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Who are you? What makes or defines you as a woman?

I am an attorney, a wife and a mother. Each of these elements are core to my being a woman. Even my team at Werksmans is an all-woman team of strong, successful women!

"I don't think it's sustainable to give 100% to everything all of the time. As woman we need to be kinder to ourselves and not sweat the small stuff."

What values should be instilled within the next generation to grow a successful businesswoman?

I believe in simple, "small town" values, including the responsibility to care for and contribute to the communities in which we live and work, to work hard, keep trying and leave no stone unturned, to respect everyone no matter their position in life, and to always be guided by honesty, trust and empathy.

WOMEN OF LEX AFRICA

IN CELEBRATION OF INTERNATIONAL WOMENS DAY, WE GET TO KNOW SOME OF LEX AFRICA'S LEADING WOMEN.

How do you balance work and life responsibilities?

This is a continuous juggle which I have not yet perfected. I think the secret is to give yourself 100% to a particular cause at a particular time – so when working, give it your all, and when with your kids, give them your all, etc. And take time for yourself too. I don't think it's sustainable to give 100% to everything all of the time. As woman we need to be kinder to ourselves and not sweat the small stuff. We also should not shy away from urging our life partners to pull their weight. I am fortunate that my husband is a full time stay at home dad, who contributes significantly to our home and family. This frees me up to pursue my career and professional responsibilities secure in the knowledge that my children are in good hands.

Who inspired you to become a legal professional and why?

I grew up in Windhoek, Namibia, where I was inspired by Judge Harold Levy to pursue a legal career. Judge Levy was a wise man with a keen sense of justice who kindled my love of the law. My choice to pursue a legal career specialising in communications and technology was inspired by my father who, in the early 1990s, taught me that technology was the future.



As a female legal professional, what has been the most significant barrier in your career?

I don't believe that I have had any gender-specific barriers in my career. I have always enjoyed the support of my parents, family, educational institutions, directors and work partners. Here at Werksmans I have always received tremendous support from my colleagues and partners, and I have never been prejudiced because I am a woman. On the contrary, Werksmans gives me the flexibility I need to juggle my personal responsibilities as a woman without compromising the quality of my work, my team or my working environment.

What is the best piece of leadership advice you've ever received?

I was blessed to be mentored and nurtured by an incredible leader who has since retired. She taught me to work hard and play hard, and that leaders lead by example. It is important to be intentional and to walk the talk with passion, grit, humility and integrity, and remember that you are part of a collective. When the going gets tough, keep moving forward one step at a time.

What advice would you share with young women entering a male-dominated profession?

The South African technology, media and communications legal sector in fact features many highly successful women lawyers, including the co-directors in my team who are internationally regarded as being leaders in their field. My advice to young women entering the profession is to do your best at all times as an individual, regardless of your gender. Apply yourself fully with integrity, passion, grit, creativity and reliability. Learn as much as you can from everyone around you. Don't be afraid of hard work. Remember that you are part of a team, but also have fun, allow yourself to be vulnerable and take risks, build meaningful relationships and allow yourself to be nurtured by those around you. And then have faith that your behaviour will speak for itself.

International Women's Day is on March 8.

The women of LEX Africa

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