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Fixed Income Sales and Strategy
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Q Where did your corporate finance journey begin, and what led you to pursue a career in the space that you are in?

A I started my career as a credit analyst in the Nedbank Graduate trainee programme, which meant that I gained very robust financial and credit analysis experience, covering multiple sectors. While at Nedbank, I held several roles in the credit, coverage and Debt Capital Markets (DCM) teams. I enjoyed analysing the credit profile of companies and working with different product teams within the bank to come up with suitable and sometimes creative funding solutions. Seeing how some of these businesses grew exponentially because of the funding they received is part of what ignited my passion for Debt Capital Markets.

Since then, I've held roles that gave me access and skills across all sides of DCM. After Nedbank, I joined the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA) Treasury Capital Markets team. This meant that I was part of the team that raised funding for DBSA, which was mainly done through bond issuances in the local and international DCM, as well as through bilateral loans with International Development Finance Institutions. I was responsible for managing and growing the bank's relationships with institutional investors and rating agencies, which were critical for an issuer like DBSA to fulfil its mandate.

When I left the DBSA, I joined the STANLIB corporate and institutional distribution team. My time there gave me an invaluable appreciation for the Asset Management sector, the "buy side", including how institutional investors apply their different philosophies and processes when making investment decisions. Understanding the universe of Asset Management funds that are out there and the kind of assets in which they invest comes very

handy in my current syndicate role at Absa, where I assist issuers to raise funding from the institutional investor base in the DCM.

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've had a few mentors over my career, both formally and informally. They provided a great sounding board for my goals and aspirations, and they kept me accountable. I also learned that having conversations with people who have walked the journey before me helped me to quickly get over some of my fears that would otherwise have held me back.

I also find that I have a mentor that I consult whenever I have a big career decision to make. One of the biggest lessons I've learnt from them is to trust my instincts, and to always separate my short-term goals from my long-term career decisions. Sometimes this has meant turning down attractive roles which did not necessarily align with my bigger career plan, and sometimes it has meant taking roles which were less appealing at face value, but would provide the learning and development necessary to bring me a step closer to the bigger goal.

Q What are some of the most memorable projects you have worked on?

A During my time as a Credit Manager at Nedbank, my portfolio mainly included SOEs and Metropolitan Municipalities, such as ACSA, TCTA, DBSA, Eskom, the City of Johannesburg and the City of Ekurhuleni, which were at the forefront of some of the big infrastructure projects, including water infrastructure and wastewater treatment plants, amongst others. Given their social and economic impact, playing a part in funding some of those projects was quite fulfilling.

Since joining Absa, I've worked on some

interesting DCM Transactions, one of which was the Inaugural Green Bond issuances by Absa Bank following the establishment of the Absa Group Sustainable finance issuance framework. The robust investor engagements, while on the roadshow, demonstrated the growth and commitment of the South African capital markets to ESG. What also made this transaction special was that the proceeds were going towards renewable energy assets, including solar and wind projects, which was quite critical given the impact of climate change and the energy issues faced by SA.

Q What advice would you give a young woman joining your team?

A I'd emphasise the importance of being grounded and confident in who you are as you set out on your career journey, as many challenges along the way require you to be grounded and true to your values. Set goals for yourself, and put in the work needed to achieve them. As you focus on your technical skills and qualifications, make sure that you also network and build strong relationships.

Never be too cool to ask questions; it's the best way to learn and grow. Never let fear stop you from making bold moves – "feel the fear and do it anyway."

FUN FACTS

Current book on your nightstand:

Atomic Habits by James Clear.

Preferred music genre:

Hip Hop.

Preferred holiday destination:

A toss up between Rio de Janeiro (Brazil) and Mykonos (Greece).

Three words that your colleagues would use to describe you:

Ambitious, hardworking and strong-willed. 🗣️