

Q&A

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Baker McKenzie.

Tanya routinely assists clients in matters involving public and private mergers and acquisitions, global reorganizations, takeovers, securities law, private equity, equity capital markets, medical law, life sciences law, and corporate governance. She represents and advises multinational and listed clients across industry sectors, including cross-border transactional work in sub-Saharan Africa.

Q *Did you have a mentor and if so, tell us about that person and include the most valuable thing you learnt from them?*

A Lerisha Naidu - she has taught me the importance of authenticity and compassion in pursuing a legal career.

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. Lockdowns and the changes in working habits took the human element out of being a lawyer, particularly when interacting with clients and training juniors. Being a people person, this is a part of the job that I really enjoy and without it, working in a vacuum was quite challenging.

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

A While the legal industry may be more male-dominated at the top end, we have a lot of young female talent. My advice would be to stick it out because the junior females of today will be the leaders of tomorrow.

Q *If you could, what advice would you give to yourself as a junior lawyer starting out in the M&A industry?*

A Learn as much as you can, but don't neglect yourself along the way. It's important to put in the time to develop yourself, but you still need to retain some form of balance and some of those hours will be best spent having some hard-earned fun.

Q *What advice would you give to young female lawyers entering the M&A space?*

A Always remain true to yourself in every interaction. When given the opportunity, always try to empower and uplift the women around you.

Q *What are three words you would use to describe yourself?*

A Outgoing, inquisitive, tenacious.

Q *What is your favourite quote?*

A "What if I fall?"
"Oh but my darling, what if you fly?" - Erin Hanson

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

A Boy Swallows Universe by Trent Dalton.

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

A Mr Brightside by the Killers.

Q *What is your most effective time saving tip?*

A If your workplace is flexible, skip going into the office when you have a large workload, save yourself the drive time and get the work done in stretchy pants.

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

A This year I was meant to climb Africa's highest mountain, Mount Kilimanjaro, but COVID unfortunately put a stop to it and it remains right at the top of my bucket list. This is followed by seeing the aurora borealis. I've always wanted to experience this awe-inspiring display of natural lights. Number three on my bucket list is to witness the Great Migration of the wildebeest across Kenya's Maasai Mara. This is the world's largest migration of wildlife and just brings home to me how vast and truly spectacular the African continent is. 