



Jess Reid

Director | Corporate and Commercial



Q *What would you give a young woman working on her first deal?*

A Take some time to understand the commercial drivers of the deal. The ultimate goal is to achieve the client's desired outcome, not to perfectly follow instructions that may be flawed. If you see an issue with your client's instructions, speak up and be prepared to offer an alternative that may be better suited to achieving your client's ultimate commercial goal.

Q *Did you have a mentor and, if so, what was the most important thing you learnt from them?*

A I have had the privilege of having numerous mentors involved in my career progression, from whom I have learnt countless lessons. Two that come to mind are:

Firstly, take responsibility for your own learning from day one. I believe this advice has contributed greatly to my career progression, as it encouraged me to immerse myself in all aspects of the deals I was working on from an early stage in my career, even if the tasks I was instructed to undertake were somewhat insignificant. I learnt a great deal by reading agreements and correspondence, and taking note of negotiations in meetings. These aspects of the deals contributed to my knowledge bank, even if they may not have been directly relevant to the task I was required to undertake. This increased the amount I learnt exponentially.

Secondly, in the context of being a junior lawyer in practice, remember that the partners and senior lawyers that you work with are, first and foremost, lawyers, as opposed to managers. Sometimes you need to "manage-up" in order to take true ownership of your work and the matters you are involved in. This may entail following up on a deliverable which is sitting with your senior for review, extracting action items from client emails and proactively volunteering to handle them, rather than waiting for them to be delegated to you, and initiating communication with your senior if they do not

Q *What attributes do you think are essential for a good M&A executive?*

A A good M&A executive will usually need to possess a variety of key attributes, but to name a few:

Financial Expertise: A strong grasp of financial statements, valuation methods and deal structuring to ensure financially sound transactions.

Negotiation Proficiency: An ability to negotiate terms, prices and conditions with the various stakeholders in the deal, whilst keeping in mind your commercial pressure points and where you may be willing to compromise.

Analytical Ability: The capacity to evaluate risks and opportunities in potential transactions and balance them appropriately.

Legal and Regulatory Knowledge: An understanding of regulatory frameworks, ensuring compliance and managing legal risks.

Effective Communication: Skill in communicating with stakeholders at all levels, internally and externally, throughout the M&A process.

Project Management: Competence in managing complex projects involving multiple stakeholders, ensuring timelines and goals are met.

Adaptability and Resilience: A capability to adapt to changing circumstances to handle unforeseen challenges that arise during M&A transactions.

FUN FACTS

Unusual hobbies: Weeding the lawn – I find it incredibly therapeutic to pop those roots out!

What genre of music would one find on your favourite playlist? With two toddlers in the house, it is undoubtedly a compilation of "Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes", "The Wheels on the Bus Go Round and Round" and various remixes thereof.

Your worst trait: I constantly misplace my phone. I miss the good old days of landlines.

Favourite Restaurant: Gioia – it has good food, but more importantly - jungle gyms, trampolines and jumping castles - which means some peace and quiet, and quality time, for me and my husband. 🐼