



# 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 have been practicing in the dispute resolution space since the beginning of my career. While dispute resolution, M&A, corporate finance and financial markets may seem like distinct legal practice areas, they often intersect in meaningful and complex ways.

A significant portion of my dispute resolution work involves matters arising from M&A transactions, corporate finance and financial markets. This naturally led me to develop a specialisation in corporate restructuring, particularly from the perspectives of business rescue and insolvency.

I find this sector incredibly rewarding. The work is fast-paced and intellectually stimulating, requiring a deep understanding of insolvency legislation and the multifaceted nature of restructuring. Each case presents unique challenges, and I enjoy crafting practical, legally sound solutions to help clients navigate them.

Guiding businesses and creditors through the business rescue process is especially engaging. It is crucial for company directors to understand what it means for a business to be financially distressed, their legal obligations, and the options available to them. I take pride in supporting them through this journey and facilitating effective collaboration with business rescue practitioners.

## How has the landscape for women in your field changed since you started?

When I entered the legal profession in 1998, at the age of 23, the landscape for women was very different. Over the years, it has been encouraging to witness the transformation within the industry. Although the journey has been challenging, today there are definitely more women in courtrooms, client consultations, and increasingly, in the boardrooms of leading law firms.

Throughout my career, I have observed a growing culture of solidarity amongst women in law. In earlier years, young female attorneys often encountered more resistance from senior women than they did from their male counterparts. It has been great to see that this dynamic has shifted, and mutual support amongst women is increasingly becoming the norm.

## What barriers still need to be broken down for women in this space?

The progress we see today is the result of generations of women who broke down barriers and redefined leadership in the legal field. These advancements were not accidental, nor were they easy; they were driven by individuals committed to change.

Despite this progress, women still face systemic, cultural and institutional challenges, including gender bias, underrepresentation in executive roles, and unrealistic expectations around work-life balance. Addressing these issues requires intentional action by all women in the legal field. Women in leadership, in particular, must actively mentor emerging professionals, contribute to the development of gender equity policies within organisations and, most importantly, celebrate and amplify the achievements of other women.

## Are there any industry norms you've challenged or want to see evolve?

As a director at one of South Africa's top corporate and commercial law firms, I sometimes look back and wonder – how did I manage to get here? In addition to hard work and dedication, a significant part of my success was made possible by the commitment, sacrifices and strides of women who came before me in the legal profession.

According to the 2024/2025 annual report published by the Law Society of South Africa (as it was then known), women now comprise approximately 45% of the 33,929 registered attorneys. Data from 2022 indicates that there was a 7% increase in women holding CEO and managing director positions between 2019 and 2022.

While these figures reflect meaningful progress, significant work remains – particularly in traditionally male-dominated legal practice areas such as corporate and commercial, tax, banking and finance, and dispute resolution.

## What advice would you give to a woman starting out in this field?

My advice is simple: success does not require you to abandon your identity. Our strength lies in embracing who we are – women in law – and leveraging that identity to lead with integrity and purpose. To pretend otherwise is misguided.

Always be prepared, and always be confident in your abilities. It is important for your clients and your colleagues to know that you are competent, reliable and trustworthy. Do not be afraid to ask questions, and make use of every opportunity that presents itself to upskill and enhance your profile.

We all would like to think that we are perfect lawyers and that things never go wrong, but they do. Own your mistakes and learn from them. Act fast so that what went wrong can be dealt with, and you can pivot and still get the best result for your client. 🙌

