



# Q&A

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**Q: Can you give us a bit of background about yourself and how your academic and early career experiences have shaped your approach to working in financial markets?**

**A:** I've been with Nedbank for my entire career, and I think my blood is green at this point. I started in a graduate programme with Peoples Bank, a small financial institution at that time. One memorable experience was a breakfast with the late Lot Ndlovu, where we were asked about our aspirations. I boldly claimed I wanted to be in treasury, not fully understanding what it entailed, but fascinated by it being at the heart of every organisation. Nedbank supported my curiosity, leading me to the market environment. My journey has been one of building relationships, looking for opportunities, and learning by doing.

I remember being seconded to the treasury briefly, which was eye-opening. It was initially intimidating, especially since the room was predominantly led by white males, but it was also exciting. Coming from Soweto, I felt like I had a lot to prove. My academic background was simple: I did a BCom, and seeing the practical application of what I'd learnt was fascinating. Over time I built relationships with people on the desk and made it known that I was interested in any opportunities. Eventually, 3 years later, I joined the market's environment, starting on the Money Market Desk, looking after retail clients. That was my introduction, and it's been a fulfilling journey ever since.

**Q: What's a lesser-known aspect of your role that you find fulfilling?**

**A:** One aspect I find truly exciting is the collaboration with different teams. I'm in Nedbank Corporate and Investment Banking (CIB), looking after Nedbank Commercial Banking clients, which means engaging with stakeholders outside of CIB. Their businesses are structured differently, so our interactions bring fresh perspectives and innovative solutions. It's challenging but fulfilling because these engagements lead to holistic client solutions to drive market growth. It's about leveraging our best practices and being open to learning from others.

Another fulfilling part of my role is using intuition in our flow business. We have daily engagements with clients, providing market insights and discussing their projections. Sometimes, a currency movement prompts me to reach out

to a client, leading to large trade executions. The thrill of executing a successful trade, especially when the client's strategy works out long-term, is incredibly fulfilling. It's about remembering client needs and being proactive in our engagements.

**Q: How have global economic trends and geopolitical events influenced your decision-making?**

**A:** They've taught me to be adaptable. The Covid-19 pandemic highlighted the importance of embracing change and adapting quickly to new circumstances. This requires us to be open to different perspectives, challenge our own biases, and be willing to pivot our approach in response to shifting circumstances. This adaptability and critical thinking are crucial in a rapidly changing market landscape.

**Q: What are your hobbies and interests outside of work that help you maintain a fresh perspective and bring creativity to your role?**

**A:** I absolutely love hiking! It's a great way to meet diverse people from different industries and age groups, which gives me new perspectives. One memorable hike at Farmhouse was with creatives and artistic individuals, in stark contrast to my usual life in financial services. I also enjoy travelling and observing fashion trends, which keeps me mindful about presentation. I even took up sewing, though unpicking mistakes is not my favourite part!

Hiking, in particular, teaches endurance. As you embark on a hike, you begin at a comfortable pace, but as the trail becomes more challenging, you learn to embrace the journey, appreciate the small wins and relish the exhilarating moments at the summit. It's a metaphor for work: even when chasing money, which motivates me daily, the journey is just as important as the destination. Hiking and these other activities help me return to work with a fresh perspective and renewed energy and creativity.

**Q: What role does emotional intelligence play in your interactions with clients and colleagues?**

**A:** Emotional intelligence is crucial. In transitioning from a senior dealer to a manager I've learnt to empathise and build trust. It's about understanding what drives people and communicating. Being a supportive voice has made a significant difference, especially during

challenging times like the Covid-19 period. It helps you build deeper connections and gain valuable market intelligence from clients.

Before I headed up the desk, I was a senior dealer, driven by execution and the thrill of closing deals. However, in management, emotional intelligence plays a vital role. It helps me empathise with both clients and employees, building trust and effective communication. Understanding people's motivations and being human in our interactions, especially during tough times, are critical. For example, during Covid-19 being a friendly voice and showing understanding went a long way in maintaining client relationships.

**Q: In what ways do you mentor or support other women looking to enter the financial market sector?**

**A:** I enjoy mentoring and supporting women, especially those from underprivileged communities who might not know much about our industry. I share my story and the effort behind my success, making it clear that achieving goals takes hard work and perseverance.

I spend time with young women at my church, telling them about my journey. Many people think that success is about material possessions. I make sure they understand that my journey didn't happen overnight. It started with small steps and a lot of hard work. Seeing someone from their own community achieve success can be a big motivator.

In addition to sharing my personal journey, I aim to impart practical insights and expertise in foreign exchange. I believe empowered decision-making is crucial, especially in underprivileged communities where access to information is limited. By sharing knowledge, I hope to equip individuals with the tools they need to make informed decisions that will lead to improved career choices and a brighter future.

