can inspire the next generation to pursue ambitious careers with confidence, while helping to strengthen and transform South Africa's financial sector, that would be a legacy I'm proud of.

If your life story up to this point had a headline in a business newspaper, what would it be?

The headline would probably be: *'Driven by curiosity, defined by resilience: Turning challenges into opportunities.'*

Looking back, my journey has been shaped by a willingness to embrace challenges, continuously learn, and step outside my comfort zone.

Curiosity has opened doors I never expected, while resilience has helped me navigate both the opportunities and setbacks that inevitably come with building a career in a demanding industry. Along the way, I've discovered that success is not just about career progression, but about personal growth, meaningful relationships, and making a positive impact on the people around you. 🙌