

Jessica Frost
Director



MALANSCHOLES ATTORNEYS

Jessica Frost is a seasoned legal professional specialising in mergers & acquisitions (M&A) and corporate & commercial law. With expertise in advanced company and corporate law, she has built a successful career at Malan Scholes Incorporated, focusing on significant M&A deals, particularly in the mining industry.

Highly regarded as a lead counsel in South Africa, and having represented a number of South African companies in relation to a full range of corporate law matters, Jessica has a track record of successfully representing clients in notable transactions. Her broad experience covers private acquisitions and disposals, joint ventures, and corporate restructuring.

Q *What led you to pursue a career in M&A | the Financial Markets?*

A A combination of good advice and fortunate circumstances led me to pursue a career in M&A and corporate and commercial law. My father advised me to study a BComm Law and to focus on electives such as advanced company law and competition law, which sparked my interest in the corporate field. Luckily, I had the opportunity to work on M&A transactions during my articles, and later joined Malan Scholes' Corporate and Commercial Department, where I gained valuable experience in significant M&A deals, particularly in the mining industry.

Q *What, in your opinion, is the hardest part of a M&A deal | financial market transaction?*

A Each M&A transaction is unique and has its own challenges. In my experience, one of the most challenging aspects of an M&A transaction is when the deal has to be completed within a very tight timeframe. This can be particularly challenging as one has to

consider all aspects of the transaction, and analyse and mitigate client risks. This is easier to achieve if all parties to the transaction, including the advisors of all parties, work together to meet the deadline.

Q *What is your favourite sector to do a deal in and why?*

A Although I enjoy doing deals in a number of different sectors, my favourite sector for deals is the mining and renewable energy sector, and I have developed a strong understanding of this industry through my exposure to it. Each deal within this sector presents unique challenges that require quick adaptation and problem-solving, and working alongside fascinating individuals in this field has been both professionally and personally enriching.

Q *The M&A industry worldwide has been a rollercoaster for the last few years – where do you think M&A in South Africa is headed, given our current political, economic and social climate?*

A Companies need to be able to adapt, sometimes quite rapidly, to keep up with the ever-changing market conditions or changes in the economy. Staying abreast of changes in technology – AI being a good example – is also needed to gain a competitive edge in order to survive. South African businesses have always had to be resilient in order to survive, and I do not foresee this changing any time soon. However, regardless of political, economic and social climate changes, new opportunities for mergers and acquisitions will always arise.

Q *If you could change one thing on your career path to date, what would it be and why?*

A Confidence is crucial in any career because it allows individuals to take risks, make decisions, and express their ideas. Looking back, if I could change one thing as a younger lawyer, it would be to not second

guess myself; to have confidence in my abilities. However, I have also come to realise that this is a skill that has to be developed and nurtured with experience, over time.

Q *What piece of advice would you give a young woman working on her first deal | transaction?*

A Do not underestimate your “opposing counsel”, but most importantly, do not underestimate yourself – one does not need to be big in stature to have presence in a room and to command an audience.

Q *What do you do to celebrate the closing of a big deal?*

A I go home to catch up on sleep.

Q *What do you do to unwind or get away from the stress of work?*

A I enjoy exercising, particularly running or cycling, and try to fit in an exercise session at least five to six times a week. I also enjoy gardening, going on hikes and spending time with my family and dogs. I have two dogs that we recently adopted from a shelter – Bailey, a lab-cross puppy, and Pearl, an adult mixed-breed bundle of joy.

FUN FACTS

Current book on your nightstand: *Freezing Order* by Bill Browder.

Dog or cat person: Definitely more of a dog person.

Item ticked off your bucket list: Traveling to Japan.

Item not yet completed on your bucket list: Seeing the annual wildebeest migration in the Serengeti/Masai Mara.

Preferred holiday destination: Kruger National Park.

Favourite restaurant: Kolonaki. 🍷