



Q&A

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What did your path into this field look like – was it intentional or did you discover it along the way?

I stumbled upon this career path, purely by chance. I studied a B.Com Law and an LLB at the University of Johannesburg, and commenced my articles in 2013. About halfway through, I realised that a career in legal practice was not for me, so I decided to start an LLM in Banking and Stock Exchange Law. I resigned at the end of my articles not really knowing what I wanted to do, but knowing what I didn't want to do. I took a real interest in Corporate Finance Law during my LLM, and when a friend told me about a position in her company's JSE sponsor team, I jumped at the chance to interview (not knowing exactly what the role would entail!) The first year was a very steep learning curve, wrapping my head around the JSE Listings Requirements, Takeover Regulations and familiarising myself with industry practice. I later joined the Questco team in 2017, and fast-forward eight years (and many transactions) later, I can confidently say that I have a real passion for this industry and I have found my niche.

What was your first deal or transaction like, and what did you take away from it?

My first transaction, back in 2015, was a scheme of arrangement for a gold company listed on the JSE. Whilst I had the academic know-how, I learnt a great deal about the practicalities involved in negotiating a deal, the interaction between the offeror and offeree boards, and the implementation of a transaction. I came to realise that there was a lot still to learn. Being involved in this process also sparked an interest for me in the shareholder protection mechanisms contained in the Companies Act, which is what I then decided to write my Masters dissertation on.

Have you faced any gender-based challenges or biases in your career? If so, how did you navigate them?

I went to an all-girls high school and was fortunate enough to be surrounded by, and exposed to, brilliant, high-achieving women from a young age. I think this set the tone for me, and I have always seen being a woman as something to be celebrated. I think that this mindset possibly set me up to look past any biases that may have arisen in my career.

What does self-care look like for you, and how do you prevent burnout?

I prioritise spending time with the people, and doing the things, that fill my cup. I'm also a bit of a foodie and I love wine (one of the

things I've learnt is that life is too short to save the good wine). I love cooking and baking for family and friends when I get the chance. I also enjoy a bit of running in the week. I have a three-year-old and an almost 6-month-old, so this is a very demanding time, and if it wasn't for the wonderful support system I have, I wouldn't be able to keep afloat.

Have your views on work-life balance changed over time?

Absolutely. Pre-COVID and pre-children, my work-life balance looked a lot different. Now I've come to realise that life happens, and as long as you're getting the job done and meeting deadlines, the where and the when become less important. I'm also trying to live by the saying, "be where your feet are", meaning being completely present (mentally, physically and emotionally) in the moment and place I'm in, and focusing my attention on the task at hand (whether it's in the boardroom or in the playground).

Did you have any mentors or role models? How did they influence your journey?

Whilst I've never formally had a mentor, the leadership at Questco have had a profound impact on my professional development. They have provided unwavering support and guidance in shaping me from a lawyer into a corporate financier during the last eight years. They lead the team with a passion for what we do, are experts in their fields, and are always ready to roll up their sleeves when it comes to the execution of a transaction.

What advice would you give to your younger self starting out in this field?

Every day in this career is different and presents many opportunities for learning. So, you'll need to be curious and keep asking questions in order to grow. Unfortunately, sometimes growth can feel like imposter syndrome – shake it off. Be patient and willing to learn. Be resilient – it's all about how you bounce back. Be confident: you have a lot of value to add. I also love the Richard Branson quote which says, "If someone offers you an amazing opportunity but you are not sure you can do it, say yes – then learn how to do it later". 🙌

