

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

**A:** We have made a certain amount of progress in the legal profession and society at large, but we still have a long way to go, collectively, to achieve equality for women. International Women's Day and Month do a great job of raising awareness and highlighting important issues. This year's theme of #BreakTheBias is apt as many women have experienced bias, been the subject of (negative) stereotypes and still suffer from the disastrous effects of inequality and discrimination. Of course the scale of this varies across society and globally, but unfortunately it is a relatively universal female experience.

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

**A:** I had a fairly traditional route into my current role. I studied law at university and studied the LPC immediately after. I joined Baker McKenzie as a trainee, qualified at the firm and made partner in 2020. Although it seems quite boring and vanilla written down, during that time I've worked in 3 different Baker McKenzie offices (London, Washington DC and Hong Kong (three times), been on 2 client secondments and taken countless trips overseas for work, so it has felt as though I've had multiple jobs, albeit at the same place!

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

**A:** I think the biggest challenge when I was entering the profession was the lack of senior female role models, not at my firm specifically, but in the industry more generally. The phrase "you can't be what you can't see" is trite but true. Luckily that is changing (and part of the way I have overcome the challenge is by becoming one of the role models myself and trying to help junior lawyers as best I can), but not quickly enough.



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

**A:** Be the CEO of your own board. By all means seek out mentorship and (importantly) sponsorship - I certainly wouldn't be where I am if it wasn't for various mentors and sponsors along the way - but be very clear on where you want to go and take ownership of it. You won't always get good advice; knowing yourself and what you want will make it easier to spot when some advice isn't right for you.

Also - take chances and say yes to opportunities. I saw this quote once which is apparently from David Bowie (though I've never checked!) and which has always stuck with me: "Always go a little further into the water than you feel you are capable of being in. Go a bit out of your depth. When you don't feel that your feet are quite touching the bottom, you're just about in the right place to do something exciting".

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

**A:** My mother was my original role model and - to her dismay - raised a very headstrong and fiercely independent daughter. She taught me to advocate for myself, be clear on what I want (see above!) and that being self-reliant is crucial, especially for a woman.

**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 more men to care about this as much as many women do and understand the toll that bias, negative stereotypes and discrimination can take. It used to be common to attend events about gender equality and see perhaps a handful of men. That has definitely changed recently - as we can't do this by talking to ourselves over and over again - but we have a long way to go.

