

Q&A

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Managing Director



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

A I wanted to be a fashion designer but could not sew or draw, so my parents convinced me to consider the CA(SA) route to have something to fall back on – it was good guidance.

Q *What, if any, hurdles did you have to face in an industry that has traditionally been male-dominated?*

A When I started my career, the CA profession was predominantly male. I was one of 4 female articled clerks employed by the then Price Waterhouse. There was a bit of chauvinism and underestimation, but you took it in your stride.

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 No specific mentor but you can always learn from any person or experience. It is up to you.

Q *What is the biggest / most complex transaction you have worked on so far in your career?*

A The transaction that got me interested in corporate finance was the international restructure of the BTR group, including Pilkington Tiles, one of my audit clients. It involved the Financial Rand and Commercial Rand at the time.

Q *What has been the Best and Worst day in your career so far?*

A I really enjoy listing companies and helping clients achieve their goals, so I have a number of best days. The most recent best day was helping a client achieve an unwind from an aggressive partner. Prior to getting involved with them, they had tried to separate twice, getting complicated tax restructuring advice. It later became very aggressive and legal. We proposed a simple unwind, which became an order of court, and saved millions in legal fees. Our client has his company back 100% and instead of exiting and leaving SA, they are now staying and are excited about their project. Can't remember a worst day – I tend to accept things and move forward.

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

A Go for it - women have a vital and relevant role. It is a great 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 It was tough but we kept our heads down, took salary cuts, and continued working. Giving up was not an option. Fortunately back to normal now, with the team intact.

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

A Positive, practical and humorous.

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

A I don't believe that any woman in this industry would exit because of male domination.

Q *What qualities would you say are essential for a woman to thrive in the M&A industry?*

A Confidence, patience, ability to listen yet put your own view forward, honesty, hard work, good ethics, believe in yourself.

Q *What are the biggest changes you have seen in the industry in the course of your career?*

A Changes in JSE regulation - it is much tougher and more complicated than when I first started in the industry.

Q *Who is your female role model and why?*

A Margaret Thatcher - born a grocer's daughter and became Prime Minister of Britain - anything is possible.

Q *What is your favourite quote?*

A Plato - "Good people do not need laws to tell them to act responsibly, while bad people will find a way around the laws."

Q *If you could invite any 3 women (past or present) to dinner, who would they be and why?*

A Oksana Boyko, Queen Elizabeth and Thuli Madonsela - all strong, intelligent women, with a dose of humour, who remain fair and resolute throughout tough times. 🍷