



Simone Dickson

Consultant



Q *What led you to pursue a career in corporate finance?*

A I'm not a corporate finance lawyer in the strict sense, but rather a technology lawyer that advises on corporate finance transactions from time to time. I am fortunate enough to have landed in the technology law sector by chance, which completely changed my career path and exposed me to opportunities I would never even have considered as a young attorney. I have never looked back, and what seemed like a mountain to climb at the time, made me realise that sometimes the career path you are focused on only provides a limited view of possibilities, and may not be meant for you. I was a dispute resolution lawyer previously and, although I enjoyed it, corporate transactional work allows me to utilise my creative side. I love drafting agreements, crafting the script to reflect the intent of the parties, and resolving stumbling blocks through words. A leap of faith and trying something new may lead you to a place you never imagined pursuing – I have become a believer in trying the road less travelled, and that anything is possible with the right mentors, hard work, an appetite to learn, humility, tenacity and determination. I love what I do, and am grateful for the challenges that this sector presents. Evolving technologies and new risk factors do not allow us to simply “rest on our laurels” – there is always something new to learn. Technology lawyers have to keep up with the pace of technology, and often need to think on our feet to find practical, pragmatic solutions for clients while

addressing risk. I am certainly not a ‘techie’, but do need to understand how things work so as to assess the risk to the client.

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

A Technology and telecommunications, of course – these are my areas of specialisation. I also enjoy being involved in retail sector transactions, partly due to the fact that I am a shopper at heart! I enjoy most sectors though, particularly as technology is now a critical service and forms an essential role in most, if not all, sectors.

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

A To not take things so seriously. Appreciate the opportunities that come with being a junior professional, being able to participate in meetings, learning from senior colleagues, trying your hand at drafting various pleadings and agreements, and finding a place for yourself. Without trying a few things (even those that don't initially pique your interest) you won't know what legal practice can actually offer you as an individual. There really are so many different options available to legal professionals, all of which should be explored to find your fit. Unfortunately, I think this appreciation only comes with time. I only realise now, looking back, that the things that I felt “rocked the boat” actually led me to where I was meant to be. This doesn't mean that it has been easy;

it has taken hard work: working on believing in myself, my abilities and having a voice to express them.

Q *When things go wrong, what advice would you give about moving on?*

A This is a tough one. As lawyers, we are perfectionists by nature, and don't easily accept things going wrong; however, humility, acceptance and the ability to dust yourself off, learn from what happened and try again tomorrow is essential in this profession. Easier said than done. I have had my fair share of bad experiences, but we are all human, and bound to make mistakes. Owning up to those mistakes and ensuring there is always clear communication is so important, and constructive criticism should be accepted and valued. A thick skin is also necessary in this game, particularly in negotiations with tough opponents and a variety of personalities! Respect for others, and not taking these things personally, goes a long way.

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

A Fitness is a big part of my life, and I make sure to move at least once a day. I enjoy running, yoga, and strength training. I also prioritise time with family and friends – quality time is the best time. I love grabbing a skinny dirty chai at my favourite local coffee spot most mornings, and a glass of bubbly at sundown. If I manage to stay awake, I can lose myself in a TV series, and try to read at least a page of my book every night! 📖