



INSIGHT

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Redefining success

How has your definition of 'success' fundamentally shifted, from when you were an ambitious graduate first stepping into corporate finance to who you are as a leader today?

When I began my career, my definition of success was simple: income that would make one blush if said aloud. That meant building an impressive career, establishing financial independence, and steadily climbing the professional ladder.

Like many graduates entering the corporate world, I viewed success through the lens of tangible achievements. A larger salary symbolised progress, independence, recognition and reward for years of hard work and sacrifice. That mindset may have influenced some of my earlier purchases, including my choice of first car. As a finance lawyer, my deal sheet is tested against transaction values. With achievement being assessed primarily through financial metrics, it became easy to equate larger numbers with greater success. Similarly, every demanding deadline I met and every new responsibility I assumed brought professional advancement and greater financial reward. Over time, this strengthened my association of success and financial achievement.

Those early years were invaluable. Advising on finance transactions exposed me to high-performing professionals, sophisticated commercial negotiations and the fast-paced world of business. I developed technical expertise, commercial awareness, and the discipline to solve complex problems under pressure. Yet, as my career progressed and I assumed leadership responsibilities, I began to appreciate that while technical excellence builds credibility, it is people who ultimately define leadership. Being a Director in a law firm has taught me that success is not only about delivering exceptional legal advice – it is also about building trusted relationships with clients, creating opportunities for younger lawyers to flourish, and helping shape a culture where excellence and humanity coexist.

The legal profession is demanding. It requires precision, resilience and unwavering commitment. But over time, I have realised that clients remember far more than the quality of your legal drafting. They remember whether you listened, whether you understood their business, whether you inspired confidence during difficult moments, and whether you treated them with empathy and respect. Equally, colleagues rarely remember every matter you worked on together. They remember the leader who invested in their growth, created opportunities for them, and encouraged them to believe in their own potential. That insight fundamentally reshaped my definition of success.

Today, my definition of success is built on three foundations.

The first is having greater control over my time. After years of measuring success by how busy I was, I have come to understand that time is our most valuable asset. With a little motivation from various surgeries and health scares along the way, I have redefined

how I measure achievement. Success is no longer about filling every hour with work. It is about having the freedom to decide where my energy is best invested; whether that is spending time with loved ones, serving clients, mentoring future leaders, or simply creating space to think, learn and grow.

The second is leaving a human legacy. Transactions close and careers evolve, but what remains is the impact we have on people. One of the greatest privileges of leadership is helping someone become more confident than they were before they met you. It includes opening doors, sharing knowledge, and creating opportunities for others to succeed. As women leaders, we understand how transformative sponsorship and encouragement can be, which is why we have a responsibility to extend the same generosity to those coming after us. The legacy I hope to leave is not simply one of legal excellence, but one of kindness, integrity and meaningful investment in people. More importantly, I hope to follow in my mother's footsteps and be an example of a technically astute working mother. In hindsight, I can only describe her as a superhero. She built an objectively impressive career while also being an extraordinary mother and wife; a living example that women can pursue both professional excellence and a fulfilling family life.

The third is the freedom to choose my own interests. Earlier in my career, opportunities were often evaluated by what they added to my CV or remuneration package. Today, I measure them differently. I believe that success includes having the independence to pursue work that aligns with my values, contributes meaningfully to my community, and allows me to continue growing in areas that genuinely interest me. That is why, when an opportunity to advise on project finance arises, I embrace it fully, not because it defines my success, but because it aligns with the parts of my profession that I continue to enjoy and value.

For me, the journey from a young legal advisor focused on financial achievement to a leader who values time, people and purpose has been one of the greatest lessons of my career. If I could speak to my younger self today, I would tell her this: pursue excellence relentlessly, but remember that your greatest achievements will never appear on a payslip. They will be found in the people you mentor, the lives you influence, the choices you create for yourself and the legacy you leave behind. That is the success I strive for today.

Women's Month reminds us that success is not a destination with a universal definition. It evolves as we, and the spaces we occupy, evolve. As we celebrate women, my hope is that every woman gives herself permission to redefine success as her life changes. My own journey has taught me that the most meaningful success is not found only in what we earn, but in the lives we touch, the choices we create and the legacy we leave behind. 

