

## Five years in practice

**June 2018**

*Without Prejudice*

This is my fifth year at Hogan Lovells and I have spent nearly all that time in the BRI department. To set the scene: after serving articles at Hogan Lovells, I worked as an associate for two years and am now a senior associate in the business restructuring and insolvency law (BRI) department, specialising in business rescue, restructuring, insolvency and commercial litigation.

I'm extremely grateful for the opportunities that I've had to study because, in my view, knowledge is power. I studied a BCom (Law) before my LLB and followed that with a Masters – taking course modules in commercial law, company law, credit law and corporate insolvency law. More recently I also completed an advance Short Course in Business Rescue. My university career set down a wonderful foundation for life as an attorney in private practice.

So much changes in five years and this is the very reason that I encourage university students to dream big and to work hard - there are great opportunities on the horizon and the world really is your oyster. You largely choose the direction of your life.

My expectations at the end of 2012 have been met in certain ways but not in others. I completely expected the long hours, the stress, the rat race, the sacrifices and the hard graft. I also expected the job satisfaction I feel now, and reaching the point of "self-actualisation" on Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs.

Where things are different from what I expected them to be, is that over the years I have realised that it doesn't get easier, you just get better. The work doesn't get easier - you just get better and more efficient at doing it. The stress doesn't become less, you just get better at handling your stress and learning to work well under pressure. The sacrifices you have to make never go away - you are just more equipped to know what you value, what sacrifices to make and how to prioritise your life. The rat race doesn't slow down - you just get faster and learn to enjoy the ride.

Corporate life has been a very challenging but rewarding environment. The days can be stressful and the hours long, but there is a great sense of satisfaction in leaving the office every day knowing that you have achieved something and have served your clients in a meaningful way.

The office has become a home away from home. I love the work I do and feel a sense of purpose coming to work every day. I am lucky to work in and with a fantastic team; I regard my teammates and work colleagues at Hogan Lovells as my good friends. I believe that the people you work with

and surround yourself with really make the journey more worthwhile.

As one of the founding members of the Hogan Lovells Bike Run Club, I have served on its committee since its inception. I am also a member of the Hogan Lovells Social Club committee. Corporate life is more than just coming to work every day – it's also about actively getting involved in causes that you're passionate about.

I am a member of the Turnaround Management Association (TMA) and sit on the TMA Next Generation committee. Passionate about the legal industry, I strive to make a positive difference in not only the business rescue and insolvency arena, but in the legal industry in general.

I also believe that a balance in life is very important and makes one happier and more productive in the workplace. It contributes to a long and prosperous career and I think that it's important to be a well-rounded individual who can sustain a work-life balance.

My time in private practice and in the corporate world has been an enriching experience, and I would encourage anyone who is interested in following this route to work hard to achieve their goals. I have learnt that in this profession, it is important to have drive, perseverance, skill and enthusiasm. It's also crucial to be a solutionist thinker and to go the extra mile for clients. To be successful, you need to be willing to put in the sweat, and have a good attitude along the way. Life is short - you may as well enjoy it!

I'm grateful for all the opportunities that have come my way over the past five years, and I'm also grateful for the wonderful support that I've received from friends, family, mentors and work colleagues along my legal journey. I have not only grown as an attorney, but as a person. I continue to work hard to add value to the legal profession and to do my bit in making South Africa a better place. Onwards and upwards.

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