



## Marilize Beyer

Senior Real Estate Banker: Commercial Property Finance, Absa Corporate and Investment Banking.



**Q** *Where did your corporate finance journey begin, and how did you end up where you are today?*

**A** I began my banking career as a business finance consultant at Absa, offering a range of funding solutions to clients, and building relationships with new and corporate clients. I soon realised that my passion lay in commercial property, which led to me becoming a real estate banker. I then worked for Nedcor Investment Bank and in Standard Bank's CPF division, before coming full circle and returning to Absa CPF as a Senior Real Estate Banker in 2016. I am responsible for building relationships with corporate clients and growing our commercial property finance book.

**Q** *Did you have a mentor at any point in your career? If so, who were they and what did you learn from them?*

**A** I have had a few mentors over the years, who were instrumental in teaching me the fundamentals of commercial property finance – especially regarding financing retail centre developments, which is my true passion. These mentors assisted in broadening my horizon by sharing their

wealth of experience and challenging me to think differently and offer different perspectives and insights. Most importantly, they assisted in building my confidence as a dealmaker.

**Q** *What are some of the most complex deals you have worked on?*

**A** I have been involved in many complex transactions across the various property sectors, in industrial, commercial, retail, and residential developments. Each has its challenges, as transactions must be structured to the client's specific financial requirements. The Eris Property Group recently formed a Student Housing Fund known as SASAI, and we are the main financier. Out-of-the-box thinking was key to getting these transactions on our book. But while landmark deals are important, the key to long-term success is identifying a new client and building a lasting relationship that leads to a portfolio of deals. Therein lies the joy!

**Q** *How did the COVID-19 pandemic affect your work or career?*

**A** The lockdown was initially a shock to my system, as I travel

a lot and interacted with clients daily. However, my home office was set up quickly and I found that I was more productive with the reduced travel. Since I have an established network of clients, I was busier than ever. The challenge was to maintain a work/life balance with my office being at home. I am now back in the office two or three days a week, which is great. Building meaningful relationships with co-workers, especially management, is critical for job and life satisfaction. Working from home all the time does not allow for that to the same extent as working from the office does.

**Q** *What advice would you give to young women who are looking to enter the corporate finance market?*

**A** First, accept that the property industry is male-dominated and that even though it has come a long way from where it was, there is still a long way to go. Second, participate. Voice your opinion, ask questions, use your external and internal network of experience around you, and grow your network. Believe in yourself and focus on doing your best and on being the best version of yourself. 