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Q *What advice would you give to other women thinking of entering the M&A and Financial Markets industry?*

A Absolutely, come join us! Don't be put off by misconceptions of the industry – I don't believe it's more difficult or intimidating than many other professions, it can be a huge amount of fun and it's rewarding coming up with solutions for problems that our clients have. It is hard work, but then most worthwhile things are.

One of the great things about the profession is that, subject to managing your client's needs and expectations, you tend to have quite a bit of flexibility in terms of how you work (particularly important for those trying to juggle children and a career) and you will likely be working with some of the top industry players.

Q *Did the COVID-19 pandemic with the various lockdowns, changes in working habits etc. bring about any major changes for you from a work / career perspective?*

A Yes, definitely. I really disliked the "working from home" environment as I'm quite a social person and I like to be around other people. I also found the "admin" of it quite hard (having to keep files at home, not being able to print large documents easily, being at the mercy of load-shedding, etc.). I also found it quite difficult to stay motivated at times, which was a new experience for me.

Even though we are now able to go back to the office, some people are now used to "working from home" and seem to prefer it, which I feel a bit sad about as it becomes much more difficult to get to know people in the "online" environment. Hopefully, over time, we will have a shift back to more people interacting again in person.

Q *What are three words your colleagues would use to describe you? Would you agree with them?*

A I asked them - one said "remarkable, fun and adventurous" and another said "loyal, witty and fearless". I think I probably am quite fun but not sure about adventurous although I did once try pesto, which I suppose is rather audacious. I am loyal, probably more dry than witty and it's nice that people think I am fearless although that is not always the case.

Q *What would you say to another woman who was thinking of changing fields because the industry is so male-dominated?*

A While I accept the M&A industry is probably still male-dominated, I think the legal profession as a whole is becoming less male-dominated. And an industry being "male-dominated" is no reason to leave it, on the contrary. Try to find your "crew" (who will likely consist of males and females) and just roll with them. As you get more experienced and comfortable in your role, the gender of the person on the other side of the table doesn't matter so much (or, indeed, at all).

Q *What is one goal you have set yourself for 2022 and are you on track to reach it?*

A I would like to complete a 5150 triathlon within the cut-off times before the end of the year but, having started the year quite strong in terms of training, it's not always easy to find the time to train that is needed for an event like this. Plus it's cold swimming in winter! I just need to recommit in my head to doing it and just go and put in the work needed to get it done.

Q *Do you have any unusual hobbies?*

A It's probably not that unusual but I like Latin dancing! I am

hoping to start competing next year (when I can find all this spare time to train for triathlons and dance competitions).

Q *What is your go-to power song?*

A "Shake it off" by Taylor Swift. Sometimes we all just need to do that.

Q *What is your favourite quote?*

A "Keep bugging on" – Sir Winston Churchill.

Q *What is your favourite motto?*

A "Always look on the bright side of life" – Monty Python.

Q *What would you do, if not for law?*

A I would love to be a cashier - it's my dream job. I have always loved tills and I even had one once, which I used as a calculator (until my kids lost the keys to the cash drawer and sucked all the fun out of that one). Once our office renovations are done, I might have to invest in another one.

Q *What is at the top of your bucket list?*

A To go and spend a week sitting in a deck chair at the side of the Loch Ness with a pair of binoculars, a tartan blanket and a flask, to try and spot Nessie!

Q *What book are you reading at the moment?*

A "Again, Rachel" by Marion Keyes. It's the latest in her series of books about the Walsh sisters.

Q *What is your favourite holiday destination?*

A I love going down to Simon's Town and going sailing with my sailing instructor. There is nothing quite like being out at sea in a sailboat, being pulled along by the wind. 🌊