



Q&A

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

What drew me to a career in corporate finance was the combination of financial modelling, logical thinking and overall strategy. As someone who doesn't feel engaged with routine tasks, the dynamic environment and intellectual challenge of M&A appealed to me. Engaging with the brightest minds around, through senior colleagues and industry leaders, provides exposure not easily found elsewhere. It is inspiring to work on impactful transactions whose effects will shape a company's future. It is a bonus that the career affords me a vacation or two. Working in M&A allows me to work with diverse sectors, gaining insights into different business models and strategies. As a young professional, the opportunity to develop these valuable skills was important in my decision-making process.

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

The path into finance was intentional; I was always academically inclined towards the finance field, but it was after greater exposure to the various finance streams throughout university that the interest in corporate finance started to take shape in my mind. After completing my SAICA articles in external audit, I branched out into traditional financial manager, internal audit and general corporate finance roles before settling into my current position in M&A. Not being afraid to leave a career path that is not working for me has led me to a field that I am excited to be a part of. The journey and broader experience reaffirmed my passion for corporate finance and the learning opportunities it provides.

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

Having a personal 'why' for choosing this career path is important to navigate challenging situations. In a high-pressure environment, it is important not to take things said in a stressful moment personally, and to learn and grow from any setbacks faced. Having high standards for yourself ensures you are prepared for any situation. Being in a male-dominated environment throughout my career, I have never felt any pressure, as I have confidence in my abilities. Advocating for yourself and demonstrating what you bring to the table are appreciated in any environment. And I do

believe the work environment has been changing, where gender diversity is acknowledged and promoted.

How have you balanced your personal life with the demands of a career in finance?

My work-life balance is better in some weeks, compared with others, due to the nature of how a transaction process progresses. The concept of work-life balance has changed for me throughout my career. Currently, balance to me means being able to get to those things that are a priority in my life. It is important in slower weeks to take the time to reset and rejuvenate, through vacations and quality time with loved ones, so that, in the long-term, I build a career that is sustainable.

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

A good starting point is always to try to be the person I needed when I entered the field. Being a team member who is supportive from a place of emotional intelligence helps me engage with empathy and clarity. High standards are a non-negotiable, but still achievable in an encouraging environment. Contributing to a work environment where others feel respected, valued and motivated is incredibly important to me. I try to practise situational leadership by tailoring the approach to individual needs, which is more effective in the diverse teams we work in – focusing more on being output driven and where optics should play a lesser role. My mentorship and support approaches continually develop, based on my experiences.

What advice would you give to your younger self starting out in this field?

- Trust your instincts and voice your thoughts with confidence, knowing that you deserve to be in the room.
- Not everything is within your control and the process is not always as you planned; however, these moments of uncertainty provide the most growth.
- You can succeed not because of your background, but despite it.
- Focus on building a career that reflects your ambition and your authenticity. 🙌