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What attracted you to the world of finance?

I had an unusual pathway to finance because I initially trained as a scientist. But I struggled with the pace; it was slower than I wanted. I wanted something more fast-paced and dynamic. That's precisely what I have now – working in a constantly changing environment, solving complex problems, and responding to the unpredictability of financial markets. It's the polar opposite of a scientist's life.

What did you want to be as a child?

A scientist. But 4 years in, after graduating, I realised I didn't have the temperament for the long-term nature of scientific work. I needed something more responsive and energised.

Describe a typical day in your role as Principal in the Energy and Metals Unit.

I sit in a client-facing product team, and every day involves balancing multiple moving parts. I'm the main point of contact for many of our transactions, so I manage client relationships, structure bespoke solutions, and guide deals through the internal approval process. A single transaction can require multiple submissions to different committees, making it critical to manage timing, internal expectations, and external deadlines effectively.

What is your leadership style?

I don't ask my team to do anything I wouldn't do myself. My leadership style

is collaborative and hands-on, working closely with the team to meet deadlines, share knowledge, and support one another. I also play a teaching role, addressing technical questions and guiding colleagues through their deals.

Tell us about your journey at Nedbank.

I joined Nedbank as a graduate in 2010, despite not having studied finance. What stood out then, and still does, is the bank's commitment to environmental and social causes, which aligns with my values. During the interview process, I met Nedbankers who are authentic, approachable, and genuinely human. That's ultimately what made me choose the bank.

How do you approach challenges?

I try to stay calm; panic doesn't help. I take a logical, fact-based approach, and remain hopeful that things will improve. My Christian faith gives me strength in times of uncertainty, and I've learned how to manage conflict, especially when there's pressure from clients on one side and internal processes on the other.

What are some of the challenges of your role?

Every deal is customised, and that means managing high expectations from clients while navigating the bank's internal requirements. The most challenging part is aligning different priorities. Clients often want speed, but internal governance takes time. Managing expectations is key.

How do you manage a work-life balance?

I don't think life and work can be balanced all the time. I love the quote by Shonda Rhimes: 'Whenever you see me succeeding in one area of my life, that almost certainly means I am failing in another, and that's okay'. I'm a mother of two boys and I don't try to give 100% to everything all at once. I make conscious decisions; sometimes work takes priority, sometimes it's family, and I don't feel guilty about that.

What practical advice do you have for working mothers?

Build a strong support system – you won't manage without a village. You need people you trust, especially when you're juggling ambition, work, and family. I used to think I could do it all alone, but I've learned it's okay to ask for help.

What are your thoughts on the future of the energy and metals sector?

The metals sector has a very positive outlook, driven by energy transition and infrastructure development, which are increasing the demand for battery metals such as lithium, cobalt, and nickel. The energy sector is more uncertain, but reliance on fossil fuels is still evolving; however, the transition itself creates opportunities.

Your advice to aspiring women professionals?

Don't be afraid to be the only one in the room. I've often been the only woman, and the only coloured woman, in very male-dominated spaces. At first, I felt like I didn't belong. However, I've worked on myself and my sense of belonging. You have a right to be there. Walk in with courage and lean on people you trust.

