

100 Women in Finance Profiles Carolyn Jackson and Insight Into Finding Success in the Financial Industry

July 7, 2022

100 Women in Finance, a global organization committed to gender equity in finance, featured Financial Markets and Funds partner Carolyn Jackson, her career rise and reflection on what women should consider when pursuing a career in finance. After a tumultuous start at a New York bank, Carolyn volunteered to be part of the bank's first derivatives team, which ultimately led to her becoming head of the trading desk. Her interest in regulatory issues took her from executive director of the International Swaps and Derivatives Association, Inc., to law school, to the partnership at Katten.

While keeping an open mind to possibility, Carolyn noted that "resilience, adaptability and creativity" are crucial characteristics to succeeding in financial services. "One must be resilient in this industry because although there will be many good days, there will be some really, really bad days along the way. One must learn to savor and treasure the good days and then learn as much as possible from the bad days and move on. One must be adaptable because the finance world is always expanding; evolving; and requiring new responses, learning and thinking. One must be creative in finance because not all answers are known or can be learned and, therefore, must come from ingenuity and perseverance. Finding that new approach, new solution, new product or next evolution is so rewarding."

Carolyn stated that her early career as a derivatives trader helps her provide counsel to her current clients. "I understand what it is to work at a bank — the economics and pricing of financial products, the dynamics of a trading floor and the time pressures on my clients. Ultimately, although the legal analysis must always be conducted, I realize that at the end of the day, my clients want crisp, concise commercial advice."

Regarding what advice she would give to women seeking careers in the financial industry, Carolyn said to embrace math. "I would advise them to embrace their quantitative side. Look for classes and seminars in math (including applied math), statistics, econometrics and financial engineering. Too

often I hear from colleagues, including financial lawyers, that the reason that they went into law was to avoid numbers and any form of math(s) whatsoever. Certainly, for a finance career on the business side, strong quantitative skills are a necessity. However, such skills are central to almost all aspects of any area of finance, whether it is in the logic of legal analysis or even in the optimization of time management."

["A Story of Resilience, Adaptability and Creativity,"](#) 100 Women in Finance, June 9, 2022

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