Q&A

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Career journey and navigating the deal room

What initially drew you to the fast-paced world of financial markets, and how did you secure your first major breakthrough in the industry?

My exposure to financial markets began during my articles at PwC, where I audited financial institutions. While auditing transactions helped me understand their impact, it also made me want to be involved in creating them, rather than reviewing them after the fact.

I then navigated my career deliberately through roles in credit risk, client coverage and structured sales to build a well-rounded understanding of the transaction lifecycle. That combination of risk, commercial and execution experience became my breakthrough, enabling me to lead increasingly complex transactions and, ultimately, lead teams of transactors across Africa.

Looking back at your career, what do you consider your 'defining deal' – the one that tested you the most or reshaped how you view your capabilities?

My defining deal was a series of hedging transactions for major infrastructure projects across Africa. These transactions required us to navigate complex regulatory environments, foreign exchange and interest rate risks, and multiple stakeholder interests, all while meeting the client's commercial objectives.

The projects involved regulators, offtakers, EPC contractors and legal advisers across several jurisdictions, making stakeholder alignment just as important as the financial structuring itself.

The experience fundamentally changed how I view my capabilities. It taught me that successful execution is not just about technical expertise; it is about resilience, persistence, and the ability to drive progress through complexity and uncertainty. Those transactions gave me the confidence that I could lead and execute some of the most demanding deals in the market.

Africa's macroeconomic climate has thrown plenty of curveballs over the last few years. How has your approach to structuring deals evolved to mitigate these local risks?

Africa's macroeconomic and regulatory landscape has required us to become far more deliberate and collaborative in how we structure deals. Whether navigating regulatory developments, interest rate volatility or foreign exchange liquidity shortages, we've learned that stakeholder alignment is often as important as the transaction itself.

This has driven deeper engagement with clients, regulators, exchanges and legal authorities well before execution. It has also reinforced a key principle: in complex environments, simple solutions often work best. Rather than increasing complexity, we focus on robust, easy-to-implement structures that effectively address client needs while remaining resilient to local market conditions.

Capital markets require a high tolerance for volatility. What personal traits have helped you thrive in an environment where the goalposts move so quickly?

Adaptability, resilience and structured thinking have been critical to my success in financial markets.

The environment is constantly evolving, whether due to market volatility, regulatory change or shifting client needs. Being able to adapt quickly, while remaining composed, has helped me navigate uncertainty and build resilience over time.

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Equally important is my ability to bring structure to complex situations. I enjoy distilling the big picture, creating order from chaos, and developing a clear roadmap forward when the path ahead is uncertain. In a market where the goalposts move regularly, that combination of adaptability and disciplined execution has been invaluable.