

Vanessa Gevers MRICS, is the Founder of VGevers Ltd and is the first MRICS in Cambodia



What got you interested in surveying?

"I left University and went straight into banking, working in Corporate Finance and Capital Markets in Venezuela. When my traineeship was over, I decided to move to London and while searching for a position in banking, I saw a job offer on the local press that caught my attention, it fitted exactly with my profile.

DTZ Corporate Real Estate Services Europe was looking to hire someone with some experience in finance, an international background, and fluent in some European languages. At DTZ I shortly became account manager for corporate clients, single point of contact dealing with all sort of real estate assignments at a pan-European level (rent reviews, lease and freehold acquisitions and disposals, lease renewals...)

I found the real estate sector to be fascinating and extremely varied; I had discovered a new profession with all the challenges I was looking for."

Where did you do your training & what did it involve (which university did you attend & which course did you study)?

"I hold a degree in Business Administration from the Madrid Complutense University. I received a grant from Erasmus to study my fifth/last year at Fachhochschule in Düsseldorf, where I specialised in Finance. I also hold a diploma in Economics and Property Markets from the Cambridge International Land Institute. In 2010 I became a MRICS through the Senior Professional route."

What does your job involve?

"I am a specialist in Commercial real estate/Investment and Finance. While at Jones Lang LaSalle Spain, where I worked for nearly a decade, I was heading the Spanish Investment department mainly dealing in the office and industrial sector. We advised investors, corporate and developers in their acquisitions and disposals across the Spanish market, and we became experts in corporate sale and leaseback transactions.

I left the firm in 2008 and moved to Asia. Since then, I have set up my sole practitioner firm in Cambodia, providing real estate advice to corporate, government agencies, developers and investors. Now I would describe myself as a general

practice surveyor, undertaking research assignments, best use studies, tenant representation services, disposals and feasibility studies. My time has also been devoted to launching with two partners a project, which aims to introduce affordable housing in Phnom Penh while preserving cultural heritage sites."

What do you enjoy most about your career in surveying?

"What I truly appreciate about this career is the unlimited possibilities to constantly learn and grow as a professional. But, without any doubt, the most rewarding part of my career is the professional relationships I have built with clients and colleagues. The mutual professional respect and trust."

What has been a career highlight/most interesting project you've worked on?

Each and every project I have dealt with at Jones Lang LaSalle Spain taught me something; in each transaction I had the opportunity to meet top-notch professionals and experts in their field. Having said that, probably the most challenging project I have ever undertaken until now has been to voluntarily leave a top position in a professional and consolidated market to move to Cambodia, one of the probably less transparent and immature markets in the world, setting up my surveying firm and working on my own."

Have you done any work overseas?

"One year and a half in Caracas working for Citibank N.A., two years in London at DTZ CRES Europe, 9 years in Spain with Jones Lang LaSalle and two years in Asia."

What are your plans for the future?

"My professional goal is to be always involved in challenging projects, to which I can contribute by making a substantial impact, enabling me to keep learning and growing from the professional and personal point of view."

What does the RICS qualification mean to you?

"It means recognition, consolidation, and a sign of distinction and respect. I am very proud to have become the first MRICS in Cambodia. Becoming a MRICS, after 13 years in the real estate profession, seemed like a natural move. It was important for me to become part of this professional and international network, which provides both, support and continuous learning possibilities. And also, while RICS has helped me opening extremely exciting and interesting doors, it has also helped me locking up those, which I would never wish to cross."