

Prudential's Leshni Dial-Harikaran on the beauty of a perfectly balanced spreadsheet

 By Nicci Botha

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As a typical Capricorn, Leshni Dial-Harikaran says she likes order and structure and really enjoys beauty, whether it be in nature, design, cars or a perfectly balanced excel spreadsheet.



Leshni Dial-Harikaran, credit analyst, fixed income team, Prudential Investment Managers

Therefore the credit analyst in the fixed income team at Prudential Investment Managers, says, numbers and debits and credits just seemed like the natural fit. "In high school I had a wonderful accounting teacher who played a large part in piquing my interest in finance. Working in asset management also has a feel-good element to it, since what I do every day influences someone's financial journey, whether it's saving for retirement, a new home or a holiday. I get to play a part in that – it's a huge responsibility and incredibly rewarding," Dial-Harikaran says.

■ ***What do you love most about your job?***

Engaging and interacting with people from very different backgrounds with immense specialist knowledge. The Issuers I engage with have a wealth of knowledge on the sectors in which they operate, the sell-side analysts offer interesting perspectives of what's going on in the market, my team have an array of skill sets and all of this contributes extensively to my knowledge base.

■ ***What did you want to be when you were growing up?***

An astronaut

■ ***What is the best advice anyone has given you?***

"You can't pour from an empty cup." In short, you can't help others if you are not first taking care of yourself.

■ ***If you could do any other job, what would it be?***

An interior designer or professional house flipper.

🔱 **What advice would you give your younger self?**

Be as protective and fierce with your love of yourself as you are with your love of others. This extends to things like self-care and self-championing.

I've always been generous with this for others, but considered it selfish and potentially arrogant to apply it to myself. It's something I am constantly working on. Also, choose your squads well. Through my most trying times I've realised that it's my support systems that have always helped me through. Family, friends, colleagues. You have to build, nurture and treasure these support systems because no one succeeds alone!

🔱 **What's your secret talent/party trick?**

I can make good wine disappear.

🔱 **Tell us some of the buzzwords floating around your industry at the moment?**

"Curve steepening" – where longer-term interest rates are rising faster than short-term rates.

"Duration"

'You're on mute"

🔱 **How do you achieve a work/life balance?**

For one, I don't see these as mutually exclusive items. Work is part of my life – a big part. I find there are times when work gets a disproportionate allocation of my time vs non-work and vice versa. That in itself is balance.

I am fortunate to be part of a team who set a very good example. They don't value hours but instead value effort and outcome. My team also have a healthy appreciation for personal time. Maintaining an overall balanced lifestyle in this kind of environment becomes natural.

ABOUT NICCI BOTHA

Nicci Botha has been wordsmithing for more than 20 years, covering just about every subject under the sun and then some. She's strung together words on sustainable development, maritime matters, mining, marketing, medical, lifestyle... and that elixir of life - chocolate. Nicci has worked for local and international media houses including Primedia, Caxton, Lloyd's and Reuters. Her new passion is digital media.

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