



BOWMANS

Ashleigh Hale

Partner and Co-head of Corporate

Q *Did you have a female role model? If so, who was she and why was she a role model to you?*

A When I started at Bowmans in 1997 there were no female role models in the M&A Practice and very few in other practices. This notwithstanding, I was determined to make a go of it and was supported by various male partners along the way. Female representation in the Corporate Department has improved greatly and it is now not uncommon to work in an all-female team on client mandates. However, there is still a dearth of senior female M&A dealmakers in our market and so it was particularly gratifying and inspiring to have Lydia Shadrach-Razzino named as DealMaker of the Year this year. Sally Hutton is another important role model for us in the South African market. At Bowmans we have made significant progress in that our Corporate, Banking and Finance and Dispute Resolution Departments are each headed by females.

Q *What advice would you give to other women thinking of entering the M&A industry?*

A Aside from investing in your career through time and effort, I think it is important to have interests and passions outside of law. It adds a bit of work life balance, makes you a more rounded person and ultimately better at your job.

Q *What qualities would you say are essential for a woman to thrive in the M&A industry?*

A I think it is critical for female M&A lawyers to develop confidence early on and to learn how to communicate well and authoritatively. It also helps to identify a more senior person who will support and mentor you along the way. 🙌

