



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?

I had a very interesting and eye-opening path. Although I had a clear end goal in mind, I realised very early that the milestones along my journey would look different from the conventional route. Being in the M&A space at a top five firm was always the goal; how I would get there was unclear. I started my articles at a boutique law firm in Cape Town, where I was exposed to highly specialised work. That experience gave me a great segue into the private wealth and funds industry space, and I found myself doing specialised M&A and transactional work. As the famous meme goes, “It was at that moment, she knew...” I was certainly where I wanted to be. My final milestone was to return to private practice, now armed with a wealth of knowledge, but my career path was not linear, and somewhat unusual.

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

The first deal I worked on was a 25% Black Economic Empowerment vendor-financed portion of a 100% shareholder buyout. I recall the complexity of the deal, which triggered the need for me to upskill. My immediate takeaway was to head back to university, invest in further learning, and remind myself to stay “prayed up” as much as possible. It was a challenging point in my career.

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

To pray first and foremost; I involve my Maker in everything I do. Secondly, the realisation that my career journey is personal and that I must take ownership of it. I've been fortunate to have great mentors and a supportive partner who have taken an interest in my career growth and development. For me, success means making sure my work ethic translates into taking control of my matters, contributing to business development in the space, and doing everything possible to ensure my absolute best.

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

I've come to realise that balance does not always mean a 50/50

split. Different aspects of life will require more of my time than others do. I understand that work can be all-encompassing and sometimes requires late nights to meet a deadline, but there are also times when my personal life needs my full attention and focus, and in each instance, I should be able to focus on what matters most. Giving 100% to every aspect of life and expecting perfection is not always possible and may lead to burnout.

Having a good spiritual anchor has always centred me and helped guide my next move. Also, a great hobby I've been perfecting is boating with my partner every other week – it's the absolute best. I can't stress enough how important it is to have a partner who's equally yoked and shares your goals. [He'll be so chuffed reading this].

What kind of leader are you, and how did you develop your leadership style?

My leadership style is collaborative. It has developed through a combination of (i) having had great leaders and mentors whose leadership style I've borrowed from and (ii) observing leaders whose characteristics and approaches didn't align with my values and making a conscious decision not to replicate those traits. As a junior, I always valued working with partners who gave me room to grow independently, encouraged me to find solutions to complex problems, and created space to ask questions and bounce ideas.

I value independent thinking and make it a point to give my juniors (my bundles of joy) the same room to think for themselves. Before giving an instruction, I ask questions like: “How do you think we should do this and what is the approach?” or “Have you considered x, y or z?” and I'm always around to support and answer questions.

I love seeing my juniors come alive, and I'm for the transformation of the industry. There is something special about seeing juniors walk in on day one, unsure, overwhelmed, maybe even in tears, and watching them grow into titans of the industry. Imparting knowledge to those who will succeed or walk alongside me is my *modus operandi*. The future generation should inherit what I've learnt, build on it and go even further. 🙌