



Q&A

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What initially drew you to a career in M&A or corporate finance?

What drew me in, initially, was my love for economics. I fell in love with the subject at 16, and it quickly became more than just an academic interest. It was a lens into global systems, business dynamics, and decision-making. That passion led me to research what a career rooted in economics could look like, and that's when I stumbled upon corporate finance. I didn't fully grasp what it entailed, but I was intrigued. It sounded intellectually demanding, strategic, and full of impact.

That ambition followed me into university, where I enrolled with the intention of majoring in economics and finance. I did well in my first year, but financial realities meant I had to pivot. I needed a bursary, and the most viable path was through accounting. Ironically, everyone in my family had always encouraged me to become a CA(SA), which I had firmly resisted. But I came to appreciate accounting, and recognised the strength of the CA designation. So I chose to recalibrate and pursued my articles in audit at EY.

What did your path into this field look like – was it intentional or did you discover it along the way?

Even though I temporarily took a different route, I never lost sight of the destination and kept my sights on corporate finance. I still loved the structure, the problem-solving, and the commercial storytelling that finance demands. And I was clear with myself: I had set out to do this, and I was going to make it happen.

Corporate finance was still that dream space where everything came together: the numbers, the big-picture thinking, and the opportunity to help shape real business outcomes.

But the detour through audit proved to be invaluable. It taught me how to manage pressure, meet intense deadlines, and engage with clients. It also gave me early exposure to leadership.

As a senior in the team, I was often responsible for guiding and mentoring juniors, something I quickly found that I genuinely enjoyed. Teaching others helped me solidify my own knowledge, and gave me a clearer sense of how far I'd come.

How have you built resilience in a high-pressure, male-dominated environment?

My foundation for resilience was laid long before my career began. I was homeschooled for five years, which meant I had to be incredibly self-disciplined. There was no teacher chasing after me to meet deadlines – it was all on me. That experience taught me how to be accountable to myself, how to stay motivated, and how to push through, even when it was difficult. That mindset has followed me into every professional space I've entered.

I've also learnt that it's not just about endurance, it's also about being smart with your energy. High-pressure environments can

easily lead to burnout if you're not working efficiently. I've always tried to find ways to work smarter, to ask the right questions early, to learn from those around me, and not to fall into the trap of trying to do everything on my own. Being surrounded by brilliant minds, there's so much value in collaborating and leaning on your team when needed.

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

Absolutely. Earlier in my career, I subscribed to the more traditional notion of "balance", where work and personal life were treated almost like two separate entities you were expected to juggle evenly. But one of my former bosses offered a concept that really shifted how I view things: work-life priorities.

In a high-pressure, client-facing and deadline-driven field, true balance isn't always possible. The hours can be long, and the demands can shift quickly. Trying to achieve a perfect balance every day often leads to frustration and disappointment. Instead, I've learnt to focus on what my priorities are at any given point in time, both personally and professionally, and to ensure that the most important things don't fall through the cracks.

There will always be trade-offs, but I try to be very intentional about showing up for the things that matter most. I might miss some of the smaller moments, but I make a concerted effort to be present for the important celebrations, the meaningful conversations, the family milestones.

At the same time, I also understand the importance of showing up for my clients, especially during pivotal moments in a transaction. The key for me is making sure that over time, the things I value most, both at work and at home, are receiving the attention they deserve.

How do you mentor or support other women entering the field?

Since varsity, I've consistently enrolled in mentorship programmes – not only to receive guidance, but also to offer it. Even early in my career, I felt strongly that we all have something to give, no matter how far along we are. You don't need to have 20 years of experience to offer meaningful support; sometimes the most helpful insights are those little nuggets you pick up while finding your feet. The kind of advice you wish someone had given you at the start.

In my current role, I make a point of connecting with new graduates and interns who are navigating and still finding their feet in their careers. Something as simple as scheduling a coffee chat or checking in can go a long way. These moments create a safe space for them to ask questions, share concerns, or just feel seen, which is often all someone needs to keep going with confidence. 🙌