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

A My journey into M&A began as a happy coincidence, with an offer from a former colleague to join the PwC Deals team at a time where I was contemplating my next career move. In hindsight, I am very fortunate to have stumbled into a career that aligns with a deep passion for financial markets that has developed over the years, and one which continues to both challenge and fulfil me in equal measure.

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

A My personal motivation and drive in the M&A environment has always been underpinned by value-add. Each transaction that I've worked on has brought its own nuance to facilitating growth and unlocking value. However, in more recent times, deals in sectors that have a direct and tangible impact on the lives of ordinary South Africans (whose resilience continues to be tested) have become some of my favourites – renewable energy, infrastructure and telecommunications come to mind.

Thankfully, we have been seeing increasingly more of these types of investments both locally and across the continent. At a time where it's tough being a South African, having the 'insider perspective' helps me to remain motivated in the current climate, and in the context of the ramp-up in 'brain drain' seen across both the public and private sectors.

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

A In hindsight, as a young woman starting out in M&A, I would put much less pressure on myself to i) constantly be on an accelerated upward career trajectory; ii) seek validation; and iii) to know everything. With experience, I've learned to enjoy the ride, and far more appreciate a situation where I can learn from others.

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

A There is a reason that you have a seat at the table – don't lose sight of that. As women, we bring a different perspective to a discussion or situation, so allow your voice to be heard. And soak in as much as you possibly can. So much of what we do cannot be taught in a classroom, but is rather informed by relationships and many years of seeing different scenarios play out.

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

A There is a massive effort that goes into closing a deal, whether large or small. My first priority is acknowledging my team's personal sacrifice in getting a deal over the line. This usually involves a celebratory meal, and a glass (or two) of something bubbly, followed by some time off to reset. My personal celebration is much less glamorous and focuses on playing catch-up on certain activities that naturally fall by the wayside during an intense transaction process, like sleep and self-pampering, to name a few.

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

A Prioritising exercise, in some form or another, has become an imperative for

me as a tool to unwind and de-stress. I've discovered the joys of boxing, which allows me to channel any frustrations from the working day in a more productive and healthy manner. I'm also a big fan of board games and game nights with friends and family, although those can get equally stressful sometimes, depending on the group!

Time permitting, and especially after a particularly stressful period, getting away to the bush and being in nature is the perfect way to reset and regain perspective.

FUN FACTS

Current book on your nightstand:

Re-reading *Sapiens* by Yuval Noah Harari, alongside my favourite author's first novel in seven years, *The Last Chairlift* by John Irving.

Favourite restaurant: Hands down, my mum's kitchen.

Item ticked off your bucket list: Seeing a pangolin in the wild. This recently became a bucket list item after seeing one on a game drive, and subsequently realising the rarity of the sighting.

Items not yet completed on your bucket list: While I've been able to benefit from PwC's global network from a travel perspective, there are always many more places to see in the world. My travel list continues to grow the more I travel!

Preferred holiday destination: Nothing can beat the magic of the South African bush.

Your worst trait: Being inappropriately competitive; i.e., in situations which do not call for competition in any way, shape or form. 🏆