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Q *What does your current role entail, and tell us about your journey to this position?*

A I am currently an executive in the Loan Syndication and Sales team in Investment Banking. The role is a great mix of client and investor engagement, as well as exposure to all investment banking products.

I have been at Standard Bank for 15 years, starting as a bank credit analyst, moving into an origination role in Structured Trade & Commodity Finance and thereafter into the Loan Syndication & Sales team.

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

A I had informal mentors throughout my career, and it was on the back of these relationships that I was offered opportunities to move into different areas of the bank.

In the time leading up to becoming an executive, I formalised a mentorship. It was a two-way conversation where we would exchange challenges and successes. In each session, we would conclude with a practical and effective way forward on the specific theme of the session. Being deliberate in this engagement, having identified key topics for discussion in each session proved to be very effective.

For a mentorship to be successful, it must commence with both parties being able to relate to one another, you have to “click” as they say.

Q *What is the biggest / most complex transaction you have worked on so far in your career?*

A Fortuitously, it was a transaction that kicked off on 4 January this year. It was a high-profile deal involving eight countries, eight currencies and seven lenders, which we closed in stages over a period of 4 – 6 months.

Prior to market launch, it took months of planning and strategizing in order to get to a solution that worked for the client, taking into consideration their key objectives, different geographical nuances and timelines.

Q *Which deal challenged you the most and why?*

A The aforementioned deal challenged me the most in the sense of finding a new, unique solution and approach to market from a Loan Syndication perspective.

However, it tends to be the smaller, under the radar deals that one learns from the most. Often more bespoke in the structuring phase, where there is limited market liquidity, meanwhile navigating changes in the way we work to get ahead of the competition.

Q *What hurdles (if any), have you had to overcome in an industry that has traditionally been male-dominated?*

A I think in any industry, once one has earned the respect of one’s colleagues, no matter their gender, you are on a winning streak.

Q *What are three words you would use to describe yourself?*

A Resilient, kind and determined.

Q *What are three words your colleagues would use to describe you? Would you agree with them?*

A Diligent, knowledgeable and confident. Yes, I’d like to agree with them.

Q *What qualities would you say are essential for a woman to thrive in the investment banking industry?*

A I think being mindful, having a voice and backing oneself no matter the challenges faced is critical.

Q *What would you say to another woman who was thinking of changing fields because the industry is so male-dominated?*

A It’s an incredible personal growth journey, take on the challenge and take your place as your contribution is essential to achieving a diverse team, where all individuals are valued. 