

Q: Why do you think it is important to celebrate International Women's Day/Month?

A: A lot has changed (for the good) in the 28 years I have been in practice but there is a lot still to do. Women are still not judged equally with our male peers. So it is important that we take the time to celebrate what we have achieved and that we have a clear-eyed view on what is necessary still to achieve.

Q: What was your journey to get to where you are now?

A: I was incredibly naive. For a long time, I denied that there were any additional obstacles placed in the way of women in law. I was deluding myself; I already knew that I was working harder than my male contemporaries. But I didn't want to be "ghettoised". The lightbulb moment for me was when I realised that women's events lift you up, that the women attending actively celebrate each others' successes and that they offer a ready network. I now think that Madeleine Albright was right: there is a special place in hell for women who don't support other women.

Q: What challenges have you faced as a woman in the industry, and how have you overcome them?

A: When I first started in law, the misogyny and sexism were overt; they are now covert but, by definition, they are still there. When I was younger, I played the game to some extent - I didn't call out unacceptable comments or behaviour. As I have got older and earned my stripes so to speak, I now have no hesitation in speaking out. I commend it. It is very liberating.

Q: What advice would you give to other women in the industry building their careers?

A: Be true to yourself. Embrace your networks. Build relationships with other women who will support your development and growth.



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ThoughtLadies that inspire





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Q: What women have supported or inspired you throughout your career and why?

A: I am of an age where my role models were still mostly men. But they are/were feminists even if they don't/didn't know it. I wouldn't be the lawyer I am today without the support of John Fordham and Sunil Gadhia. More recently, I have very much enjoyed working with my female friends and colleagues, Ros Prince and Holly Molyneux, to name but two.

Q: It's 2022, how can we move forward in the industry to raise awareness against bias and take further action for equality?

A: We need to keep calling out unacceptable comments and behaviours. We need to keep talking about the issues that affect us as women. There has been a sea-change around the menopause, purely by way of example. It has only been in the last couple of years, women have felt comfortable talking about the menopause to other women save in hushed, slightly ashamed tones! And it is only very recently that law firms have developed menopause policies and encouraged open discussions.

