Q&A

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Personal reflections and integration

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

As a graduate, I was unfettered by responsibility, and privileged to have the support of my family, enabling me to focus fully on learning during my audit articles and early career in valuations, developing my career and completing my CFA. At that point, success meant qualifications, progression, promotions, and building professional credentials. I took validation from external markers that felt like proof that I was earning my place as a career woman.

Today, my definition of success has softened, but deepened. I still value career progression deeply because it creates opportunity, both for me and for those I can bring along. However, life has introduced new priorities, and various responsibilities and experiences have brought about a change in my perspective. Success now equals contentment, the satisfaction of doing meaningful work that adds genuine value to clients, building trusted relationships, and working towards being a client's first port of call. Success is the freedom to pause and enjoy simple moments, and the privilege of spending quality time with friends and family. Success also means being able to use my resources, however small, to help others. Where success was mainly linked to achievement, it is now more balanced.

What is a personal passion or hobby you pursue that has absolutely nothing to do with finance, but keeps your perspective sharp?

Travel. On a practical level, navigating unfamiliar streets, languages and etiquette forces your brain to think in fresh ways. More importantly, travel reminds you that you are a small cog in an enormous wheel, and that the world is much larger than your daily routine. Challenges that feel insurmountable in the moment are often momentary when viewed against the bigger picture and your broader purpose.

I also enjoy dot art, which offers the perspective of incremental progress. It involves creating intricate designs entirely from individual dots of paint, so a piece spends a long time as a 'work in progress' before it comes together. It reminds me to see myself in much the same way: constantly evolving and learning – not allowing ego to get in the way – remaining open to the experiences of others, and being patient with my own growth. Dot art also shows how small, consistent actions can add up to something meaningful. It requires patience, focus and dedication, which are also important foundations for a meaningful career in corporate finance.

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?

I would hope that my legacy is, ultimately, the legacy of my team, rather than mine alone, as we don't operate in silos.

I would like our legacy to be one of positive, practical contribution, and perhaps also a reconnection to simplicity. Finance can become complicated, but at its core it is about deciding where capital and resources should be directed. I hope we are remembered as responsible capital allocators who supported commercially sound transactions that created lasting value for clients, and contributed positively to employees, communities, shareholders and the wider economy.

Having recently moved into a mining and resources team, I would also hope to contribute to greater female representation in resources corporate finance. It is a fascinating, historically male-dominated sector that I believe could benefit from more women and the different perspectives they bring. If my career helps make that path more visible to other women, that would be a legacy I would be proud of.

Finally, from a personal leadership perspective, I hope to be remembered as an empathetic leader. To me, empathy does not mean being soft or avoiding difficult decisions. It means being a deep thinker, noticing what is not said, understanding body language, and recognising the different perspectives in a room. It is the ability to place yourself in someone else's shoes while still exercising sound judgement.

Outside of the financial press and market tickers, what books, podcasts, or philosophies shape how you lead and live?

The premise of James Clear's Atomic Habits is that outcomes are the product of small, repeated actions rather than single moments. I'm learning that deals are much the same. They are won in the preparation, the follow-through and the quality of the relationship, long before a mandate is signed.

I've also recently started exploring the philosophy of Ayurveda. In simple terms, it holds that we are made up of five elements, which combine into three constitutional types that reflect your physical and psychological make-up. Understanding where I sit has helped me recognise when I am in and out of balance, why I react the way I do in certain situations, and how to manage myself in a way that is specific to who I am, rather than generic. In a fast-paced financial environment, that awareness keeps me grounded and helps me correct an imbalance early, so that I can try to get back to giving my best more quickly.

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