Q&A

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Personal reflections and integration

The phrase 'work-life balance' can feel mythical in transactional finance. How do you personally define and manage the integration of a demanding career with your personal life?

Becoming a mom means that family now always comes first for me; that is my anchor and my non-negotiable priority. At the same time, I am fortunate that the nature of the work I do allows for a degree of planning around availability and deadlines, which makes integration more realistic than it might otherwise be.

Of course, there are moments when matters are urgent (whether it's a data breach or a transaction that has to close), and in those situations I am very lucky to work with colleagues who step in seamlessly, as well as a very supportive husband who makes it possible for me to be fully present where I am needed. Clients are also very understanding, as they too are balancing demanding professional lives with personal commitments, which creates a shared sense of empathy on all sides.

I want colleagues and peers to remember me as someone whose word could be relied upon, and who treated people with compassion and respect.

How has your definition of 'success' changed from when you were an ambitious graduate to who you are today?

Early in my career, success was largely measured by external milestones: promotions, recognition, and building technical expertise. Those things are still important, but they are no longer the whole picture.

Today, success means being a lawyer who clients can trust, mentoring younger lawyers, and helping organisations navigate technology in a way that is commercially practical and responsible. It also means having a career that complements, rather than competes with, the life I want outside the office.

What is a daily ritual, habit, or boundary you protect fiercely that keeps you grounded amidst the chaos of deal flows?

One boundary I protect fiercely is my family time between 5pm and 7pm. Unless there is a genuine emergency, that time belongs to my husband, my daughter and, when they decide to grace me with their attention, our two cats.

Working in technology law means there are occasions when a data breach or urgent transaction genuinely cannot wait, but I have learnt that you can't treat everything as an emergency. Protecting those two hours has made me more disciplined during the workday, and more present at home.

What is a personal passion or hobby you pursue that has absolutely nothing to do with finance, but keeps your perspective sharp?

I love cooking. There is something incredibly satisfying about switching off from legal problems and creating something tangible from scratch. I enjoy being creative and it's one of the few activities that demands enough attention to quiet my mind completely – and there is the added reward of sharing it with the people I love.

Another personal obsession of mine is rearranging our living spaces. It is a recurring source of amusement – and occasionally frustration – for my husband, who has learnt that no room is ever truly 'finished'. I love rethinking layouts, moving furniture, and finding ways to make our home feel more functional and inviting. It's a creative outlet that lets me reset my mind and see familiar things from a different perspective.

When your career in this industry is eventually complete, what is the lasting legacy you want to leave behind in the South African financial sector?

I want clients to know that my advice was always honest, commercially sound, and given with their best interests at heart. I want colleagues and peers to remember me as someone whose word could be relied upon, and who treated people with compassion and respect.

If, at the end of my career, people describe me simply as someone they trusted, I would consider that a legacy worth leaving.