

# IWD: 60 SECONDS WITH REBECCA MASLEN-STANNAGE

08 March 2017 | Sydney

---

## 60 SECOND Q&A WITH REBECCA MASLEN-STANNAGE



### **WHAT WAS YOUR CAREER PATH LIKE? DID YOU ALWAYS WANT TO WORK IN THIS FIELD?**

*I wanted to be a forensic scientist but the reality dawned that it would be more about repetitive work in a lab than glamorously solving mysteries. So I became a lawyer instead and now live the glamorous life of an M&A lawyer! My career path was unusual in that I was a Disputes partner, but one day got chatting to a M&A partner over lunch and decided to defect and do takeovers instead of litigation.*

### **WHAT DO YOU WISH SOMEONE HAD TOLD YOU EARLY IN YOUR CAREER?**

*Be yourself and show your personality. I used to just be very task-focused, thinking it was all about doing work perfectly. But it's just as important to build relationships within and outside the firm. It's a lot easier to find common ground with people if you let them know who you are. It also makes work a lot more fun.*

### **WHAT TIPS DO YOU HAVE FOR ALL THE WOMEN COMING UP BEHIND YOU?**

*As above - be yourself and show your personality. And speak up. If you wonder why you were not invited to an event or are not on a particular deal, ask - don't just quietly get discouraged or feel that you can't influence the situation. Finally, if you are the person who never gets to say something at meetings because you are waiting for a gap so you can make your brilliant point, learn to interrupt. You soon realise that everyone else who is being heard is doing that. Of course, as you get better at interrupting avoid taking it too far - sometimes I have to put my hand over my mouth to stop myself and make sure I am listening properly.*

#### **WHAT WOMAN INSPIRES YOU AND WHY?**

*Many, but one to highlight is Helen Nugent, former Freehills board member and previously a star at McKinsey, now a professional non-executive director and chairman around town. I love her style and range at board meetings - where she is both professional and shows her personality - and the way she has managed family and an extremely successful career.*

#### **WHERE DO YOU SEE THE FUTURE TAKING YOU?**

*I am one of those lucky people who loves their job. So more of the same and doing my bit to push HSF toward global progression of our current strategy.*