



The Spotlight

The Spotlight is a regular Q & A feature that showcases our people, their expertise, and trending topics that are on top of our clients' minds directly from the voices of our business leaders.



Tzeitel Fernandes, Partner, APAC Banking and Capital Markets

Tzeitel Fernandes leads the Banking and Capital Markets practice for McLagan in the Asia Pacific (APAC) and is also the Managing Director for the Hong Kong office, representing Talent, Rewards & Performance.

Questions and Answers

How has the official arrival of culture reform in Hong Kong impacted financial services?

Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) recently issued a note to enhance firm standards and practices in respect to governance and risk management and the role that culture reform plays in this process. Since the legislation is not yet in effect, we will need to wait to see how culture reform impacts the sector in Asia. To prepare, however, many organizations are implementing new regulations regarding culture in their own firms by examining comparable regulatory measures and outcomes in the UK. Anticipating a similar impact in Asia, firms are determining how to best evaluate performance and pay for effective incentive planning that includes behavioral parameters.

What are the main challenges that firms in the Asia Pacific will face as we head into 2018?

How to manage risk and growth is top of mind. Firms must ensure that they're equipped to serve transforming client needs in the region as a result of technology. Customers are asking for services that are quicker and require much less effort than ever before. Many of the larger banks in the region that have operated as traditional banks for decades, have found that their size makes it more challenging and expensive to adapt to the changing environment.

If you could describe today's Asia Pacific financial services industry in three words, what would they be?

Growing, Innovating, Digitizing

What tactics are banks using to adapt to the emergence of tech companies across the globe?

Many firms have set up intellectual incubator platforms, which provide connections between FinTech startups and established financial firms to help develop forward-looking ideas, while delivering real capital for firms to invest and adapt with the shifting landscape. Financial institutions are also identifying FinTech firms throughout Asia with the best value propositions for lucrative partnerships. In return, FinTech firms gain support and access to large client groups and expert knowledge surrounding credit, customers, and more.

What does the competition for talent in APAC look like?

Unlike in other parts of the world, in APAC, banking is still considered a prestigious industry in which to work. The demand for qualified talent, however, outstrips the supply in high growth markets like India, China, and Indonesia. Popularly referred to as the *paradox of plenty*, there are often more applicants than firms can easily handle in these countries, making it difficult to identify those with the right skills.