

Lutfiyya Kara

Senior Associate | Real Estate



Q *What was the toughest deal you have worked on and why?*

A I was an integral part of the registration of a mixed-use precinct scheme known as Sandton Gate – The Terrace. CDH represented Abland – the leading South African based commercial real estate developer – and Game Camp Developments, a joint venture between Abland and Tiber Investments. We were involved from the land assembly process, where we assisted with all the sale agreements and transfers of the properties to Game Camp Developments. We also attended to the transfers of various properties sold to Abland and Game Camp Developments, including numerous consolidations and subdivisions, and the sale agreements were complex, as they had to account for complex town planning issues. This matter was tough as it required an in-depth knowledge and understanding of mixed-use developments, land and town planning challenges, the processes of the municipality, and so much more.

Q *What, in your opinion, is the hardest part of a transaction?*

A I deal with many commercial sale transactions within the Real Estate Department, and I would say that the hardest part of any of these transactions is the drafting of the agreement of sale, as you need to ensure that every detail is considered for the parties to the transaction; to identify the possible risks for your client and how to mitigate those; and to ensure that all the terms of the agreement are properly worded, so that all parties to the agreement are on the same page and understand what is expected of them to bring the transaction to fruition. This requires a thorough understanding of commercial concepts, as well as understanding your client's needs within the scope of the transaction. In this regard, you

have to be a really good communicator and people person.

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

A If I could change one thing, I would believe in myself at an earlier age or stage of my career, and I would have applied for jobs at “bigger firms” than where I started out doing my articles. I always doubted myself and believed the words of my superiors during my articles, that the “bigger firms” would not be a fit for me, due to my personal circumstances. Once I gained the courage to put myself out there and apply for a job at a “bigger firm” – and got the job! – I realised that I was more than capable of excelling in my area of expertise, despite my personal circumstances.

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

A My advice comes from personal experience: feel the disappointment of what has gone wrong for that moment, be it a day or two, but do not dwell on it long enough to allow it to consume you. Give yourself a period to feel the negative emotions, and then force yourself to move on from it. Understand that one negative moment does not define your whole career. We are all humans, capable of mistakes; even the most experienced commercial attorney makes mistakes. Learn from that moment and use it to fuel you even more to do bigger and better things.

Q *What advice would you give a young woman working on her first deal?*

A Do not doubt yourself or your capabilities. You studied this field and have sufficient knowledge in it, so believe in yourself and

dive in with full confidence. Research the work given to expand on your knowledge, and ask the necessary questions from seniors in your team when you need guidance. There truly is no such thing as a stupid question. Asking every question as you go through your deal can save you from making a mistake which can cost the client.

Q *Do you have a role model or someone you greatly admire and, if so, who are they and why?*

A I truly admire Naledi Pandor. She is a woman who does not waver on her stance, who speaks with clarity, intelligence and grace on any issue that she takes on. I truly do aspire to be a woman in a leadership position one day, with her traits, as she is the epitome of the qualities a true leader should have.

Q *What is one thing that makes your life easier and that you really wouldn't want to do without?*

A Being in the Real Estate Department, a Conveyancer really needs a great and competent conveyancing secretary or secretaries. Having an experienced secretary who understands the work truly does help with the work flow – getting it out faster – and allows you, as the conveyancer, to go out and bring in more work. I would not be able to be a successful conveyancer without the assistance of a great conveyancing secretary.

FUN FACTS

Favourite Colour: Purple.

Item on your bucket list: Skydiving.

Preferred holiday destination: Zanzibar. 