



# 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?

My journey into this field was quite serendipitous, as it was something I discovered later in my career rather than pursuing intentionally from the outset. I found myself working on three different integration and carve-out projects, and it was during these experiences that I realised the potential for building a career in this area. With a background in Industrial Engineering, I developed my skillset through numerous large-scale, cross-functional business and technology transformation projects. Although I initially assumed that a finance background was a prerequisite for engaging in M&A projects, I've come to appreciate that my extensive experience across various functions and industries allows me to swiftly comprehend how the different components of a business interconnect. This understanding has proven invaluable in evaluating how a carve-out or integration affects various facets of a business, encompassing people, processes and technology.

### What was your first deal or transaction like, and what did you take away from it?

My first significant transaction was the carve-out and sale of more than 50 retail stores from a well-known national retailer. This experience was both challenging and rewarding, as it required close collaboration with a diverse group of individuals across the business. The anticipation leading up to Day 1 was palpable, following months of meticulous preparation and planning. Each day during the cutover period was filled with engaging check-ins, ensuring that every detail was accounted for and that the transition would proceed smoothly. Witnessing everything come together seamlessly on Day 1 was an incredibly gratifying moment, as it highlighted the collective effort and dedication of everyone involved in the project. This experience taught me the importance of teamwork and thorough preparation for achieving successful outcomes in complex transactions.

### What's the hardest lesson you've learnt, and how did it shape you?

The hardest lesson I've learnt in my career is that solving complex problems goes beyond merely constructing academically correct solutions; it's fundamentally about engaging with real people — genuine human beings with unique perspectives and motivations. Initially, I focused heavily on the technical aspects of problem-solving, but I soon realised that the human element is equally, if not more important. I had to cultivate the skill of listening attentively and taking the time to understand what drives individuals, as these factors can significantly influence the success or failure of a solution. This lesson has shaped me by emphasising the

importance of empathy and communication in my approach to problem-solving. Additionally, part of this journey involved learning to listen to myself, trusting my instincts, and recognising my own needs and motivations. This holistic understanding has been critical for developing solutions that are not only effective, but also resonate with the people involved.

### What does self-care look like for you, and how do you prevent burnout?

For me, self-care is a multifaceted practice that involves being intentional about the choices I make in both my personal and professional life. It's about consciously deciding what aspects I'm willing to compromise on, and recognising the moments when it's important to stand firm on my principles. This intentionality extends to being fully present in whatever activity I'm engaged in, whether it's burning the midnight oil on a demanding project or enjoying a leisurely walk with my dogs. By immersing myself in the moment, I find that I can better appreciate the nuances of each experience and maintain a sense of balance. This approach not only helps me manage stress effectively, but also prevents burnout by ensuring that I remain connected to the things that bring me joy and fulfilment. Ultimately, self-care is about nurturing my wellbeing, and creating a sustainable rhythm that supports both my personal growth and professional success.

### Have your views on work-life balance changed over time?

Over time, my perspective on work-life balance has undergone a significant transformation. Initially, I viewed it as something that could be achieved by taking a holiday or a break after completing a major project. However, I've come to realise that true work-life balance is a daily practice, requiring consistent attention and effort to maintain equilibrium between professional responsibilities and personal wellbeing. This shift in understanding has been influenced by insights from our M&A leadership team, who emphasise the importance of creating regular opportunities for team members to connect on a social level. By encouraging individuals to share their hobbies, passions and interests, we foster a sense of community and support that is essential for achieving balance at the team level, contributing to a more fulfilling and sustainable work environment.

### What keeps you motivated on tough days?

On tough days, my motivation comes from being immersed in a high-performing environment alongside high-achieving individuals. The collaborative spirit and shared commitment to success create an atmosphere where continuous growth is not just encouraged, but expected. 🧠

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