Ronel Williams

Fiduciary specialist, Nedbank Private Wealth

What is it about your job that most excites you as you come to work every day?

Every day brings new challenges. I find it fascinating that, after 25 years in the industry, I still now and then come across scenarios that I've never dealt with before. My colleagues at Nedbank Private Wealth are amazing, dedicated people who are passionate about the work they do and that makes coming to work a real pleasure.

Congratulations on becoming the chairperson of the Fiduciary Institute of Southern Africa (FISA). How did you come to reach this professional milestone?

I've been a member of FISA for many years and was elected onto the national council in 2013. When the previous chairperson's tenure ended earlier this year, I was elected as chairperson.

How long will you be the FISA chairperson and how do you balance its responsibilities with your normal work?

The chairperson is elected for a two-year period, after which they may stand for election for a further one-year term. Balancing the responsibilities of the chair with my normal workload is always a challenge, but I have the support of a very capable council comprising eight other members, so teamwork helps a lot.

Your work as a fiduciary specialist must bring with it a keen sense of ethics. If you hadn't become a fiduciary specialist, what other career paths could possibly have interested you?

I have never really considered another career path, but am quite interested in psychology and understanding why people act the way they do.

What is your comment on female representation at a senior level in the financial services industry?

I'm happy to see that there are more and more females in senior levels and that it is because they deserve to be there. We clearly still have some way to go, and it's my aim to ensure that women are given the opportunity to prove that they are capable of doing the job.

What would you describe as being your greatest business and personal successes to date?

I think the fact that I still love coming to work and tackling problems after all these years in the fiduciary/financial industry is a success. From a personal point of view, I'm an eternal student who loves to learn and attain more knowledge, so I'm proud of my postgraduate studies and view this as a success. My qualifications include the following: Postgraduate diploma in Financial Planning (UFS), Advanced certificate in leadership (UCT), Postgraduate diploma in Tax law (UCT) and LLM (cum laude) (UNISA).

If you had R100 000 to invest (excluding in Nedbank products), what would you do with it?

I would love to say that I'd spend it on an overseas holiday, but the (more boring) reality is that I would invest it in my bond or shares.

How do you strike a balance between your personal life and your work schedule?

That is a never-ending quest! I think every person must find his or her own balance. I work long hours, but it makes me happy. I have a very supportive husband who never complains when I take out my laptop, and I try to balance my work commitments by singing in a choir and playing the organ.

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