



Q&A

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Q: Please share the story of your career journey and of what led you to take up your position in corporate finance.

A: My journey into corporate finance wasn't exactly as I had planned. I worked in the Sponsor Team at Rand Merchant Bank (RMB) in 2008 and that served as an incredible training ground – I discovered a passion for the job and a dynamic environment. After 4 years at RMB, I worked for a decade at various smaller firms and with brilliant leaders who contributed significantly to my professional and personal growth. I've been with Nedbank for 20 months now as part of the Regulatory and Sponsor Team within the Corporate Finance Advisory Division.

My career path has been anything but linear – I stumbled and encountered a few setbacks in the past 10 years. Experiencing failure, followed by hard-won recovery, has made me more resilient and adaptable. My ability to bounce back from setbacks has been crucial in my career and I have managed to land on my feet time and again.

Q: Did you always know you wanted to work in finance?

A: Not at all. I've also worked in other fields, like management consulting, and even lived and worked in Shanghai teaching English to adults. What draws me to corporate finance is continuous learning and the varied nature of the transactions I work on. I like to keep busy and move – implementing systems and processes and teaching and training to ensure that a high standard is set and maintained. My role provides me with the opportunity to do all these things.

Q: What skills are essential for success in corporate finance and advisory roles?

A: Firstly, a passion for business and making connections, along with a strong work ethic, is paramount due to the sheer volume of work and the need for perfection. Attention to detail, the ability to think laterally and learn quickly, resilience, a thick skin, and skills of negotiating nuanced outcomes are all crucial. The last 2 especially come with time and experience.

Q: How do you ensure your team stays motivated and aligned with Nedbank's strategic goals?

A: I strive to make life easier for those around

me, whether they are above, below, or next to me in the hierarchy and I try to drive and enable practices and behaviour that support this. I have a strong sense of fair play and often think from a team perspective. I believe that surrounding yourself with intelligent, capable, and purpose-driven people enables organisational growth. I create a space of belonging by leading by example, being considerate, and understanding my colleagues' motivations. This naturally aligns the team with Nedbank's goals and successes.

Q: Do you think women face more obstacles in the finance sector than men? How have you overcome these challenges?

A: Personally I haven't faced male gender bias fully. Surprisingly I've encountered more unsupportive higher-ranking females than males in my career. This has always been jarring, considering that I come from a family of strong, supportive women. However, as future leaders, my peers and I are determined to change this narrative. We aim to uplift and support our junior colleagues and create environments where everyone can thrive. Fortunately, I am now seeing the emergence of strong, emotionally secure, diverse female achievers in corporate finance.

Q: What opportunities exist for women in corporate finance today, and how can they be best leveraged?

A: At the start of my career I struggled to find a role model and didn't have a mentor either. With the proliferation of social media I am heartened to see inspiring women of colour who share their time, wisdom and energy with us. I routinely and in my own time attend female networking and leadership events.

It is crucial to drive a narrative of understanding and upliftment, creating environments where uncomfortable truths can safely be spoken about without fear of penalty or censure and where we continue to hold ourselves and others accountable.

Q: What emerging trends do you see having the most impact on corporate finance in the next 5 years?

A: The corporate finance landscape is constantly evolving, and we are already seeing the trend towards increased automation, artificial intelligence, alternative energy sources and a growing call for sustainability and

environmental, social and governance factors to shape investment decisions. We live in the information age and are marching bravely towards sustainability. Firms that are aware of this and agile enough to act upon these trends will likely succeed.

Q: How, do you think, can the corporate finance industry better support and promote diversity and inclusion, especially for women?

A: Creating environments that support and promote diversity and inclusion is not a tick-box exercise but rather a behavioural change over time. An organisation's culture flows down from its leaders.

We live in a constantly changing world and are a diverse team of people from different backgrounds, cultures, and lifestyles. Individuals that are self-aware enough to recognise this as well as disregard any of their own unconscious biases, that act in an independent and fair manner often succeed together with uniting people and thus, organisations towards a greater purpose and higher achievement.

