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Q *Where did your corporate finance journey begin, and what led you to pursue a career in the space that you are in?*

A I have taken the scenic route through investment banking to my current role. I began my career in 2008, as a quantitative analyst building risk models ahead of the implementation of Basel II. It was an interesting time, categorised by a global financial crisis where seasoned bankers experienced career-first risk events, which made me keen to explore the Risk division and its varied specialities through a secondment programme offered at the time. This was how I found myself in the Analytics team, where I risk-rated and priced transactions across the investment banking franchise.

The Analytics team was formed shortly before I joined, during the transition to more data-driven decision making, and was often regarded as a new-fangled inconvenience by senior bankers.

My deep understanding of the intricacies of rating and pricing models, as well as my love for puzzle-solving, enabled me to build networks by assisting deal teams to tweak their facilities to enhance economic viability. I believe that it was at this point in my career that I developed a keen interest in structured trade, particularly commodity financing, because of its dynamic nature, learning opportunities and scope for creating bespoke solutions.

I was asked to head up the Analytics team in 2013, which thrust me into the challenging but rewarding realm of leadership. Once my learning curve had flattened somewhat, and my team was empowered to run with minimal input from me, I moved on to Credit Management, assigned to the Structured Trade

and Commodity Finance portfolio. Here I was exposed to a deeper understanding of the portfolio, how to present credit applications, and the repercussions of inadequate risk assessment.

This knowledge, buoyed by the networks that I built while in the Risk space, precipitated my move to the Structured Trade and Commodity Finance front office team in 2016. It is a position that continues to pique my interest and quench my thirst for learning and puzzle-solving to this day, and I am excited by the opportunities that the expansion of my role to Head of Natural Resources (Structured Trade and Commodity Finance) in 2023 will bring.

Q *Did you have a mentor at any point in your career? If so, who were they and what did you learn from them?*

A I have been fortunate in this regard, as I have encountered several individuals who have guided me through my career, offering wisdom, encouragement, and technical knowledge when I needed it.

My formal mentorship has predominantly come from strong female leadership in the banking sector, who have taught me how to hold my space and be heard in a corporate environment, as well as the importance of empowering and nurturing talent. While the former is largely a personal journey of self-discovery, the latter has become increasingly relevant in my career in recent years, particularly as I look to develop my team and support the progression of the individuals that make up the team. I find great satisfaction in mentorship and knowledge-sharing, as it enables the development of talent for the benefit of the individual and the organisation, and creates a space for fresh perspectives and idea-sharing that the mentee gains from. It is also exceedingly gratifying to

watch your mentee succeed in reaching their goals and gaining recognition.

Q *What are some of the most memorable projects you have worked on?*

A In the last year, I was involved in the structuring of a US\$130m hybrid funding solution that involved the monetisation of commodity offtake agreements to fund mining investment projects on the continent. The solution encompassed collaborative efforts from Resource Project Finance, Markets and Structured Trade and Commodity Finance, creating an environment for innovation, networking and knowledge-sharing.

Q *What advice would you give a young woman joining your team?*

A I would advise her to create a diverse network of individuals who inspire her to greater heights, and to be kind to herself. This is a dynamic and demanding environment – accept (and expect) that you will misjudge and make mistakes. It is how you recover from these pitfalls that matters most. Having a network that inspires you will also aid in these times, offering objectivity and a different outlook.

FUN FACTS

Current book on your nightstand:

The Perfumist of Paris by Alka Joshi.

Preferred music genre: 90s Pop.

Preferred holiday destination:

A beach holiday, near a place of historical significance.

Three words that your colleagues would use to describe you: Fun, curious and daring. 🐣