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Celebrating excellence



On 15 March 2019, some of the top black professionals and entrepreneurs in South Africa descended on Emperors Palace for the 2019 edition of the Black Business Quarterly (BBQ) Awards. An annual event on the premium business events roster in South Africa, the red carpet affair lived up to its reputation as executives and founders came in their droves. Hosted by media and television personality Somizi, the awards were also streamed live on BET television.

The classy affair had me deep in my thoughts while I was surrounded by black excellence. What is the true definition of success and excellence? What are the yardsticks of success for black business excellence in SA and Africa? Do we measure

success through the bottom line, profit and loss business model? Assets? Expansion and growth or rather, through impact.

Today, social media is awash with various individuals who define success in numerous ways. Some through cars, others through the places they visit. Some define success through the people they mingle with, while others define success by being recorded or photographed wantonly spending obscene amounts of money. What, then, is the definition of success for the black child?

Back to the BBQ Awards. I was proud to see the awards being won by various individuals with different stories and capabilities. Success on the night was reflected through leading those behind us to growth and success, servant leadership, helping those in need, ensuring we build a better world for those following behind us and, above all, upholding the spirit of Ubuntu.

"I am because you are." The spirit of Ubuntu, epitomised by the great Nelson Mandela, can guide us in defining success. It is the unofficial African constitution that should serve as a masterpiece of guidance and a moral compass in the pursuit of success. With that in hand, success is not only easily attainable but also easier to define. May you enjoy this latest edition of this history-breaking public

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BEHIND THE STORY

WEDNESDAYS @ 22:00

Thabang Mashigo

Guided by purpose

A renowned International Speaker, Activist, Speechwriter and Think Tank, Thabang Mashigo's talents and achievements surpass the average individual



Bmedw



Above all, being in the audience at an event where she takes the podium is nothing short of life-changing. "I commit my life purpose to thinking; for thinking is an entry point to creation. I speak and choose to reason as a think tank. As an International Speaker, Entrepreneur, Author and Africanist, there is nothing more I seek than to produce substance, developing character and living a truth that is unconventional and uncompromised. For that will always equate to relevance. Steve Biko said: 'I would rather die for ideas that will live than live for ideas that will die'."

Mashigo holds a BA degree in Political Science and International Relations, Honours in International Relations and a Master's in Public Policy and Project Management degree. She has authored a book and several academic papers in food security, Africa's Agenda 2030 and Islamic banking and finance in Africa. She was awarded as one of the top 10 Speakers in South Africa by the city of the Western Cape and has represented Africa in Germany, Paris, Malaysia, Bangkok and Dubai, to name a few. Mashigo has sat as a Content Advisor for the BRICS Council in China Xiamen, WTO MC11 in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and the African Caribbean Pacific (ACP) group in Brussels, Belgium.

Vibrant and original, Mashigo sat with *Black Business Quarterly* magazine to explain more about her journey and principles.

Please could you provide us with a brief history of yourself?

My gifts and experiences have always navigated me towards what and where I need to be at a particular time. My passion for entrepreneurship began in school, at the age of 16. Being part of the debating and public speaking union, I decided to convert the skills acquired into a viable business model. With the help of my father, Mr Abel Mashigo, I packaged my gifts into services that could be traded to our clients. Three companies (Agriculture, a research Think Tank and solar energy firm) and three

degrees later, I wouldn't have chosen any other path.

I was trained at the age of six years old by my father to be a Public Speaker because he saw the talent in me. Usually, adults just dismiss children as being talkative little chatterboxes, but here was a parent who didn't dismiss who I was. Rather, he saw it as an opportunity to train me. He couldn't know what the future would hold but he knew that his child had too many words in her mouth so he thought, "Let me give her structure, let me polish it and let me aid in her grammar."

He fed me with sophisticated books and, from the age of six, I was reading a variety of adult authors. On the one hand, that was really intense but, for me, what is so important is that, upon the realisation of our gifts and talents, it takes somebody greater than you to affirm you, especially at that age. My speaking is not a technique. Rather, it's a gift, so that is why it hurts or it is very disappointing to hear people claiming to be speakers when they don't really know the art behind it.

Is there any ideal preparation or focused learning an aspirant leader should focus on?

Absolutely. Our talents, gifts and experiences direct us to what we love and what we should focus on. Once you find that, surround yourself with knowledge and acquire skills that can make you an expert in that field.

Focused learning truly is an enabler. If it's cooking you love, focus on the top chefs in the industry and how they have structured their talent—it might be in the form of a recipe book, establishing an academy or being a food taste expert through a media platform. Form is a structured methodology that you choose. I have a love and weakness for Africa, entrepreneurship and people. I use public speaking, trainings, workshops and writing as a tool and method of strategically expressing and empowering this love.

What advice do you have for young, aspirant leaders when it comes to coping with the immense pressure

and expectations that will be placed on them?

Words are the purveyor of truth! Listen to your experiences, for there dwells that which awakens your spirit. Living your truth is the only way to set boundaries in your life and to silence dictators. Opinions are not facts—they are just uneducated judgments. Therefore, choose carefully who you seek counsel or advice from. Use the mistakes of others as lessons and expertise for yourself.

What have been the biggest challenges you have faced in your career?

Organisations and people wanting to dominate and own my expertise/skill instead of opting for reciprocity.

Clients who appreciate what I can offer but are willing to negotiate my value. (i.e. A celebrity would be paid his/her rate because they are popular, even if they do not feed into the demand; yet I, with content, experience and proven results will be undermined and not paid my rate.



Being headhunted as a Speech Writer for select Ministers in Parliament was a priceless experience. However, when overburdened with incompetence, intimidation and destructive behaviour, it became too bitter to swallow.

What was your secret to overcoming (or surviving) those challenges?

Recognising that the chapter I'm in is only but a few pages. This is not my destination, it's only an important stop on the journey. If this stop is because of a tire puncture or low petrol, it's definitely important for the road ahead. Refuel and get a move on. If it doesn't hurt, you are not growing.

What do you believe is the secret to success in industry?

- Self-knowledge.
- Moving at your own pace.
- Avoiding people and things that do not serve you.

What do you believe is a solution to the crucial issue of youth unemployment?

Creating an eco-system of entrepreneurship amongst the youth, where they can actually

produce what they consume with the assistance of corporate support through CSI and government initiatives such as industrialisation and building manufacturing hubs. It would be great to have a special economic zone, dedicated to youth enterprises.

Identifying their talents, training and structuring them will assist greatly in directing their efforts. As a youth myself, this is what has worked for me and many others I know, like Mr Theo Baloyi, the founder of Bathu Sa, Ms Ayanda Nkosi, the founder of Monate Ka Ganong Cakes, Maphefo Mashigo, the founder of Maps Traditional Dishes, etc.

What message do you have for young people who want to succeed?

"One day is Monday." Start as soon as you can. If you need funding, do things that can bring in the money that you need. Do not wait for a donor to approve your dreams.

If you could take all the insight, intelligence and experience that you have gained up until today, and go back to the start of your career as a young person (either high school, postgraduate studies or the start of your working life), what would you do differently?

I would believe in myself more and listen to more of what my father advised me to do at the time; which was:

- The corporate/government environments are hostile, do not expect your skills, talents and experiences to be appreciated because that won't happen.
- Package all your content into training manuals and learning material, as this is another stream of growth and opportunity. I only started doing that two years ago.

Where do you believe the keys to solving the challenges of education lie, from primary school through to tertiary education?

In the quality of our calibres. Who is drafting the curriculum? Where are they receiving their advice from? We need strategic sectors of our economy incorporated in the system of education—such as agriculture/farming, entrepreneurship studies, commerce, industry and trade.

Tell me how you identify a future winner in business and, especially today, a winner in terms of disruption?





One who is not ashamed to live to tell their truth. One who has a story and narrative that drives the company's profitability.

Why is connecting with people so important and what are some of the secrets to your success as a connector?

Human beings are the centricity of any governance, organisation and form of trade in business. Without humans, creation would not be glorified. Producers would not rely on consumers and vice versa. Companies would not survive. Problem solvers would not have problems to solve. Social stratas would cease to exist. People are important—and once a connection between the right people is aligned, magic happens... I love being part of the magic, for the betterment of society.

What are your thoughts on collaboration as one of the new ways of doing business?

Collaboration is great if it is done right, with the right people. It can be an asset to the business or a huge liability. Misalignment and people who are incorrectly placed can cost you everything that you have worked hard for.

Please share with us some insight into what having a mentor is like and how you have benefitted from having a mentor?

I've never had a mentor. My mentorship is the wilderness—my challenges and what I've conquered and survived.

Have you been able to offer mentorship guidance to other people, and what have you learned from the experience?

Yes, I have. Not in telling mentees what to do, but in enabling them to seek the answers for themselves. Not enslaving them to what is wrong or right, but guiding them to their own truth. Hence, I always ask

before we proceed, what their expectations of a mentor are.

How important is guidance and mentorship to the development of everyone's career and in terms of offering them that special ingredient that will help them to succeed?

Important indeed. Only when self-interest is eliminated does it become guidance. Helping someone cross over is very rewarding—it's a reflection on you. We all need that person to either believe in us, reprimand us or walk us through something. I have offered to my mentees that which I wished I had.

What does the future hold for you? What can we expect in the next few months/years?

Watch the space—it's going to be explosive! **BBQ**

Evans Manyonga



Broadcasting a digital SA

The Fourth Industrial Revolution, or Industry 4.0, is well underway and there is no way for South African companies to avoid or escape it

The time has come to embrace all things digital, from mobile connectivity to artificial intelligence (AI) and the Internet of Things (IoT), these new technologies have the potential to disrupt every industry, and radio and television are no different.

“When it comes to the digital transformation, South Africa has shown pockets of excellence and there are some exciting innovations happening. We just need to look at the South Africans like Elon Musk and Mark Shuttleworth, who have made great strides in developing new technologies, or even Naspers, who has been involved in the digital transformation for many years already. I think while we might be lagging behind in some areas of innovation, research and development, it is because we don’t yet see the impact of these pockets of excellence directly in the SA economy,” says Mlamli Booï, CEO.

“Here at Sentech, we are working on a number of exciting projects, including the launch of South Africa’s own communication satellite. We are really trying to push the frontiers of new technology in delivering OTT. As a country, I believe that we are not there as leaders, and we’re not yet fully prepared for what’s to come as we don’t yet have the skills needed to move forward into 4IR. For this reason, I think it’s very important that we keep learning about new technologies and new management



methodologies as we continue to invest in the skills of the future. We are not at the cutting edge of digital transformation but we’re not at the tail end either,” he adds.

Sentech first began its operations in 1992 as the signal distributor of the South African Broadcasting Corporation, and its mandate also included providing services to M-Net, Radio 702, Radio Ciskei, Radio Transkei and the Bophuthatswana Broadcasting Corporation. In 1996, the Sentech Act 63 of 1996 was amended, converting Sentech into a separate public company responsible for providing broadcasting signal distribution services as a ‘common carrier’ to licensed television and radio broadcasters.

A signal for change

Today, Sentech is the backbone of broadcasting in South Africa, providing broadcast

transmission services to public broadcasters’ commercial radio and television stations, and over 150 community radio stations countrywide. Its infrastructure and data communications platforms also provide services to South Africa’s telecommunication sector and mobile providers. Operating as a commercial enterprise owned by the South African government via the Department of Communications and Digital Technologies (new DCDT), its board of directors reports directly to the Minister of Communications.

“Our network covers the whole country, we have 367 sites countrywide that transmit TV and radio. As an organisation, we have instilled a vision to become a global leader in digital content delivery, and this speaks to the whole value chain. One of the biggest steps in achieving this is the move from analogue TV to digital TV. We have been working tirelessly to provide the necessary platforms to deliver this digital content to all customers.

“Going forward, we need to make sure that we build an organisation that is innovative and entrepreneurial. We need to identify areas of new development in the market, as well as current pain points for our customers and come up with solutions for these challenges. We work with customers and develop solutions to solve their challenges. We work to develop new products together with our customer, while continuously looking at new opportunities outside of our current offering, like providing broadband services and working towards closing the



access-to-Internet gap by assisting the state to reach outlying areas with wireless broadband services," he says.

According to him, all content that is produced in today's modern era must be delivered digitally and access to content must be universal. This means that we are moving to a time where people should be able to receive content anywhere using any device.

"We are making good progress but we have a long way to go to achieve universal access to broadband. There is still a gap in society, where many South Africans still have no access to the Internet, streaming services or e-services," Booi explains.

Television, one of the nation's favourite pastimes, plays a large role in the everyday lives of all South Africans. Sentech currently provides audio-visual content for more than 11.4-million homes through its broadcasting network.

"This new digital standard for satellite and terrestrial TV involves converting the transmission from analogue to digital and so, to accommodate this transmission change, we have recently finished a national upgrade of our network, converting all of

our TV transmitters to digital TV. Our next challenge, however, is to make sure that everyone has the correct receiving equipment.

"Set-top boxes (STBs) technology, which is somewhat outdated technology, for free, to air reception due to the availability of integrated TV sets, which are fitted with a DTT tuner. However, these are still pricey for most people, especially those targeted for subsidised STBs. In South Africa, STBs will remain a requirement for some time until the market more aggressively promotes TVs with digital tuners. This has been challenging for us, as we should be switching off analogue TV transmissions and starting the process of frequency stacking while also freeing up spectrum in the 700MHZ and 800MHZ range for other mobile services," Booi says.

In addition to Sentech's vast terrestrial network, the company also offers a Direct-to-Home (DTH) Satellite platform—a universal open access interoperable platform that is designed to provide broadcasters and content aggregators with the rapid deployment of a universally accessible satellite broadcast platform.

"This platform has contributed greatly to the emerging redefinition of the country's

digital multi-Channel television broadcasting industry, and it aims to contribute to the future growth of the content industry in general and the free-to-air (FTA) broadcasting and emerging subscription broadcasting industries.

"Our primary focus remains in the media platform space where we will continue to deliver TV and radio to South Africans far and wide. We are looking at moving into the streaming services space in addition to our terrestrial and extra-terrestrial satellite platforms. We're much more focused on digital television and digital radio, which is still subject to policy and regulation updates. Digital radio will, however, also offer more capacity for radio to expand. It is a very efficient use of real estate compared to analogue," he explains.

At the centre of innovation

Upon his arrival at Sentech three-and-a-half years ago, Booi established an innovation-focused team, and their role is to identify areas of growth and research in order to develop new and exciting innovations.

"One of these innovations is providing content over an OTT network. This is the



same platform used by Showmax and Netflix, but we plan to take our OTT platform and deliver it via satellite—allowing the likes of SABC and eTV to deliver their content in a new and exciting way. This is just one of the innovations coming out of this new team, and we will continue to build these capabilities as we use the world-class infrastructure we have to deliver IoT to ordinary South African citizens.

“Other possible innovations for the future include delivering broadband through television white space,” says Booi.

The company has recently introduced B2B broadband services to the broadband market by providing connectivity to public sector entities such as schools, clinics and other state-owned entities.

“We believe that it is our duty to assist the country by bringing broadband to underserved areas and we are in a prime position to close the broadband access gap. The private sector is doing a great job in terms of providing broadband in high-density areas, but rural communities remain poorly connected,” he says.

Sentech is participating in the SA Connect project, which is currently managed by Broadband Infracore (BBI).

“Our focus is on fixed wireless broadband. From the nearest fibre point-of-presence (POP), we install microwave backhaul systems and use fixed wireless access to cover the last mile. In very remote areas where there is no nearby fibre POP, we make use of our VSAT infrastructure,” Booi says.

Regarding the proposed South African communications satellite, Booi recently visited the International Telecommunication Satellite Organisation (ITSO) where South Africa is the current chairman, effective from last year.

“As an SOC, we have been designated to host the preparation and management of a new communications satellite project, where we plan to launch South Africa’s own communication satellite. We are in the process of setting up a project management office and doing what is necessary for the government to execute this satellite strategy,” he says.

Transformation is a priority

Sentech supports underprivileged communities, mainly in the field of education and health through its corporate social investment (CSI) Schools Connectivity Programme. Fifty-two schools have been connected to date. The company has also established and funded a programme to provide extra Maths and Science classes to 300 learners from Grade 10 to 12.

"This has been one of our most successful projects so far and we have seen very good results from the learners who have attended the centre. This project is important in that it shows that we are not just pursuing business, but that there is a social side to us too," he says.

Enterprise and supplier development also forms part of Sentech's transformation and development mandate. Through its ESD initiatives, the company stimulates the growth of small and medium enterprises, creates jobs and provides critical ICT intensive skills for the economy.

So far, Sentech has incubated 20 SMMEs, of which 18 are potential suppliers and two are existing suppliers.

"We have also partnered and collaborated with three universities—the University of Pretoria, University of Witwatersrand and University of Cape Town—to sponsor research and bursaries for undergraduate and postgraduate students in the electrical engineering field.

"Going into this industrial revolution, I think it's critical that our learning institutions keep up to date and keep pace with development. It has become a necessity to equip our young people properly and rather than train them to find jobs, we need to teach them how to be entrepreneurs to create jobs. I think that the SMME sector is where most of our growth will come from and so we need to have our young people creating value. Sure, not everyone is going to be an entrepreneur, but they need to be able to find solutions to the new challenges and issues we face in a digital age," he says.

The company also runs internships through the MICT SETA to assist graduates coming into the working world. They have

employed 62% of the 220 students that have been part of this programme over the last 10 years.

An organisation to be proud of

While there may currently be a lot of negativity and uncertainty surrounding SOEs in South Africa, Booi is proud of the fact that they have obtained a clean audit for six consecutive years, and this is partly due to good governance and professionalism, he says.

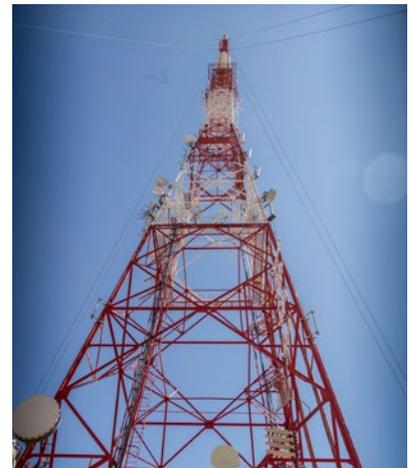
"We run a well-respected organisation, one that we can be proud of—not only can we boast a profitable entity but also a clean operation. For us, innovation isn't just about new technology, but a different way of doing things. The world is changing and we must look at how we can apply those changes in this current business environment," says Booi.

All of the company's operations are rooted by one strategy—aptly named the Sentech way. This strategy focuses on seven pillars to drive their core culture while factoring in some room for change.

"Change is exciting and we want an organisation that is thinking, sleeping and breathing innovation. Our seven strategic pillars will continue to guide our path in achieving our strategic objectives. These strategic pillars include growth through leveraging existing businesses, expansion to Pan-African markets, the acquisition of synergistic businesses, strategic partnerships and the deployment of wireless broadband.

Other pillars include the innovation of new products and services, customer focus, managing our reputation, driving efficiencies and socio-economic transformation.

"We are deeply committed to the transformation of the ICT sector, both from a technology and human capacity point of view. We have done a great deal of introspection in order to improve on the services we offer, and plan to offer in the future, and as we've brought our customers back as our main focus point, they will soon begin to feel the difference," Booi concludes. **BBO**



Taking Microsoft and Africa to new heights

Microsoft South Africa's new Managing Director, Lillian Barnard, is a woman who has taken her career and female empowerment seriously for over two decades and one who has no plans to slow down anytime soon



In fact, six days into her new role at Microsoft, Barnard was proud to announce that Microsoft cloud was finally local, with the opening of enterprise-grade data centres in Johannesburg and Cape Town, and that the company was opening up a world of possibilities—enabling and driving economic growth and stability for both public and private enterprises.

Enabling a digital world in Africa

The data centres will offer Microsoft Azure immediately, and Office 365 and Dynamics 365 in the near future, and will power the emerging cloud, artificial intelligence (AI) and edge computing innovations across the continent. This is a massive first for Africa as, previously, all cloud data centres—and the business aspects and concerns associated with them, like security and geographical placement—lived overseas.

“I have been given a unique opportunity, as part of the Microsoft team, to truly effect change in South Africa. The opportunity to accelerate digital transformation journeys with customers while driving economic growth is high on my agenda from a career point of view and I feel honoured to be at the helm of Microsoft at this pivotal point of 4IR where Microsoft can play an important role in setting up the country for digital success,” she says.

As a technology leader, Microsoft envisions a different future and it's one that

will be driven by AI and cloud, which are major drivers behind the Fourth Industrial Revolution. Business can play a defined role in upskilling people, increasing digital literacy and deep tech skills, ensuring they can participate in the new world of digital. Barnard says AI brings many opportunities and challenges with it but it will not be replacing humans. Rather, it will amplify and augment their roles in business.

Barnard feels strongly that her position at a global heavyweight like Microsoft will give her the foundation she needs to pursue one of her passions, which is driving digital innovation, embracing disruptive technologies and using both to find answers to South Africa's most pressing societal and economic challenges.

Enabling skills development across the continent

Barnard's first week in office, so to speak, was a busy one. In addition to seeing the launch of data centres in South Africa, she also announced the evolution of Microsoft's Equity Equivalent Investment Programme (EEIP).

In 2011, as part of its transformation approach, Microsoft committed to investing a percentage of the total revenue of the South African operation into its EEIP each year, over seven years. At the time, this investment was ring-fenced for the support of local independent software vendors (ISVs) but, at the event hosted earlier this year, Barnard announced that it had evolved to include investment in technology solutions in agriculture and digital transformation in manufacturing—two sectors where key government priorities and Microsoft focus areas overlap.

But Microsoft's investment in skills development across the continent doesn't end there. With multiple programmes running today that focus on skills development in young women, coding, cloud and students, Microsoft has again and again shown its commitment and dedication to raising the bar in the skills development arenas. Theirs is not simply a CSI obligation, it is

a dedication to bring the skills that South Africans and Africans alike will need to embrace the new digital world.

The road to the helm at Microsoft SA

With a career predominantly grown in the technology industry, Barnard started her working journey as an intern at IBM, moving across various roles over the next 15 years, which allowed her to understand the industry from an extremely deep and hands-on place. At the young age of 28, she was offered a position in leadership that took her abroad for seven years and enabled her to develop intense skills across sales, operations, strategy, governance, transformation and leadership development.

"Working outside of South Africa was a great opportunity in that it leapfrogged my career in a brilliant way. I grew as a person, both personally and professionally, and my view of the world opened in a very deep and meaningful sense but, nonetheless, I found myself excited to return to South Africa when the opportunity to lead the partner channel for Africa at IBM became available," she says.

After over 15 years of fast and focussed personal growth and development, Barnard left IBM to start her own consulting firm, called Lillian B Consulting, and she describes this as yet another incredible learning experience. Hungry to do something on her own, she spent the better part of three years assisting corporations in empowering and developing women, zoning her focus in on making sure the advancement of women was a conversation businesses were having on serious platforms.

Throughout this time, Barnard also sat on various boards, including Mango Airlines and Vodacom—ultimately, joining the latter as Chief Sales Officer for the Enterprise Business unit when the time to return to a corporate environment arrived.

But it was in joining Microsoft two years ago that Barnard found her home. Filling the role of Public Sector Director since 2017 gave her an incredible opportunity to forge

relationships with the government, advising around what it is that technology can do to help our leaders explore the opportunities that it represents to countries like ours—innovative digital solutions that give citizens a better quality of life.

Lift as you rise

As a woman in power, Barnard feels that there is a lot more that can and should be done in terms of bringing women into positions of leadership.

"There are so many opportunities for businesses to turn things around for women in South Africa and across the continent and, for those fortunate enough to be working for them, the world is full of unending opportunities to grow.

"I was always ambitious and wholeheartedly embraced all of the opportunities presented to me, making my aspirations clear. I eagerly availed myself to mentoring and coaching opportunities within these organisations and took full advantage of any and all moments of learning.

"I have learnt from my own experience that going to the top is not without its challenge and so it is with this in mind that bringing women into the boardroom and senior positions is a focus for me, however, I strongly believe it is up to the individual to get into the driver's seat when it comes to their own career progression," she says.

From a personal perspective, Barnard's mantra is: you need to lift as you rise.

"I'm heading up one of the largest blue chip companies in South Africa today and still, my driving force is people.

"It is vital for me, when I go home at night, to know that I have focussed on our greatest asset, our people, and that I am creating a plan where everyone can do their best work. In order to be able to do that, you need to be very agile and bring an ability to adapt and accept change along with an openness to learn. Only then will you truly find yourself in a position to create a platform for your people to shine," Barnard concludes. **BBO**

A new way of doing business

In an era led by digital transformation, the emphasis is placed on how a company embraces technology to meet rising customer expectations. Remaining competitive and driving revenue growth means understanding the necessary tools a business needs to successfully transform digitally.

According to McKinsey, the term 'digital' refers to the process of using technology to engage with customers in a new way, primarily focusing on interconnectivity; connecting people, devices, objects, data and technology, while transformation in the business context is the process of a profound and radical change that takes the business in a new direction. Bringing a completely different level of effectiveness, it represents an entirely new way of doing business.

Digital transformation is a complex process, which requires serious investment and comes with risks and great rewards. If implemented successfully, the rewards overshadow the risk because the right digital strategy integrates with your business' overall strategy, increasing revenue by a milestone.

The Fourth Industrial Revolution means we are confronted with digital disruption; digital disruption is the change or transformation that is caused by emerging technologies and business models that essentially affect the business value proposition of existing goods and services. Major importance is placed on how you can do something better in order to create a better customer experience, better customer value, and make the customer pay for it. This is why it is crucial to understand what it takes to transform your business and what it means for companies and for consumers.

The way things were 10 years ago is very different from the way things are today. From personal devices to complex industrial

systems, you don't need a printed map book to navigate your way around. Before buying anything, you first look at reviews to see if it's worth your money.

There are applications that assist with all kinds of things, meaning you do not have to physically be at a place to compare with other places.

Competitors are no longer traditional large organisations; they are agile entrepreneurs and organisations that embrace new and exponential technologies to compete and disrupt markets through digitalisation. This kind of change means that, in order to succeed as a company, you have to structure your business in such a way that digital drives your business model.

A clear vision with a coherent plan

The first step towards successfully digitally transforming your business is formulating a clear vision with an elaborate and coherent strategy for digital transformation. Creating an effective transformation strategy desperately requires a clear structure. The strategy should be based on an in-depth analysis, which calculates the budget of the desired enhancement together with possible risks.

Combine the problems you hope to solve with innovation to attain your desired end goal. Concentrate on the experience you want to create for your customers and employees—a vision that addresses the future but at the same time, deals with daily realities. A strategy means conducting thorough research, which will help you identify gaps in the current structure and, in turn, create ways to optimise those gaps. This will work to your competitive advantage.

Once a coherent strategy is put in place, the organisation or company needs to embrace digital literacy. This can be done by aligning the development strategy with the capabilities or skills of the organisation's human capital. This will shape the company's culture, activities and structure to transform the traditional concepts of products, concepts, services and knowledge to the more innovative and modern ones. At the moment, South Africa faces a scarcity of digital talent. We need to start instilling digital skill sets and finding new talent that possesses these skills.

African Digitalisation Maturity Report 2017

According to the African Digitalization Maturity Report 2017, the manufacturing industry is the most mature with regard to the transformation and adaptation of digital technologies in Africa, however, it remains a marginal player, struggling to make a bigger impact on country GDPs. This is because African governments have not managed to create a 'here and now' emphasis on job creation and digitalisation. Unlocking new digital operations and skills will help reduce the high rate of unemployment in South Africa. Companies can recruit people they can train while upskilling the





ones already working for them using the model mentioned above. At the same time, a collaboration between the government, business, labour and academia will help change mindsets and formulate policies that create an environment for digital knowledge on the general population.

At the moment, one of the sectors that has adopted advanced analytics is the automotive sector, but the massive potential is waiting to be unlocked in the other sectors, which brings us to the next tool that can help you successfully transform digitally: analyse the market—digital disruption means technology development is rapid. If you do not carry out a profound analysis of the market dynamics, you risk creating an outdated strategy. You can easily find inspiration and practical solutions from other industries and use them to your advantage.

Designing the experience you want to create for your customers

Pay special attention to the experience you want to deliver. Come up with ways

you can add value for your clients. The same energy should be extended to your employees. Come up with ways that can help them complete their tasks quicker and easier using new software. At the end of the day, the main focus is not on technology but rather the experience that technology can provide.

Assess your current standing. It is just as important to know exactly where you are now if you are to fill future gaps. This is the stage where you have to do in-house criticism, examining your current digital infrastructure.

Pay close attention to how effective your software, apps and any other tools you use are. This will enable you to identify the areas you will need to develop new functionality for, the technology that needs to be updated, the processes that need to be optimised and automated, and the digital tools that need to be changed. As you invest in your digital strategy, you will have an idea of the areas that need the most attention.

Adjusting your infrastructure

This is where the experts come in. Preparing your infrastructure means surrounding yourself with a dedicated group of digitally competent experts. If this cannot be achieved in-house, outsource a reliable partner who can implement the digital strategy for your company. This also ties in with upskilling your team for the future changes, using platforms such as qualification upgrades and workshops specifically designed to train.

Formulating a strategic approach towards digital transformation will create a roadmap that guides the transition process.

It will help identify the current challenges within your business and assist you in tailoring your business accordingly to fit customer demands.

Today, the business world is more competitive than ever. Implementing digital transformation offers development and secures competitiveness. **BBQ**

Staff Writer



NTSU AVIATION SOLUTIONS

SAFE - COMPLIANT - EFFICIENT

Exploring the new frontiers of drones

We are in the midst of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, which ushers in innovations across all industries. Drones are one of the fastest-growing tools in terms of innovation and, forming part of the aviation industry, they are regulated as such.

The co-founder and Business and Technical Director of Ntsu Aviation Solutions, Sam Twala, explains how it all comes together and how his organisation assists companies to use drones effectively and within the stipulated regulations.

Please could you tell us a bit more about the formation of Ntsu Aviation Solutions?

Following my successful years at the Civil Aviation Authority, leading a regulations development team as a UAS Specialist and the promulgation of drone regulations, I was determined to make this industry work, thrive and reach its potential in any way possible.

I left the drone industry for about two years, barely six months after regulations were promulgated, but I soon realised that I made a mistake and needed to return.

I happened to meet my former colleague, Dale McErlean, with whom I worked with at the Civil Aviation Authority, at a UAS meeting, during the time. I was planning my return to what seemed like a stagnating two-year-old industry.

Dale was responsible for the operations aspect of regulatory development, completing the first test cases and, eventually, the certification of the first 25 RPAS Operators Certificate (ROC).

Born with aviation in her blood, Dale joined the Civil Aviation Authority after being in the aviation industry for 10 years—working at both O.R. Tambo and Cape Town International Airport, flying commercially



Sam Twala

and completing her BCom Aviation Management degree.

After a short time in the general aviation department at CAA, Dale joined the RPAS division. RPAS immediately became a passion for Dale, who remains excited and determined to use this dynamic technology to its full potential. We both realised that we have a similar passion, drive, zeal and, of course, expertise and experience to propel the drone industry to new heights. We decided to meet for coffee the following week, which resulted in the birth of NTSU Aviation Solutions, and both resigned from our jobs three months later.

What is the role of Ntsu Aviation Solutions?

NTSU Aviation Solutions is an aviation company that offers specialised and professional services to the unmanned aircraft systems industry.

More companies—small and large—are beginning to realise the potential, benefits



Dale McErlean

and opportunities offered by drones and the value they can add to services already being offered.

Even though the use of drones cuts across all industries, they are regulated in accordance with aviation rules. Our role as NTSU Aviation Solutions is to assist new aviation entrants to introduce drones into their operations by designing an operational framework that suits the operator's plans and vision while taking regulatory compliance into consideration. Our service includes assisting with strategic planning, designing the concept of operation, the training of postholders and development of compliance documentation, advising on the most suitable aircraft (drone) and associated equipment, eg. payload.

We assist prospective drone operators to attain their Air Service Licence and ROC approvals from the Department of Transport and the South African Civil Aviation Authority respectively. For existing ROC holders, we assist with continued

regulatory compliance, scope expansion and modification, the introduction of new services, the addition of new aircraft as well as a drone management and operational control tool (app and web-based). Due to our experience with drones at an international level, our services cover all aspects of drone operations.

Can you tell us a bit more about Ntsu Aviation Solutions' values?

We regard ourselves as safety ambassadors of the RPAS industry by consistently and innovatively delivering professional and cost-effective solutions to the industry at large. Ntsu Aviation Solutions was born out of a passion for the development and improvement of the drone industry. We strive to realise our dream of harmonisation and co-existence of drones and conventional aviation by enabling the equitable use of airspace and resources. I believe the ingredients and cornerstone to integrate drones and for the users to realise the full potential and benefits, these core values are critical, and we remain committed to them within Ntsu Aviation Solutions: Safety, integrity, customer commitment, passion, innovation and open-mindedness.

What is the company's service delivery approach?

Understanding our clients' needs and vision is critical to the successful introduction and implementation of drone technology, whether it's a new business venture or value-add service. This is due to the fact that the use of drones differs from one organisation to the other and no one solution is best for all organisations and operations. Constant engagement and adaptability are important because things change rapidly in the drone industry, hence, flexibility is key when designing a solution for our clients.

Ntsu Aviation Solutions states that they are passionate ambassadors of the RPAS. Can you provide more details about RPAS?

Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS), commonly known as drones, are defined

by the Civil Aviation Authority and International Civil Aviation Organisation as "a set of configurable elements consisting of a remotely piloted aircraft, its associated remote pilot station(s), the required command and control links and any other system elements as may be required at any point during flight operation".

The difference between RPAS and drones is that the former has a legal definition associated with civilian use and drones have been used for many years with its origin from the military.

RPAS has been part of aviation for over a century as model aircraft simply repurposed into a commercial "tool". In 2011, the International Civil Aviation Organization pronounced RPAS as another type of aircraft, which must be regulated in accordance with existing rules and with modifications where necessary.

Ntsu strives to harmonise the co-existence of RPAS and conventional aviation systems and the equitable use of airspace and resources.

Can you briefly explain what differentiates RPAS (drone) from conventional manned aircraft?

The main difference between RPAS and conventional manned aircraft is the location of the pilot and common uses. Even though they are both defined as aircraft, the pilot of the RPAS is not on board of the aircraft he/she is piloting.

The majority of RPAS are purpose-built and intended for a specific use—filming, security surveillance, agricultural, mining etc. Due to the intended use, RPAS are predominately operated at very low altitudes and can be very small in size.

What are the current challenges that RPAS face that Ntsu Aviation Solutions strives to assist with?

Challenges faced by drone users are regulatory compliance, selecting the right tool for the job and integrating drones into the existing operational environment of the operator. The majority of drone users do not have aviation backgrounds,

therefore, competency and compliance with aviation rules often present a huge stumbling block. Establishing aviation competency internally can be labour-intensive and costly.

We take care of the regulatory compliance and obtaining all the necessary approvals on your behalf so that you concentrate on your core service provision. We assist you to optimally integrate aviation processes into your existing policies and procedures for seamless integration, such that you see the drone as "another tool in your toolbox".

In addition, we provide post-certification support, remaining at our client's side; assisting them with running an aviation business whilst remaining compliant, growing and operating as safely as reasonably practical.

Our drone management and operational control tool gives the operator peace of mind and total operational control. This tool is used internationally in countries such as the UK and USA. This tool offers functionality such as operations management, flight planning, fleet management, risk management, automated hazard identification and flight logs and reporting.

We are an approved reseller of MMC UAV Drones. MMC drones are highly comparable with other brands and suitable for applications such as; energy and facilities inspections, law enforcement, fire-fighting, search and rescue, photogrammetry, 3D modelling, city planning and management, delivery, communication and security.

Similar to other technological advances, drone technology may also be misused for malicious and ill-intent by some, thus, we offer drone detection solutions for security-sensitive areas. **BBO**

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Frik Rademan, CEO

Giving dignity in life and death

During 1918, the Spanish flu, which ran rampant toward the end of World War I, inspired the start of an informal burial society, which has become South Africa's leading mutual assurance society

AVBOB started with less than 100 members in 1918 and by 1936 had rapidly grown with close to 90 branches being established and more than 24 000 members on its books. Today, AVBOB serves every community in South Africa and insures more than six million lives.

AVBOB Mutual Assurance Society

Frik Rademan, AVBOB CEO shares, "What makes AVBOB really stand out is our mutual status. This has played a large role in our growth, and as one of the few remaining mutual societies in South Africa, we are able to offer benefits to our policyholders that our competitors simply cannot match."

As a mutual assurance society, AVBOB has no shareholders and, instead, shares its surplus profits directly with its policyholders in the form of special bonuses and Free Member benefits. This has been a key differentiator for AVBOB and over the past 11 years alone, they have shared R10 billion with their members.

AVBOB offers a one-stop solution, which is also a key contributor to their business differentiation.

"Our three main service offerings serve to ease the financial burden on mourning relatives, from life and funeral insurance cover to funeral services from more than 330 branches countrywide. Our factory, based in Bloemfontein, manufactures

coffins, wreaths and other funeral-related products. To show that the Group is on an upward trajectory, "In 2009, we celebrated our millionth policyholder and by our centenary year in 2018, we had topped the two-million policyholders' mark, with more than six million lives currently covered by the society," says Rademan.

"Amongst other initiatives, our Free funeral benefit contributed significantly towards our successes. The Free Member benefit offering is currently valued at R16 000.

"This member benefit is paid to policyholders over and above the insured value of a policy and includes a free basic funeral, free transportation of the deceased within the borders of South Africa and R2 500 cash upfront to assist with funeral expenses, provided that the funeral is conducted by AVBOB Funeral Service," he explains.

In August last year, AVBOB declared R3.5-billion as a special centenary bonus to its members by means of a new feature, the AVBOB Reward Account (ARA).

"Our members can now claim the funds allocated to their ARA in cash after the main insured individual reaches the age of 65, subject to conditions. What makes this truly exceptional is that people can claim their bonus while they are still alive. In future, special bonus declarations will be used to increase the ARA values," he says.

AVBOB, as with most companies weathering the difficult economic climate in South Africa, is accustomed to dealing with the complex challenges of a rapidly changing society.

"We've seen everything from changes in technology to the shifts in customer behaviour and growing competition from new market entrants. But there will always be a need for funeral policies and other services relating to funerals.

"What makes the South African funeral services industry unique is the fact that it is made up of micro, small, medium-sized and large enterprises serving local markets. And because the sector is not regulated, undertakers are not required to register with industry bodies. This means that there are many informal operators, which are becoming widely supported by an indeterminate number of stokvels and burial societies. The problem here is that when these operators cut corners, it gives the rest of the industry a bad name," Rademan says.

However, he believes that AVBOB has been able to overcome many of the current market challenges by demonstrating the giving of dignity in life and death. The thousands of deaths left in the wake of one of the modern world's most deadly epidemics, the Spanish flu, inspired the start of what is today South Africa's leading mutual assurance society benefits of being a true mutual, creating real policyholder value compared to

other insurers that are more concerned with creating shareholder wealth.

For the love of literacy

While dedicating the majority of his career to ensuring AVBOB policyholders receive the maximum benefit from their investments, Rademan's passion extends much further, spilling out into the communities around him. A project especially close to his heart, AVBOB's groundbreaking national Poetry Project, comprises a dedicated website and a prize-winning poetry competition which embraces all 11 official languages, enabling thousands of aspiring and established poets to receive recognition for their craft.

Poets are invited to submit their work online and are encouraged to offer unconventional formats and approaches in this annual multilingual competition. An anthology of the top entries plus some commissioned work, *I Wish I'd Said*, has been published. Due to the resounding success of the competition, the Group decided to make the AVBOB Poetry Project an annual competition.

"The project was started with the intention of helping families deal with their grief, and one of the first questions we are often asked by family members when it comes to planning a service is 'What do we say?'. It was also very important to us to have all 11 languages represented in the book. The anthology is made up of poems written by the first and second place winners in each language category, as well as 77 poems specially commissioned by AVBOB from South Africa's most notable poets," Rademan says.

AVBOB's Corporate Social Investment (CSI) efforts are heavily focused on improving literacy in South Africa. Actively engaged in the communities in which they operate, they have donated 53 of 60 container libraries pledged to underprivileged schools, worth approximately R500 000 each, to date.

"These container libraries are constructed at our factory in Bloemfontein and AVBOB works closely with the Department of Basic Education to ensure we provide books in the appropriate languages for each school.

We also plan to slow down the rollout of new container libraries as we go back to those already donated where we may need to conduct renovations or upgrades.

"So far, not a single container has been damaged and out of these 53 libraries donated, I have been there to launch 50 in person because, for me, it is very important that I go myself so that I can see what's going on in the community and make sure that we assist where we can," he says.

“Our business model is also sustainable in that it empowers branches

AVBOB has also pledged to invest R150 million for the refurbishment and upgrade of rural schools across the country, in partnership with the Department of Basic Education, with a portion of the funds allocated to the upgrading of sanitation systems and the eradication of pit toilets in six Mpumalanga schools.

"This may seem like a drop in the ocean, but it does help. I imagine that trying to fix all of these issues alone is a challenge too big for the government to tackle on its own. I can see the difference we are making, it's unbelievable, but it still pains me that we can't do it for everyone in need," he says.

The company also invests in a number of other secondary community projects aimed at social upliftment. The AVBOB Trolley Libraries is just one example, where they have already donated around 35 of these mobile wooden bookshelves, also manufactured by AVBOB Industries in Bloemfontein. The AVBOB Foundation has also adopted the internationally acclaimed Mzansi Youth Choir. Established in July 2003, the choir provides talented underprivileged teenagers

and young adults with the opportunity to perform locally and abroad.

"Since its inception, the AVBOB Foundation has really instilled a great sense of pride in me. It's something I started seven years ago and it has grown into something much bigger than I could have imagined at the time. I believe that if you are a big corporate in South Africa, it is imperative that you do the right thing, especially when you have built a name for yourself.

"Our business model is also sustainable in that it empowers branches. Through our semi-franchise model, we are able to supply infrastructure while staff work on commission, they employ their own services and as a result, empower both their own staff and surrounding communities by supporting other businesses who provide flowers, catering, etc. This helps to support thousands of people in South Africa and we want to continue to grow our footprint in respect to the number of branches, we will be better equipped to empower more of the previously disadvantaged," Rademan says.

Rademan, who has been with the AVBOB group since 1982, started his journey with the company as their Financial Manager, moving his way up the ranks until he was appointed CEO in 2011.

Remembering the first time he was invited to an interview at the factory in Bloemfontein, he laughs as he recalls how sceptical he was of the idea of working in the funeral industry.

"Back then, it did not cross my mind that I would climb the corporate ladder. I never had the ambition to be the CEO, I just wanted to progress in life. I worked at the factory for seven years before I was transferred to head office as a Finance Manager, and later the Financial Director. I was then appointed Managing Director of the Insurance Division before my appointment as CEO of the group.

"In these last eight years, I think we have made great strides when it comes to transformation, and AVBOB has now become a place where people want to work. We are a respected organisation within the finance sector, and I'm very proud to be a part of this," he concludes. **BBQ**



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STRONG AMMUNITION IN THE FIGHT AGAINST HIV

For decades, African communities have been paralysed by the fear of this virus that weakens an individual's immune system by destroying important cells that fight disease and infection

To counter the devastating effects of HIV, the South African government designed and created the National Strategic Plan (NSP) 2017 – 2022—the roadmap in the fight against HIV, TB and STIs.

Pre-exposure prophylaxis, commonly referred to as PrEP, is when people at very high risk for HIV take HIV medicines daily to lower their chances of becoming infected. The NSP 2017 – 2022 was created to strengthen already existing systems put in place to fight against HIV and formulate new systems that offer a higher impact. One of those strategies is offering PrEP to people placed in the category of facing high risk with regards to HIV transmission.

South Africa has the biggest HIV epidemic in the world and 7.2-million people are living with HIV in South Africa. That number is more than alarming and something drastic had to be done to reduce the risk of transmission.

In December 2015, South Africa became the first country in Sub-Saharan Africa to fully approve PrEP. Truvada for PrEP contains two medicines—tenofovir and emtricitabine—that are used in combination with other medicines to treat HIV. When someone is exposed to HIV through sex or injection drug use, these medicines can work to keep the virus from creating a permanent infection. PrEP must be taken diligently every day and people using it must see their healthcare provider for follow-ups every three months.

By nature, human beings, despite knowing right from wrong, are prone to making mistakes. Initially, strategies such as abstinence, limiting the number of partners, circumcision and using condoms took centre stage and were effective to a certain extent, but numbers were still relatively high. As supported by statistics in 2017, according to Avert, an organisation providing global information and education on HIV and AIDS, 7.2-million people are living

with HIV and 18.8% are people between the ages of 15 to 49. In 2017, there were 270 000 new infections, 110 000 AIDS-related deaths, 61% adults on antiretroviral treatment and 58% children on antiretroviral treatment.

To combat these statistics, South Africa came up with the NSP 2017 – 2022. Its main aim was to categorise and help defend the people who face the highest risk of HIV transmission.

By researching the groups that face the highest risk of infection, they can come up with ways to minimise transmission among those people, trying, by all means, to break the cycle through the use of PrEP. Several studies were conducted and Avert found that sex workers were at the top of the list of people facing a high risk of transmission: nationally, HIV prevalence among sex workers is estimated at 57.7%, although this varies between areas, with prevalence estimated at 71.8% in Johannesburg, 53.5% in Durban and 39.7% in Cape Town.

There are various factors that increase the number of South African sex workers, in turn, increasing the risk of HIV transmission. Among the most prevalent is poverty, caused by a high number of dependents in certain homes, accompanied by the lack of alternative career opportunities. Studies have also found that the understanding of HIV's risk is often low among female sex workers. In Durban, it was reported that only 4.6% of female sex workers could correctly identify HIV transmission risks and reject common myths.

However, the South African government launched a comprehensive and nationally coordinated plan for sex workers in 2016. This progressive new National Sex Worker HIV Plan outlines a new peer-led approach to providing HIV services that are tailored towards meeting the specific needs of sex workers.

The next category is men who have sex with men (MSM): the HIV prevalence among MSM in South Africa is now estimated at 26.8%. This number varies geographically but it is reported to have risen by more than 10% in Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban since 2008. Despite a

constitution that protects the rights of LGBT communities, many men who have sex with men face high levels of social stigma and homophobic violence as a result of traditional and conservative attitudes within the general population.

There is also a lack of knowledge around the issues that MSM face, making it difficult for these men to disclose their sexuality to healthcare workers and get the healthcare they need.

In 2017, the South African government released a national LGBT HIV strategy for the first time, recognising that these groups have specific needs that were previously overlooked. The new strategy aims to provide the basis for more inclusive services to the LGBT communities, providing them with the necessary tools to realise their health and human rights goals.

Among the recommendations made in this strategy is increasing the availability of lubricants and providing PrEP to protect them from infection.

Needles and syringes

A 2016 study in five South African cities, of people who inject drugs, found that 32% of men and 26% of women regularly shared syringes and other injecting equipment. Of that number, nearly half reused needles. The same study reported that fewer than half of those surveyed used a condom during their last sexual encounter.

Children and orphans

In 2017, an estimated 280 000 children (aged 0 to 14) were living with HIV in South Africa and only 58% were on treatment. Children are also affected by HIV through the loss of family members. In South Africa, more than two million children have been orphaned by HIV and AIDS. Orphans are particularly vulnerable to HIV because of economic and social insecurities. They are also often at risk of being forced into sex, having sex in exchange for support, and typically become sexually active earlier than other children. The NSP 2017 – 2022 aims to renew the focus on children, putting emphasis on eliminating new infections and building resilience in families.

Women and adolescent girls

HIV prevalence among young women in South Africa is nearly four times greater than that of men their age. Young women between the ages of 15 and 24 made up 37% of new infections in South Africa in 2016. To try to reduce this high rate of infection, young women and adolescent girls who are considered at high risk are now being offered PrEP. Intergenerational relationships between older men and younger women were also driving a circle of infections.

In 2016, the government launched a national campaign in an attempt to improve these health outcomes for women. The She Conquers campaign focused on decreasing teenage pregnancies, preventing gender-based violence, keeping girls in school and increasing economic opportunities for young women. All of these would protect women from falling into this cycle of transmission.

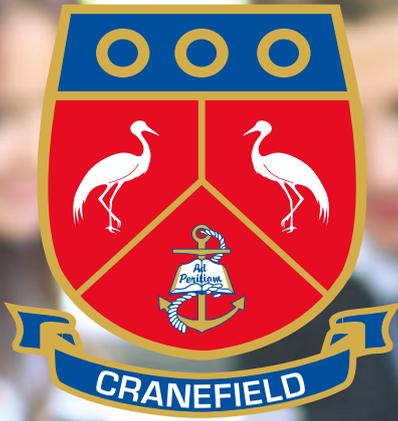
All these statistics are proof that HIV is a serious epidemic in South Africa, which is affecting multiple lives. It was imperative that the prevention methods not only increased but became strategically designed to target those facing the greatest risk of infection.

PrEP is an effective tool to combat the spread of the disease. PrEP can stop HIV from taking hold and spreading throughout the body. It is highly effective for preventing HIV if used as prescribed but is much less effective when not taken consistently. Daily PrEP reduces the risk of getting HIV from sexual intercourse by more than 90%.

In 2017, it was estimated that between 30 000 and 35 000 individuals were being targeted with PrEP in ongoing and planned projects across South Africa.

The NSP 2017–2022 aims to expand this so that PrEP becomes available to all those who are most likely to benefit, including adolescents, sex workers, MSM and people who inject drugs. They predict that more people from the most affected groups will be initiated onto PrEP by 2022. 

Tavonga Jacqueline Manyonga



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Provocative research

Breaking boundaries in South African healthcare

Scientific research is revolutionising healthcare in South Africa and across the globe. The CEO and President of the South African Medical Research Council (SAMRC), Professor Glenda Gray, has just been re-elected for an unprecedented second term.



She elaborates on how they are using science to change the world. Prof. Gray spent much of her career as a Paediatrician, Clinician, Researcher and activist based at Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital, in Soweto, where she co-founded the Perinatal HIV Research Unit (PHRU).

Prof. Gray is the Protocol Chair of two large HIV vaccine trials conducted in Sub-Saharan Africa with the HIV Vaccine Trials Network, HVTN 702 and HVTN 705. PHRU is one of the trial sites enrolling for HVTN 705.

"I am an accidental Scientist. When I started my career in medicine, I just wanted to be a Doctor," she explains.

Fate, however, had other ideas. Her career led her to the forefront of fighting for the right HIV treatment for babies as a Paediatrician and, today, to the highest chair of the SAMRC. Her moral imperative and groundbreaking efforts in health in the country culminated in her receiving South Africa's highest honour, The Order of Mapungubwe, and her research in the prevention of mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT) has transformed healthcare in South Africa and the rest of the world.

Please could you provide us with a brief background of yourself?

I started off as a Doctor, as a Paediatrician. I had no intention of ever becoming a Scientist. I wanted to train doctors and paediatricians. Then HIV happened,

during medical school and during my training as a specialist—I was working in progressive health structures. During my training, HIV became evident in our hospitals, though it was still rare at the time. Gradually, it grew from being an exotic disease to being in every third child and, soon, we had all these babies that were infected. They were dying and we could not do anything about it. My first research project was based on stopping mother-to-child transmission. We knew that a third of the transmission was through breastfeeding. My scientific research was quite provocative because, at that stage, we had no drugs, and women could choose to breastfeed (ultimately, transmitting the disease if infected). If they bottle-fed their babies, there was a big possibility that they could still die of diarrhoea. I conducted a study in Soweto between 1992 and 1993, when the HIV epidemic was starting to take off. We explained to the women what was going to happen, telling them that they had to make a decision to either breastfeed or bottle feed. We would monitor babies that were not being breastfed in order to understand what

caused their death; whether it was diarrhoea or due to HIV for those who were breastfed. The study was controversial at the time because at that stage, the World Health Organisation (WHO) was saying that women in poor countries who were infected with HIV needed to breastfeed their babies. My issue at the time was that these women were essentially not being given a choice in the matter. I believed in making informed decisions as opposed to dictating without context. Once antiretroviral drugs came along we could use them to prevent mother-to-child transmission. My work in science was based on a moral and ethical imperative, rather than "I want to be a scientist". I saw just how powerful science was. It enabled us to challenge policymakers at the Constitutional Court through articles, publications and tangible empirical evidence. This is why I love science so much—it is the evidence we need to change the world. That's how I became addicted to science.

How did your role at the SAMRC materialise?

The SAMRC requires a medical doctor, who is proficient in science, to lead the division

of science in South Africa. There comes a time in your life when you have to put your own individual science interests aside to pursue the science interests of the country. There is a time in your life when you have to give back—it is my time to do so, which is why I joined the SAMRC. At one stage, the organisation was going through a lot of tumultuous costs. Since its founding in 1969, it was a bloated organisation, conducting mediocre research. We didn't have enough money and there was a review calling for it to be closed down. But the Minister of Health at the time knew that the SAMRC could be a powerful instrument, in improving the health of South Africans. Through the headhunting process, my name kept on coming up, so they approached me. I became the first female President of the SAMRC. I came in five years ago, this is my second term. I am the first President, since democracy, to be offered a second term. I've got the best job in the country because I have the opportunity to help determine a vision of medical science for South Africa. We take the 10 most prominent causes of death in South Africa and then design a programme of science formulating solutions. I cannot find a job that is as profound as this which, simultaneously, has such a strong impact on orchestrating how medical science is conducted in South Africa.

How has your job as a Paediatrician helped you manage your role as the President?

Looking back, being a Paediatrician enabled me to develop a lot of empathy and compassion. Being involved in medicine in South Africa, I saw the differences between the diseases of the poor and the elite first-hand, and dealt with that injustice within the system. Being a woman, a mother and a Paediatrician, I saw diseases, which should have been eradicated in the 10th century, causing deaths in the country. It made me angry about the state of health in South Africa. Working with HIV-infected women and their children, watching the mother or one of my child patients die was devastating. The positive stories also left an indelible

mark on me. Seeing some patients survive from a young age to living fulfilling lives filled me with immense happiness.

Under your guidance, what are your values and aims within the organisation?

There are four co-aims. Our mission is to fund and conduct research that changes the lives of South Africans. We do this by using our money wisely, firstly, by ensuring that our team is very lean and by giving money to scientists. The money is disbursed in such a way that the bulk goes to science and very little goes to administration. Anything we fund has to impact South Africans, from drug discovery to policy. The work should be aimed at changing the burden of disease. We are also interested in funding innovation, finding vaccines, diagnostics and finding easy ways to diagnose people in the community. Building the pipeline of scientists is another major objective. Doing so will replenish and create capacity within the organisation. When I came to the SAMRC, one of the things I wanted to focus on was building a pipeline that is diverse—looking at gender parity—that funded African scientists and that looked at all areas, rural and urban. I wanted to create a pipeline of scientists who are geographically diverse. When I came to the SAMRC, we were funding mostly white men at UCT. We started changing our strategy and, now, most of the people we fund are women and the majority are black African scientists.

Can you please elaborate on some of the breakthroughs you've had?

The first is the Beijing Genome Institute (BGI). There was no whole-genome sequencing capability in Africa, so we always had to send all our genes outside to be analysed. Thus, we collaborated with the BGI to build the first genome institute in Africa. The lab has been built and we are about to launch it—that's a great achievement because it is going to leapfrog our ability to understand the genetic response to drugs, why certain drugs work and others don't for various populations.

When I joined the SAMRC, I was worried that the institute was not doing enough research in terms of maternal and child health and I was looking for an innovation that could help us prevent stillbirths. We came up with Doppler technology. This device can be put on a pregnant woman's stomach to measure the blood flow, and just by doing so, you can pick up whether babies are at risk of death or not. We invested R4 million in the development and delivery of new and affordable antibiotic treatments for drug-resistant neonatal sepsis and sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Conducted by the Global Antibiotic Research and Development Partnership (GARDP), the clinical research studies aim to have a treatment for drug-resistant gonorrhoea registered in a number of countries, including South Africa, and to develop two new treatments for neonatal sepsis. We also funded Iyeza Health through our Grants, Innovation and Product Development (GIPD) Unit. The innovator behind Iyeza created a network to dispense medicine in various locations. This has helped numerous individuals and is a key part of health product dispensation. The SAMRC supported Iyeza Health to build a mobile app system.

Since you have just started serving your second term, what is your vision for the next five years?

We don't have enough funds because people don't understand why investing in science is important. When you invest in medical research, you invest in the longevity of a person. This will increase the GDP or wealth of the nation. We are underfunded and this makes running the organisation difficult. We have increased our baseline. Last year, we brought in over a billion rand, but that's not enough. For the kind of science we want to do, it's minimal, given that it is amazing what we achieve. My focus is on capacity development and transformation in science. At the end of my five years, I want medical scientists in this country who are internationally recognised and who also represent the diversity within our country, because we don't have that at the moment. **BBQ**



Digitalisation and the rising rate of unemployment in the banking sector

The banking sector and retrenchments: what is really happening in South Africa? Is it an opportunity for new positions or redundancies across businesses?

The South African Banking Sector is becoming increasingly competitive as more people across the globe adopt the smartphone trend. According to PWC's Analysis of Major Banks, software trends are in charge of directing the financial services landscape.

2019 is likely to be heralded as the year of the customer in South African banking, with so many viable options to choose from, digitally savvy entrants are the future of banking. What does this mean for the major banks in South Africa like the Absa Group and Standard bank, who have been on top using the more traditional systems and are not as digitally savvy?

In 2017, Vikram Pandit, the former CEO of City Group, forecast that robots would take over 30% of global banking jobs within five years. At that time, this amounted to about 1 million jobs in Europe and 770 000 in the United States, meaning it was only a matter of time before this wave hit Africa and South Africa. Job losses have escalated in Europe and now the South African banking retail sector is confronted with the same predicament.

The competition is higher than it has ever been in the South African financial services sector. With another new rival, TymeBank, being launched in February and two more expected to follow this year, Discovery Bank

and Bank Zero, the pressure is on for major banks like Absa Group and Standard Bank South Africa. These new banks are introducing new technology that is growing revenue while cutting operational costs. Research from South African Major Banks Analysis indicated the extent to which automation has affected the banking sector.

Three of the country's five largest banks have been quietly cutting staff, particularly in retail units, to drive down stubbornly high cost-to-income ratios. In the past year, Absa, Standard Bank and Nedbank have cut over 2 200 staff in their South African operations—across retail, corporate and investment banking and wealth units. In 2018, Absa reduced its headcount by 830 (net) to 30 819, Nedbank by 726 (net) to 28 260 and Standard Bank by 680 (net) to 31 662 in South Africa. The 2 236 decline equates to 2.4% of the total staff complement in the country across the three banks. These reductions are not surprising as efforts to reduce the number of branches (and total physical space occupied) ramp up and digitisation becomes entrenched.

Absa Group is restructuring its South African retail and business banking units. This comes after just reducing the division management team and rolling out a new strategy. The group commenced its new strategy, which came as a result of slow economic growth and a consumer base that

has been battered by tax hikes, rising fuel and utility expenses. This shakeup entailed job cuts in its top management, further working its way across the corporation as it cuts costs and reorganises to compete aggressively with other established banks that are digitally savvy.

The banks thriving because of being digitally savvy include FirstRand and Capitec. In contrast to Absa, they are actually adding staff. FirstRand says group headcount increased by 5% to over 47 000, although this number now includes the UK's Aldermore branch, which they acquired last year.

Absa's new strategy will affect about 15 retail banking executives. It entered into section 189 negotiations with the South African Society of Bank Officials (SASBO), with 827 jobs on the line. Absa's CEO, Arrie Rautenbach, after being appointed a year ago, is focusing on boosting mortgage lending money, lowering costs and expanding the number of products the bank sells to its clients. More than half of Absa's profit comes from retail and business accounts. The UK-based parent, Barclays sold down its controlling stake to below 15%. Their South African group cannot afford to suffer the same fate. The determination the bank has to regain the leadership position in retail banking has led them to find ways to lower its

cost-to-income ratio ahead of the market from next year. Successfully achieving this will lower the cost-to-income ratio to the 50s by 2021 from the current level of 58.7.

As part of restructuring its unit discussions between the bank, employees and union, SASBO revealed that 827 jobs are potentially at risk. On the other hand,

actions". In Standard Bank South Africa, the headcount reduced from 680 to 31 662. The group notes the increase in staff costs of 4% in 2018 and this was attributed to annual salary increases and separation costs in the information technology business

The strategy to grow earnings while reducing headcount (actively or passively)

Towards the end of December, their unit had 19 545 employees within its retail and business banking units. It further reduced its total headcount by 1 469 (mainly through natural attrition) and optimised its staff points of presence by closing 18 branches while maintaining their coverage of the bankable population at 84%.

As part of an ambitious plan to reduce its efficiency (cost-to-income) ratio, it is implementing a "target operating model" that will achieve R1 billion in cumulative savings this year. It has already achieved savings of R680 million. The cuts aren't only coming in the area of frontline staff, or even in the retail bank, but point to ongoing headcount reduction in back-and-middle-office optimisation.

The bank previously said that software robots could replace up to 3 000 jobs through natural attrition. "With about 32 000 staff, our natural attrition rate is about 3 000 per year. When we look at a three-year period, we don't think that robotics will take up more than one year of that natural attrition," explained CIO, Fred Swanepoel, at the end of 2018. Nedbank's model is effectively reducing the cost-to-income ratio while maintaining its bank population.

This all serves as evidence that banks are on the path to evolving their strategies because of heightened competition. Using different models to achieve the same objective, which is to digitally transform their already existing systems, ultimately, the ultimate goal is increasing revenue while lowering the cost-to-income ratio. This poses as both an opportunity for those who are willing to upskill to beat their competition and redundancy to those who are not willing to digitise at a pace that is fast enough for their consumers.

The most unfortunate thing is the extent to which these new strategies are adding to the already high unemployment rate in South Africa. But it is a necessary evil for banks that want to remain competitive. Being digitally savvy is the only way to stay ahead of your competition. **BBQ**

Babington Maravanyika



340 people might reportedly be employed through this process.

In comments to the media earlier this year, a representative of Absa noted, "Once the realignment is complete and the total number of people who have either been appointed to new roles or have left the organisation is known with certainty the changes will result in both new opportunities and redundancies across the business". He also described the moves as; "not a retrenchment exercise, but a realignment effort aimed at enabling their new strategy."

Standard Bank says the net headcount for the group declined by approximately 900 people, "it is a combination of natural attrition, digital efficiencies and management

is firmly embedded among most players in the local banking environment. They will use earnings to measure efficiency headway generated per employee. Standard Bank said it would cut around 1 200 jobs and close 91 branches as "part of efforts to digitise its retail and business bank".

The bank says this has not been an easy decision to make. Standard Bank South Africa added that it would implement a "comprehensive exit package" that goes beyond the legal requirements. Sadly, this comes at a time where job cuts are sensitive in South Africa, as unemployment stands at 27%.

Unlike Absa and Standard Bank, Nedbank initially reduced headcount by 698 last year, largely through natural attrition.

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In Tshabalala's shoes

The serial entrepreneur behind *Melusi's Everyday Zulu* and other business ventures

Melusi Tshabalala has been involved in the business of language for 21 years, ever since entering advertising as a Junior Copywriter in 1998. It was there, in the very, very white world of advertising, that a language bug of a different kind began to bite him, sending him on a journey that would ultimately lead to the creation of a platform designed to bring South Africans together by breaching the language barrier.

"I was unhappy with how advertising treats non-English languages," says Tshabalala, who now has his own advertising agency, Studio 214.

"For a start, the advertising industry is extremely resistant to transformation. Support for small black agencies is very thin on the ground. It's not necessarily the fault of the agencies alone—it's the marketing departments of corporate firms in South Africa that decide which agencies they want to work with, and they usually choose to continue to work with multinationals. But more than that, the advertising agency has tended to treat African languages as poor relations, skimping on quality control in a way that short-changes the public," he says.

These observations were set out in an article that Tshabalala wrote in 2017 presenting a rational argument for the transformation of language policy within advertising.

"The bulk of radio ads go to African language advertising. However, once

the copywriter and creative director have recorded the English ad, the creative input ceases. The people who are invested in the campaign are no longer in the studio. This means that although the ad is translated into other languages—and the quality of translation has improved over the years—the overall quality is compromised because decisions are made by people who don't know anything about the target language or culture. Sometimes, I'll be driving and an ad comes on the radio where the voice artist is just wrong—they've got a Sesotho speaker to do an isiZulu ad and the voice artist gets the pronunciation wrong, killing the ad's credibility. Marketers are spending millions on products without quality control. A lot of ads are literally a turn-off for the radio listener," he explains.

In the end, Tshabalala decided not to publish the article for fear of making things difficult for himself within the industry, but he still felt compelled to do something for African languages. He started off by using his personal Facebook page "to tell a funny story every day about an isiZulu word that would inspire peers to look beyond English".

Tshabalala's sense of humour, which varies from the sly and the dry to the side-splittingly funny, resonated so strongly with his peers (a disproportionate number of whom are in advertising) that he opened a separate page dedicated to this pursuit—and so, *Melusi's Everyday Zulu* was born. Apart from the Facebook page,

which recently passed the 10 000 mark, there is also a book of the same title, "an anthology of isiZulu words, stories, jokes and observations", that includes material not found online.

Soon enough, readers were requesting that Tshabalala do something to enable them to reach the next level—that is, actually begin learning the language. An entrepreneur at heart, Tshabalala gamely accepted the challenge and launched an educational product.

Now, *Melusi's Everyday Zulu* also exists in the form of face-to-face and online language courses developed by



his business partner, Anthropologist and isiZulu Practitioner, Thenjiwe Mwase. The first course was completed in May, with overwhelmingly positive feedback.

“People said they used to be scared to interact with language, but now they have gained an appetite for it,” he enthuses. Although the project is still in the pilot stage, with 50 online subscribers, Tshabalala is confident that with the right marketing effort (such as his featured appearances on Kaya FM and East Coast Radio) this number will grow to 500 in six months.

“It’s a beginner course, so people are learning and experiencing the language for

the first time. They are breaking through the barrier of fear.

“The Apartheid system did something to white South Africans so that they are scared of things that aren’t scary at all—it created an entire population of people who are scared of the ‘other’. As a result, they are losing out on a lot.

“Diversity is beauty. Killing a language kills the uniqueness of the people. We become homogenous where we should celebrate our differences, highlight and protect them,” he explains.

Tshabalala’s book also reflects his experience as a contemporary urban Zulu man.

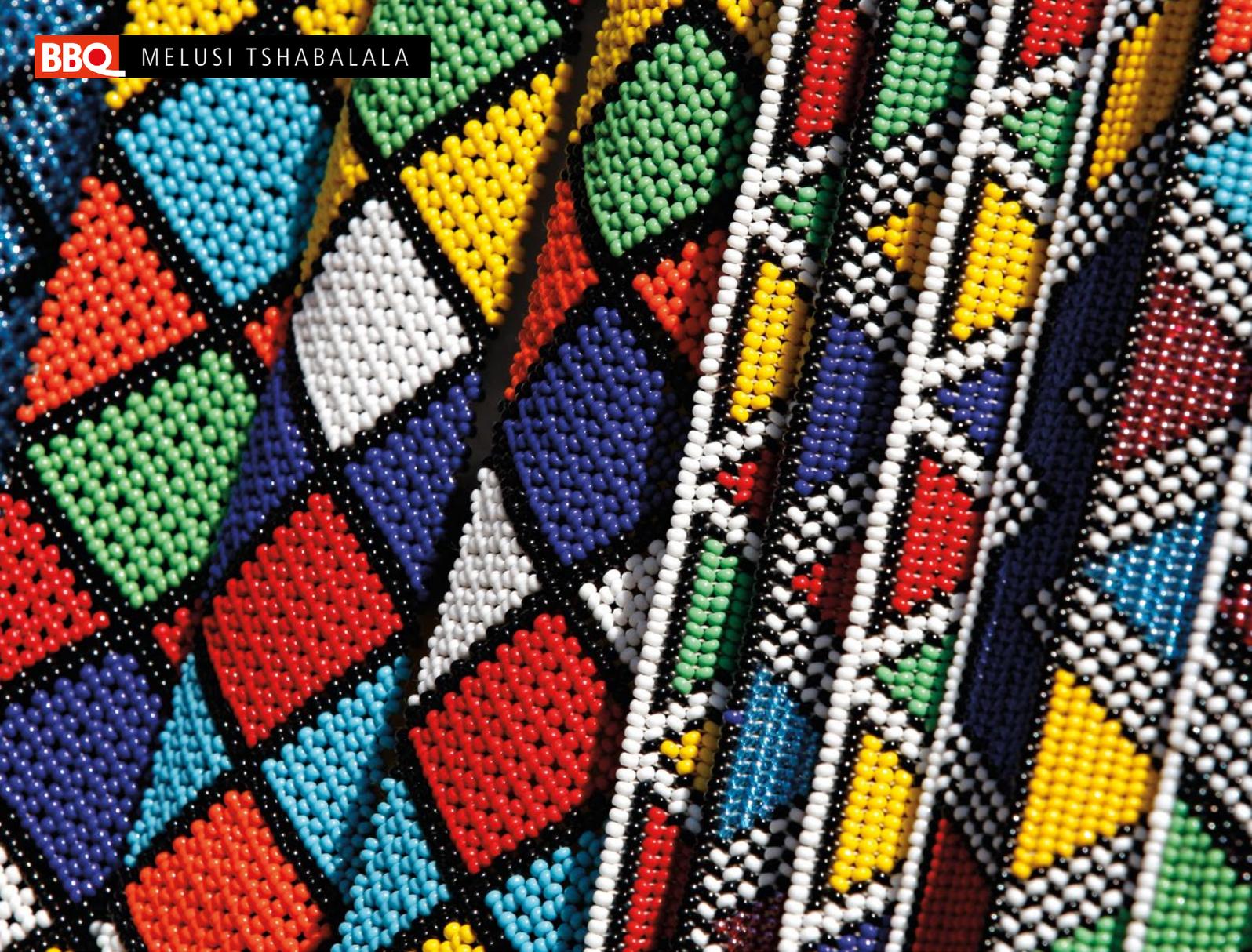
For the classical isiZulu of the old prophets and kings, apply elsewhere.

“I am very clear that I am Joburg based. I write about isiZulu, I experience it as umZulu (a Zulu person) navigating the world in the 21st century.

“There’s no reason why somebody else shouldn’t do a classical book, though,” he says.

Learners need not fear, however, the teaching courses are in classic isiZulu, fit for purpose anywhere isiZulu is spoken.

A major potential growth area for *Melusi’s Everyday Zulu* is in the corporate space, where companies that put their



employees through the course stand to benefit considerably.

Asked what business advantages a knowledge of isiZulu confers, Tshabalala quips, “You will know when people are gossiping about you.” Then, more seriously: “People tell me that when they try out the words and phrases I write about at work, the barriers between people automatically start coming down. Simply by making the effort to use another person’s language, you show and gain respect—which translates into a much more trusting and accepting work environment.”

Given sufficient corporate uptake, the potential for scalability is clear. Naturally, this would entail taking on additional tutors and developing additional course material, creating jobs that are sorely needed in today’s economic climate.

The role of language in fostering sustainability deserves to receive much more attention than it has to date.

Tshabalala’s vision extends beyond his own mother tongue.

“I’m currently in talks with other writers, whose styles I like, who speak and write in different languages, not just isiZulu. There deserves to be an Everyday Sotho, an Everyday Shangaan, and so on, for all,” he says.

Breaking down silos in a different way is an initiative carried out by Tshabalala and Afrikaans Journalist, Jo Prins, called Ubudlelwano, a word that means “relationship” and “relates to meeting and breaking bread and sharing a meal together”.

“On the first Saturday of every month, we get people from all walks of life to meet up in Melville so that we can all

break down the walls that contribute to fear and mistrust of each other,” Tshabalala says.

“We’ve had 10 so far and now we’ve started bringing in guest speakers. We’ve had Ruda Landman and Stoa from Bongo Maffin, and we’re looking to bring in others like the Nelson Mandela Foundation,” he says.

Ubudlelwano takes place at the conference and events venue known as chiesa di PAZZO LUPi.

Food is available from Kholiwe’s Studio Kitchen, a joint venture between serial entrepreneur Tshabalala and his business partner at Studio 214. Attendance is free and participants are welcome to bring their own drinks. **BBQ**

Greg Penfold

EXTRACT 1

LINDA

Linda is a popular Nguni name. It's used by both genders, but when a girl or woman is called Linda, we never know whether she is a Nguni or a European Linda.

Speaking of European Lindas, the first time I encountered a white Linda I honestly thought her parents had given her a Nguni name, like the Thandis and Tandis I know. Then I encountered a Lynda and thought she'd also been given a Nguni name, but her parents just wanted to give it a twist that would ensure that those who read it immediately knew she was white.

That's important for things like renting property. It was a real shock to discover that Linda is also a completely stand-alone European name.

I still don't know what it means, though. Does it have a meaning? Anyway, I've decided that all white South African Lindas and Lyndas

are really using the Nguni Linda. In isiZulu, a Nguni language, Linda means to wait or be patient. This means Linda and Patience are the same name.

Since black names are so difficult to say, we should rename all white Lindas 'Patience' to make it easy for their friends, family and even themselves to say.

White Linda, you'll seriously make everyone's life so much easier by calling yourself Patience. You can still use Linda when you're with black people, but not with whites. You don't want your loved ones to hurt themselves trying to say your complicated Bantu name, do you? Exactly.

Don't fight me on this. It's worked for black people for hundreds of years. You'll see, it will do wonders for you.

Black Lindas can remain Linda.



EXTRACT 2

IDLOZI

Idlozi is an ancestor.

Amadlozi is the plural of idlozi. Amadlozi are those who came before us and who now guide us, protecting us from the spirit world. They can also be a pain in the ass. No, amadlozi are not ghosts or evil spirits. And no, you cannot dress your kid as idlozi to go trick or treating on Halloween. Even though Christianity is now the dominant religion in South Africa, amadlozi are still an important part of life for a significant portion of the Zulu population. I have questions about this aspect of (after)life:

Does everyone who passes on become idlozi? I certainly hope not.

How long does it take you to become idlozi after you've passed? Is it one moment you're doing the Vosho, the next the Vosho kills you, and boom! you're idlozi? Or is there a waiting period? I suggest a waiting period and proper vetting.

Is it possible to have idlozi with low self-esteem who thinks your dreams are too big? I know some people who'd be this kind of idlozi.

What if you were just plain stupid while roaming the earth? Do you immediately gain otherworldly wisdom, or do you become a stupid dlozi?

What if you worked really hard while on earth and just want to rest once you're on the other side? Do the other amadlozi give you dirty looks and talk behind your back until you feel so bad that you relent and then become one of those grumpy dlozis who complicate people's lives? You know those ones.

Do you have amadlozi who are overly enthusiastic, sticking their noses in other clans' matters? Does the spirit world ever hear, 'Hayi [redacted], Macingwane, man.[Redacted], ndoda. Fall back!'

Has idlozi ever said, 'Hayi,[redacted]. Awachithwe lamanzi, ayikho lenkukhu'? One of yours probably has.

What if your descendants are Model C's and reach out to you in English? Do you just pretend you're not there?

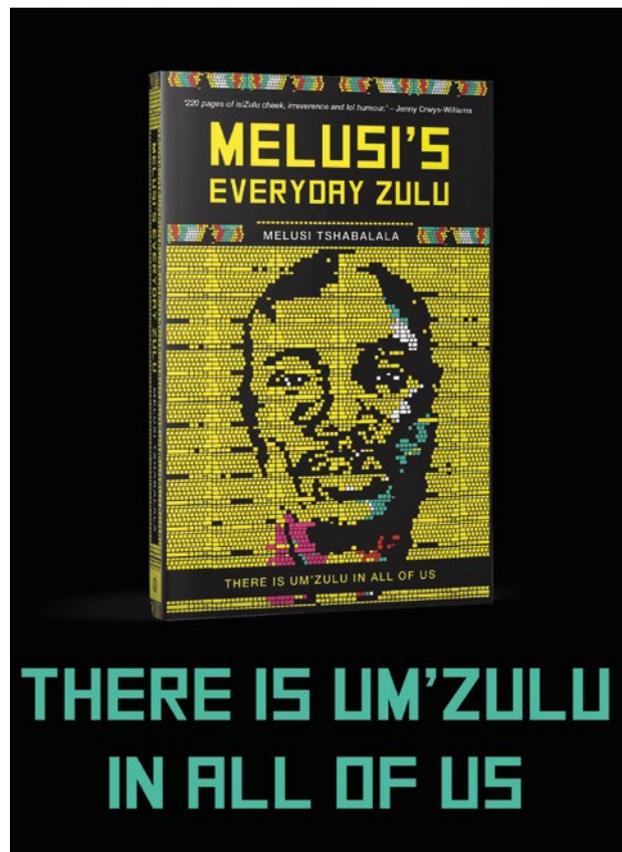
What if your descendants are reaching out to you about really dumb [redacted]? Do you care if they want a man with a car?

Is there a dlozi app that keeps amadlozi updated on what the kids on earth are yapping to them about? Is the app called iDlozi? Do you consult iDlozi when a spoilt brat is upset he doesn't have Netflix?

How often do amadlozi facepalm because people have become so entitled and keep wanting more?

Do amadlozi recognise their descendants through layers and layers of make-up, amashiya (eyebrows) on fleek and Brazilian weaves?

What if the dlozi who loves you the most became idlozi because he was killed by Apartheid police, but now you're marrying an Afrikaner? Does idlozi turn on you, or are amadlozi not petty?



If you find this post disrespectful, take it up with amadlozi akini. Mine are fine with it. In fact, your ancestors reached out to my ancestors to get them to ask me to write this in the hope that you might see it and stop your [redacted]. Sho, dlozi.

Dlozi is also a term of endearment and a playful way of saying someone is [redacted] old.

PS: With so many black people having abandoned the African ways in favour of 'more modern' approaches, some amadlozi are extremely lonely, including those who were abandoned hundreds of years ago. To tackle this problem, I have set up an initiative called Adopt-Idlozi.

For a nominal fee, Adopt-Idlozi gives white people access to amadlozi they can claim as their own. To mitigate the risk of dlozi abuse, I run a strict vetting process and assign people amadlozi suited specifically to them. If you get a nyaope dlozi, I surely picked up something about you that says you deserve that kind of dlozi in your life. Inbox me for banking details.



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Funerals, finance and family

Edwin Anderson, the founder and CEO of Zororo-Phumulani, discusses the business of funerals and helping the people during one of the most emotional periods of their lives

Anderson was born in Harare, Zimbabwe in the early 1980s to a driver and a janitor. Life wasn't easy and his parents struggled to afford schooling. Anderson says that university was worse as he couldn't even afford notebooks but would make his notes on used paper. This didn't stop him, in fact, it motivated him to work harder and he became the first in his clan to have a university education. "Education is the only way to escape poverty," says Anderson.

Whilst growing up, he was given the opportunity to work in his uncles' small to medium businesses in Zimbabwe. Due to Anderson's work ethic and dedication, he was slowly but surely given more important roles and duties. He says: "I was given more responsibility because my uncles knew that I would get the job done without grumbling or moaning." In addition to the hands-on experience, Anderson is grateful for the exposure to the various elements and departments in a business.

Following Anderson's move to South Africa in 2009, armed with a business degree, the only job he was able to secure was that of a waiter. Raised by entrepreneurs, Anderson, too, has that spirit. In 2010, he started a clothing company with very little capital, however, the shop was burgled and, thereafter, Anderson gave that up. One of the most valuable lessons he learnt whilst waiting was that of customer

service. He explains that in Zimbabwe, due to the shortages, the supplier was in control, yet, in South Africa, the customer is king. This was a milestone in his personal and professional journey.

Noticing how people struggled after the death of a loved one, Anderson was thinking of ways he could assist his countrymen and women living in South Africa. Taking action, Anderson started Zororo-Phumulani.

The business of death

Anderson started Zororo-Phumulani as a means to assist in the desperate times, following the death of a loved one. He started as a sole proprietor and, following about six months of research, he realised that he needed a license to operate this type of business, which he rented until 2015. As the business grew, Anderson realised he would need to change his strategy, thus, he sold some of his shareholdings and registered Zororo-Phumulani as a full business entity.

The journey continued when, whilst selling policies, his customers continually asked him what would happen to their policies, should he decide to go back to Zimbabwe. He found a partner in Zimbabwe to honour these policies in order to ease the minds of his clients, but this partnership was dissolved due to trust issues. He then managed to secure a partnership with Doves Zimbabwe. This partnership ensures that clients who return to Zimbabwe are still covered by their policies.

In 2016, Zororo-Phumulani used sub-contractors for the repatriation process but in 2017, they brought this in-house and registered with the Financial Services Board in order to become a financial services provider.

From a sole proprietor, Anderson has grown the business exponentially. "Apart from being the preferred funeral service provider for state funerals, we have risen to be the unparalleled leader in the funeral services industry in Zimbabwe and the Sub-Saharan region, providing repatriation services to our clients in South Africa," he says.

Building success

Anderson has simple views on how to reach success. He says it is all based on reputation and relationships, whilst delivering on promises.

Zororo-Phumulani was grown through Anderson's tenacity and strong work ethic—building trust amongst his client base, building the reputation of the business and developing and maintaining strong relationships is what drives the business. He says that money is secondary, building relationships is the primary driver behind human behaviour and, therefore, consumer behaviour.

One element that truly sets Zororo-Phumulani apart from the bigger companies in this space is the cultural understanding of its client base. Having been founded by a Zimbabwean, the Zimbabwean cultural requirements are not new to Anderson. Tailor-making products

to suit these requirements is a unique selling point for Zororo-Phumulani. The funeral policies and repatriation services offered might not be the cheapest on the market, says Anderson, but they are able to react to the changing needs of their client base swiftly, they Zdeliver on promises, and value customer service immensely.

Anderson is not one to back away from a challenge and his vision is to grow ZororoPhumulani to become the leader in funeral financing and repatriation. Further down the line, he envisions the business becoming a listed entity, taking over from Cape To Cairo, and owning residential and commercial properties.

Anderson's view is that you can't be in a business if there is no passion. "Our business is emotional and we need to be sensitive to the needs of our customers," and in this respect, Anderson firmly believes in politeness. ZororoPhumulani is also very focused on eradicating patriarchy and employs more females than males.

Another aspect, which Anderson is adamant about, is that of not taking failures, complaints and suggestions for granted. He believes that they enable us to identify our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. He says that when a person identifies something as a strength, the natural progression is to continue building on it. In the same vein, he believes that being made aware of threats and weaknesses provides an opportunity for growth.

For example, only focusing on the Zimbabwean market was limiting, and he noticed that other foreign nationals were having the same issues, and they are now broadening their customer base. In addition, the South African market has needs that aren't being met. As Anderson explains, in Zimbabwe, the supply of buses for the mourners is the norm, and now ZororoPhumulani is able to provide this service to the local customer base.

Receiving feedback post a funeral or repatriation is where Zororo-Phumulani finds these insights. They are one of the few funeral companies with a Customer Experience Officer, and this alone shows the uniqueness of the business model.



Anderson is very proud of two major milestones in the business' journey, one being that Zororo-Phumulani was the company who repatriated the body of the Zimbabwean Morgan Tsvangirai from South Africa, and the most recent is that they were named Business of the Year 2016 in the Zimbabwe Excellence Awards.

Challenges

Anderson is quite candid when he explains that, although social media is responsible for 60% of their client base, social media is also the biggest challenge. He says that everyone is a publisher and misinformation spreads quickly. Therefore, managing a company's reputation online is very difficult, especially one in the emotive field of loss.

Another challenge Anderson has faced is that as the business grows, it becomes difficult to know what's going on at all branches, at all times. His solution was to manage this growth through committees. He doesn't chair

them but when he is available, he attends the meetings. This gives him access to the day-to-day information, as well as the opportunity to meet and interact with junior staff.

Effective leadership

Anderson says that his leadership is based on delegation and trust. The more his business grows, the more he has had to delegate. He also believes that by delegating, a business owner is not giving up power, but is learning from others. "Most people think they have a monopoly on ideas but when tasks are delegated, they might find that the other person knows how to perform the task more efficiently," he says.

A strong team is the backbone of any business. Anderson says that he is only as strong as his team and he can only guide them, but they do most of the work, while he can focus on the strategic vision of the business. **BBQ**

POSTGRADUATE STUDIES WITH THE FUTURE IN MIND

Considering postgraduate studies? To invest time, energy, finances, perhaps putting a promising career on hold, and asking for sacrifices from your close relations – all this must surely add up to considerable reward, or why bother? Small wonder we involve our full circle, our family, friends, lecturers, industry professionals and mentors. These conversations can be invaluable – apart from the support you may get, the questions about your reasons for wanting to further yourself will challenge you. But the clarity and insights that you gain can be of great help to distinguish between productive and potentially counterproductive reasons for pursuing a specific programme. Consider two of the most compelling reasons to pursue postgraduate studies, as well as red-flagging the merits or demerits of their counter-arguments:

Reason #1: passion and engagement

Postgraduate studies allow you to delve deeper and gather more in-depth knowledge within the field. Advanced study develops the required mental agility to synthesise information, to produce compelling arguments, and to analyse and conceive meaningful solutions to challenges. Deep engagement is both fruitful and rewarding, but only if your interest, and perhaps even passion, is genuine. Without this approach to the field, the work is inevitably laborious, tedious and demotivating.

Enrol for the postgraduate programme of your choice when you have no doubts that you are genuinely compelled by the complexities and challenges of the field and its relation to the world around you. You may find you naturally incline to the themes and issues of relevance to your field whenever and wherever they appear. It may be current affairs, news about industry projects or even the plot of a TV series. The ideal postgraduate programme should then enable you to involve yourself in your field of choice to the fullest extent while honing your abilities and skills. It should also expose you to unique opportunities to apply advanced thinking to practice, to work on real-life briefs and projects, and ideally participate in transdisciplinary teams.

Reason #2: the network

Do not disregard the value of connections. Lifelong networks comprising of your peers, expert lecturers and industry thought leaders are a major feature of postgraduate programmes. This benefit is particularly true for programmes where the faculty or academic staff are active in, and highly regarded for their involvement in industry. Even more so when they navigate outside academia on behalf of their students. Programmes that provide direct contact and open conversations help students to build meaningful relationships with industry practitioners, thought leaders and of course the alumni. A postgraduate programme designed with the future in mind will undoubtedly build a network of collaborators who will continue to soundboard and work together on projects, even and especially as personal goals and careers evolve.

These two motivations are interdependent in many ways. Posited as a counterargument, why would anyone pursue postgraduate studies in a field you may be lukewarm about, or engage with individuals with little or no common interests? Embarking on this venture would then be a waste of intellect, energy and resources – not only of yourself, but also those of peers, specialist tutors and just about anyone else involved. Here we have the crux of the matter: what sets further education apart? It involves so much more than merely a perceived advance to a job or promotion. Rather, it is a lifelong pursuit of personal growth, developing and strengthening collaborative relationships – and achieving collective changemaking. You should invest yourself in postgraduate studies because the field is of significance to you, and if your contribution matters to you.

**Dr Carla Enslin, Vega Co-founder
Head of Strategy & New Business Development**



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The Johannesburg Literary District





People fall in love with Jozi for different reasons. For Griffin Shea, American Journalist, bibliophile and proprietor of Bridge Books on Marshall Street, it has been an affair of the heart that has seen him change his career and dedicate his time and energy to uplifting the inner city and, above all, the people who make a living from supplying the city's avid readers with the reading material that they treasure.

Among other things, he started a walking tour taking curious tourists around what is now known as the Johannesburg Literary District, meeting dealers and learning about the seemingly chaotic but actually tremendously productive milieu they share with thousands of Jozi's other denizens. The walk proved exceptionally popular and the Johannesburg Development Agency (JDA) recently included the tour in its Jozi Walks programme. Thanks to Shea, the Literary District is firmly on the map.

How did you switch from a flourishing career in journalism to bookselling—and why in downtown Johannesburg?

I came to Johannesburg in 2008, as a Journalist for Agence France-Presse. I spent 13 years with them, all over the world, but once my family settled in Joburg, we decided we didn't want to move again. When my posting here was over, I needed to reboot and, essentially, I accidentally fell into the world of books. I went back to school at Wits and was amazed at how difficult it was to find local books. At the same time, my oldest son was getting into the reading age and almost all of the children's books were about white kids—a fact that was not missed by him or his friends. On storybook day, when the kids at school had to choose a character to dress as, he would choose a soccer player because he couldn't think of a storybook character that looked like him. That's heartbreaking. So,

I decided to explore around Park Station and see if there was anyone selling books there, people who might have different kinds of books or to see if I could set up a bookstore around there. There are a million passengers a day at Park Station, so it's a huge potential market. That's how I started meeting all the urban booksellers who, it turns out, had no access to mainstream publishing. I started the bookstore downtown to keep supplying them with books on a wholesale basis, but the retail side of Bridge Books has kept growing too.

What is the change that you are trying to make?

Bookstores are different from normal shops. They're community anchors and they say something about the neighbourhood that they're in. They are spaces where people can linger, talk and step out of the world for a little while. We're trying to point out the positive things happening in the city—the small businesses thriving or the students going to school every day and stopping to browse books on their way home. There's a theory that the things we pay attention to grow. If we have an itch that we can't scratch, paying attention to it makes it itchier. If we can think about something else, the itch doesn't seem so bad. If we can pay attention to the good things happening in the city, then we'll think more about how to make good things grow.

We've started a new partnership with the Johannesburg Development Agency to create a Literary District downtown. The Lit District will pull together all the bookish activities in the city centre, from the library to bookstores to small booksellers, and create a common platform to promote the city's book heritage and culture.

What other businesses in the CDB do you respect?

For years, Gerald Garner has been doing amazing things with JoburgPlaces and the gorgeous new Scatterlings Restaurant

on Gandhi Square. The Urban Agriculture Initiative is transforming rooftops into hydroponic farms and selling the produce to shops on the street level. Oresti Patricios' company, Ornico, bought the old Natal Bank building and moved its headquarters there.

That's a huge vote of confidence in the CBD. Dicky's Cakes is an amazing success story, founded by Dikeledy Lethea and now with locations around the city.

What advice would you have for somebody trying to start their own business downtown?

Do it. Like anywhere else, spend some time to figure out your audience. And get involved in the neighbourhood. That makes everything easier.

I understand you're doing research on the underground book trade in Johannesburg?

I'm writing a PhD at Wits about how the underground book trade works. Hopefully, this will be a starting point for learning more about all the different book cultures in

South Africa and a means of finding ways to bridge the gap with mainstream publishing.

What kinds of business models have you identified among the booksellers of Johannesburg?

There are several—most work as swap-and-sell businesses in second-hand books, which doesn't mean that they're necessarily cheap books. Some are very cheap, like R20, but others could cost more than what you'd pay in a mall. It's all about supply and demand. Many sell more than one product, so there are a lot of fashion/book stores plus a few hair salons and spaza shops that also sell books.

There's a large import trade of books from Nigeria, especially religious books. Books stolen from shopping malls or libraries also end up in the underground trade, but that's a fairly small fraction of the total.

Why is it not a problem for Nigerian writers to be pirated?

It depends on the author. For Nigerian publishers working from a traditional business

model, they don't want to be pirated at all. But the religious authors seem to see their books as part of their marketing efforts, so they're not necessarily looking to turn a profit on the sales.

To what extent are books considered a valuable commodity among the communities that these sellers serve?

Books are wildly valuable, which is why so many people can make a living selling them. There are almost 80 booksellers downtown, mostly in the one kilometre between Park Station and Gandhi Square. Local books are in short supply, so they're especially valuable. You rarely see copies of Steve Biko, Niq Mhlongo or Yewande Omotoso, for example, in the second-hand market, because people value them and don't sell their copies.

What proportion of underground booksellers are from other countries and what accounts for this?

About three-fourths of them are migrants from around Africa. Partly, I think that's because they brought their business models with them from countries that have a longer experience in open markets—like what we now have on Joubert Street. And partly, it's because foreigners may feel safer living in the CBD than in the townships.

In what ways have your ideas about readers in Gauteng changed?

I've learnt so much about who reads and what they read. I met a man with no front teeth, in workers' overalls, looking through books for sale. It turns out he runs a bookstore out of his home in Orange Farm, and he was looking for copies of Marlon James' *A Brief History of Seven Killings*, which won the Booker Prize. A book club met at his house and that was their book of the month. Lots of people are reading, or want to read, and we just haven't met them yet. Or they haven't found the right book yet.

What are some of the extraordinary challenges that these booksellers face on a daily basis?



There are huge logistical problems. Some are unbanked, so they struggle to order books through mainstream sources—if they even know what those sources are. There's a huge problem around storage and security, so many books are stored underground in parking garages, which can also lead to rain damage or even damage from rats. For the pavement vendors, weather and shoplifting are problems as well.

What is the historical significance of book clubs in Johannesburg?

Book clubs and private libraries were the first systems for sharing books in the city. By 1890, Johannesburg had 11 booksellers, but private libraries grew up to allow groups of (mostly men) to import books and share within the club. One of the larger collections was donated to the city library to help start its initial collection. In the 1920s, the city also had a black-run library at the Bantu Men's Social Centre, an important social and cultural hub of its time. In the 1930s, the famed Zulu Writer, Herbert Dhlomo, took over the library and received books from US donations. Peter Abrahams was one of the librarians and in his biography, he writes about encountering black writers on the shelves who inspired his work.

What other projects are you involved in?

Our non-profit arm is called the African Book Trust, where we take donations to buy new, local books to give to schools and libraries. We mostly work through partners who run library programmes, to make sure that the books get put to good use, though we can give directly to schools or any library where books are shared. As part of that, we're working on fundraising to revive classic South African books that were banned or simply faded into the past, and we're creating new versions of traditional stories as modern picture books.

Our main project right now is the Lit District, which we're just beginning to collaborate on. We're working on ways to beautify Library Gardens and the surrounding streets, and to build Street Libraries—public sculptures that hold

If you're in downtown Johannesburg looking for things to do, Griffin Shea recommends:

Books, coffee, art: Start at Bridge Books for sure.

Food: Scatterlings Restaurant on Gandhi Square, Lahlous, Ben's Pizza and 21 Loveday. Rand Club now serves lunch to the public in their bar. Also visit James Findlay Collectables for antique maps, prints and books in the old theatre in the basement. Swallows Inn for Chinese food. R Jana's, 97 Commissioner for samosas, bunny chow and rotis. Urbanologi at 1Fox for high-concept, locally sourced, small plates. Snacks at Dickys Cakes.

Live entertainment: The Good Luck Bar at 1Fox, Market Theatre in Newtown and Bridge Books for films, poetry or book launches. Rand Club hosts opera and other classical evenings.

Sundowners: Rooftop at the Reef Hotel

Coffee: Flight at FNB City and Corner House at Commissioner and Simmonds for coffee under the stained glass dome.

Sights: The Standard Bank Gallery and the Johannesburg Library.

books for free use. The sculptures will hopefully also have directional signs, maps and information about the area's book history, along with a light source to help illuminate the streets at night. We're also looking at ways to design new carts for street vendors to safely store books. Ideally, the carts will have a power supply so traders can use credit card readers and be mobile so that they can set up at festivals, book fairs or other events to increase their sales.

Who are your allies in this venture?

The JDA is fantastic with support through their Our City/Our Block programme, and we have a great network of booksellers in the city. We're discussing how to work with the Johannesburg Inner City Partnership, and we're always talking with publishers, writers and other bookish types about how to work together. We're really trying to reach out to corporations and other businesses in the CBD to find ways of getting their support too.

As someone who is more familiar with the CBD than many, what, for you, are the most attractive aspects of downtown Johannesburg?

Johannesburg is full of amazing architecture. It's difficult to appreciate when you're driving, but if you have a chance to walk or ride the bus, it's a beautiful space, especially in our area around the historic core. The areas that need work are like in all big cities that are growing and changing quickly—especially around transportation and maintenance of public spaces. It's a huge challenge in a young country. The median age in South Africa is only 24, so we have all of these smart young people who are changing the way things work and looking for new ways of doing things.

Specifically, the main library is gorgeous, free, and a wonderful place to spend time. Chinatown has great food and 1Fox has a great microbrewery and gin distillery. 

Greg Penfold

A mineral processing and steel fabrication company committed to excellence



Linhleko Projects (Pty) Ltd is a 100% black-owned company founded with the mission of establishing an integrated steel fabrication and erection business (the Steel Division) as well as mineral processing operations and management business (the Mineral Processing Division). The two divisions, though distinct in nature, have the advantage of aligning the company to derive the maximum benefit across the entire value chain of its business.

"Linhleko is an artistic fusion of the words 'Linhle', denoting 'beautiful, great, awesome' in Nguni and 'ko', denoting company (co). In short, Linhleko stands for 'awesome company' and that is the spirit of its existence. Our vision is to redefine excellence in mineral processing and steel fabrication industries. We simply want to ensure excellence at all times," says Buang Moloto, the CEO.

"In line with our spirit, our values are captured through the acronym, AWESOME, and they are adaptability in changing environments, willingness to learn; excellence at all times; SHEQ first (safety, health, environment and quality); open engagement; making a difference in society, and empowering employees" he says.

Moloto holds over 20 years' experience in the mineral processing industry. Born in the Tlhabane Township, Rustenburg, in the North West, he completed his matric at HF Tlou High School in 1991 and joined JCI in 1992 as a Composite Trainee for Extraction Metallurgy.

"JCI unbundled in 1994 and I was assigned as an Anglo Platinum Metallurgy

Trainee. I obtained my National Higher Diploma in 1997 from the then Technikon Witwatersrand. I worked as an Anglo Platinum Graduate Metallurgist from 1997 and got progressively promoted to Concentrator Manager in 2007. I joined Xstrata Alloys in April 2008 as Group Manager: Platinum Concentrators," Moloto says of his professional journey.

He has achieved a Management Development Programme Certificate from Wits Business School and a Master of Business Administration Degree from De Montfort University in Leicester, United Kingdom. He was elected President of the Mine Metallurgical Managers Association of South Africa for the year 2013 – 2014. He has held various senior concentrator management positions at Anglo Platinum and Glencore before he decided to pursue his business ambitions.

"When I turned 40 in 2013, I felt it was time I started a new journey in life and so I resigned to pursue my business interests.

"As the Director of Linhleko Projects, I am responsible for providing the strategic direction of the company in terms of business development, forging strategic alliances and partnerships, acquiring financing for our projects, leading a motivated and effective management team, providing support to operations and engagements with the stakeholders (governments, communities, etc.).

"I continuously keep abreast of developments in my business environment by reading, attending seminars and dialogues. I subscribe to many relevant publications and societies. Regarding excellence, I am a believer in continuous improvement and as such, we always raise the bar so that we are never in comfort zones. We are also embarking on a world class-manufacturing journey as part of creating a culture of excellence and employee development and appreciation. We reward solid performance," says Moloto.

Since its formation, one of the company's most notable successes has been signing a cooperation agreement with the renowned multinational original equipment manufacturer (OEM) giant, FLSmidth,

for guaranteed access to their novel Reflux Classifier Technology and through that, being able to conclude a BOOT (build, own, operate and transfer) agreement with Sibanye-Stillwater to recover additional chrome from their spiral plant.

Linhleko looks to lead the adoption of new and innovative mineral processing technologies in South Africa.

"The company has observed that the mining industry faces ongoing challenges to efficiently and responsibly extract mineral resources. Linhleko Projects is bringing forth its specialist knowledge to promote the sustainable development of mining operations and boost their efficiency, productivity and profitability.

"Innovation is highly critical for both the mining and metals industries as it improves process efficiencies and effectiveness, speeds up processes, reduces human failures, improves safety and generally tends to bring down the cost curve if correctly selected and implemented," says Moloto.

He explains, "Our business model regarding our Mineral Processing Division can be summarised as partnering with novel mineral-processing technology license holders (or OEM) and together, present a high value-adding offer to a resource owner for the benefit of all key stakeholders. Our value proposition models are typically BOOM (build, own, operate and maintain) or BOOT, depending on each client scenario."

He explains that Linhleko seeks to secure guaranteed (or exclusive) access to the unique value-adding technology, do all the required technical test work to determine the feasibility (applicability, practicality and viability) of this novel technology to the client's peculiar mineral resource, provide the requisite financing of the project, maintain and operate the processing facility as per the BOOM(T) agreement between Linhleko and the resource owner (client), be compensated on an outcomes-based business model, and hand over the asset to the client at the end of the contract duration.

Moloto states that to a large extent, the main challenges that still affect our steel and mineral sectors are macroeconomic

factors like policy uncertainties and wrong policy choices (in the mines, it stifles investments and thus, growth), international trade wars that are starting up, high unemployment rates and low technology literacy rates.

"I must also emphasise that a general low work ethic in our society depletes value. Frequent unprotected strikes cause many production disruptions.

"I have also observed that lately, our sectors are averse to investing in technological researches. We are generally a new entrant in these industries and are still susceptible to their volatility and unpredictability. Nonetheless, we are intentionally congruent in the make-up of our company to be able to derive value from the wider range of our industry value chain," he says.

"For example, take the Chrome Recovery Plant we are building at Sibanye-Stillwater. The project execution phase will take almost a year from now, but we are able to derive value from our project management expertise and steel fabrication and erection capabilities. We are also the operations management company once operations are in place. These offerings can and are also offered as stand-alone services to other clients. So, in a nutshell, our diversity of strategically connected services enables us to navigate challenging times," explains Moloto.

He says that what separates Linhleko Projects from the rest is that they are an integrated steel fabricator and mineral processing company.

"In other words, we can design, fabricate, build and operate our own and others' plants. We don't have to wait for long periods before we derive income and we have the capacity to extend our incoming earning periods through operating the plants we so built. We are a holding and operating company. This, combined with our commitment to maintain world-class standards of service at all times, building new relationships, and constantly nurturing and improving them, and having a tireless work ethic to deliver the highest value to our clients; only serves to foster our organisational success," concludes Moloto. **BBQ**



MILELE GROUP
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Investing with a longer-term vision



Milele Group, an investment holding company, focuses on innovative business opportunities and strives to generate superior returns for all stakeholders, applying a hands-on approach where necessary to assist with commercial activities and operational efficiencies. They leverage their existing network of business contacts to promote and enhance a well-diversified investment portfolio.

With strong executive teams and vast experience, they actively engage with their teams to provide strategic guidance to fast-track high growth potential initiatives in the mining logistics, medical supplies, agribusiness, mineral resources and property and consulting services sectors of the economy. Initially, Milele started out with a focus on geology consulting and mining haulage and logistics, a sector CEO Zandile Mdanda was well versed in.

"I have a BSc. (Hons) Geology from Wits and an MBA from Wits Business School. I have always been interested in the sciences and learning weird facts about how things work. So, when the time came for me to choose a course of study, something in sciences was a natural choice. That said, I must be honest that my specific choice of field in the sciences was also influenced by the availability of a bursary to study geology specifically," says Mdanda.

After university, she spent about eight years working as a Geologist in the mining industry. At the peak of her geology career, she was a Chief Geologist at the African Exploration Mining and Finance Corporation (AEMFC). This last role, which was GM: Projects, really influenced her leadership style.

"After more than half a decade working in the mining industry, the time came for me to move back above ground, where I thought I would be most able to contribute meaningfully to South Africa.

"These focus areas provided an easy transition for me because I had built a name for myself in the mining industry. In fact, some of the people I worked with while employed were my first clients. If there is any lesson I could teach to currently employed young people, it would be to make sure that they give their best to every role. A former employer can one day become a client. At Milele, we are now growing our investment portfolio to include investments in property, fast-moving consumer goods and healthcare across the continent. A lot of the investment opportunities we are now exploring have come from relationships that I have built in my work and studies," she explains.

The company's investment philosophy is to invest proprietary capital. On how this enables investing with a longer-term vision, she says, "I am not certain what longer term means in this current fast-paced and changing world, but I would say it means being operationally involved in all our investments. This provides us with the opportunity to understand the business, stay and exit quickly when it does not serve our vision or interest," she says.

Mdanda explains that the decision to invest her firm's own money was driven more by necessity than by choice.

"Raising capital for a fund in South Africa is difficult. And truth be told, I didn't come with a strong background in finance. Add to that the fact that I am black and a woman, it led to a lot of doors closing in my face. But even so, I was convinced by the ideas I had in my investor memo. So, when funds were not forthcoming, I took the decision to cash in my retirement annuity fund and use that as seed capital," she says.

Mdanda says that looking back, it was a blessing in disguise for the firm. As a result of not having a lot of outside money, they have been able to define their own investment philosophy without the pressure of needing to meet quarterly investor expectations.

"Our investments range from short term to long term, but at the core is to make investments that also have a social benefit. When we invest, we don't only consider profit as a measure of success. Of course,

we are not a charity, so profit is important, but equally important to us is job creation, the environmental impact and innovation that benefits South Africa.

"For now, our investment approach is to invest in industries that we know enough about to know where the revenues come from and to know how we can help our investment targets to influence those revenues," she explains.

Milele's consulting services are focussed in geology consulting and are driven by the team's expertise in the sector. "We have also started offering consulting services in agroprocessing, again, driven by the skills we have inhouse," she adds.

Africa's food and agribusiness is a big focus sector for the Milele Group and their vision is to be a catalyst for sustainable growth within it. "Africa has one of the fastest growing populations in the world. All these people will need to be fed and this will have to be done in a way that is sustainable for the environment in the long run. For me, participation in this sector is both an obvious opportunity and a chance to contribute meaningfully to finding a long-lasting solution to food scarcity on the continent," says Mdanda.

In the food and agribusiness sector, the Milele Group strives to build businesses and deliver enviable returns while being mindful of the impacts on people and the environment, as well as to address the challenges that hinder the sector.

"For me, the biggest factor is the limited inclusion of smallholder farmers in the sector. Agri buyers and input suppliers have not yet fully figured out how to work with smallholder farmers across the continent. As a result, many good farmers are systematically locked out of participating meaningfully in the sector. I think this is something all the stakeholders in the sector need to look into across the continent," she says.

In addition to agribusiness, a key sector for Milele is mining and mineral resources, and they believe the sector is poised for substantial growth in the coming years.

"One is always wary of trying to forecast the direction of the mining sector because of the volatility we have seen over the past

years. However, we don't look at the whole mining sector and try to forecast its growth, but we look at specific commodities and try to forecast where those are going.

"Currently, we are quite bullish on coal. In the near term, South Africa will remain reliant on coal for electricity and this will continue to be a growing commodity. Of course, there are environmental challenges with coal, and we are cognisant," says Mdanda.

The Milele Group is committed to sustainable economic development in the communities it serves, and Mdanda explains that as South Africa has a 25% employment rate—a number that becomes even higher if one looks at the youth only—it is clear that something must be done here.

"The government alone cannot solve a problem of this magnitude. Business and civil society also need to get involved. Unfortunately, unemployment is but one of the challenges that South Africa faces. Add to this a growing disease burden, crime, education and you have a long list of issues that need to be tackled head-on. It thus becomes important that each of us plays our small part.

"My passion is education because I have seen what that has done for me. So, I do a lot of work in education, be it sponsoring learners or going to schools to speak, especially to young girls. As our business grows, this is the one area that I want to focus on the most," says Mdanda.

As a black female-owned company, Milele Group champions transformation and women's empowerment simply by trying to be the best that they can be every day.

"I won't lie, being a female in the kind of sectors that we work in is not easy. As a small company, we don't yet have the voice to influence change in meaningful ways, so we do it in our small way, in our small corner where we have some influence. For example, we are intentional about working with black female-owned suppliers and partners, we are intentional about hiring talented black females when we find them. These small steps might not change the trajectory of the country, but they matter," concludes Mdanda. 

Black Umbrellas

Developing Africa's Future
Black Businesses Together

Growing SA's economy through SMEs

Black Umbrellas, an enterprise development organisation, is nurturing local entrepreneurship

Partnering with the private sector, government and civil society, Black Umbrellas addresses the low levels of entrepreneurship and high failure rates of 100% black-owned emerging businesses on the African continent.

The programme focuses on promoting entrepreneurship as a desirable economic path and nurturing 100% black-owned businesses in the critical first three years of their existence through the provision of nationwide incubators. At the helm is CEO Seapei Mafoyane, a woman who is passionate about building black business to the best that it can be.

Born and raised in Mafikeng, she finished high school at the International School of South Africa and proceeded to the University of Natal—now the University of KwaZulu-Natal—in Pietermaritzburg where she attained her undergraduate Bachelor of Science Degree in microbiology and genetics.

After graduating, she moved to Johannesburg where her first job was at Discovery Vitality, a time she remembers fondly. "I had the time of my life there. It was an incredible place to learn, grow and be entrepreneurial," she says.



Initially, she was concerned that an absence of skills in finance and the financial markets would prevent her from being a well-rounded leader; however, an opportunity soon arose when Standard Bank put out a call to action seeking young graduates in fields outside of banking and finance.

"I joined Standard Bank in 2007 as part of a management development programme, which was headed by the CEO of Credit Africa at the time and a fantastic leader, Mr Terry Moodley, who remains one of my mentors. And for four years, I headed up a customer portfolio within Personal and Business Banking (PBB) South Africa," explains Mafoyane.

Towards the end of this period, she started studying for her MBA and after

a year at SA Breweries as a Business Capability Leader, the opportunity arose to join Black Umbrellas, where she has spent the last seven years.

"When I started at Black Umbrellas, I came into a relatively small environment. At the time, there were just over 20 staff members and four business incubators. My role as COO was to consolidate and diagnose what the challenges were and ensure that there was operational effectiveness.

"It was probably my toughest time at the organisation as it was basically learning while on the job. It was a combination of gaining a detailed understanding of the business, ensuring that we weren't shutting down anywhere and that we were effective, growing the brand—because at the time, a lot of people knew about Shanduka Group, the commercial company, but failed to see the link between it and Black Umbrellas—and communicating effectively what business incubation is, which a lot of people still struggle with in South Africa at the moment.

"And it all had to happen very quickly as the work that Black Umbrellas does is donor based—so, our growth over the seven years was determined by where the opportunity comes from and, fortunately, in my first six months, we had an opportunity

to open four more incubators in the space of one year," she explains.

Black Umbrellas has a ninth incubator, which will open its doors in Soweto by the end of August this year, and the organisation hopes to establish a tenth one in the Free State by the end of this year.

"This will deliver squarely 10 incubators as set out by our board for our 10-year commitment 10 years ago when the organisation was first established," says Mafoyane.

As to why SMEs fail, she says that while, on the one hand, the support landscape in South Africa is trying to drive growth, on the other, it tends to be inhibitive.

"Small business tax is not simple by any stretch of the imagination. I think we've come quite a long way from when I first started at Black Umbrellas in terms of setting up and starting a business, so the CIPC process is a little better, but a lot of the other legislative frameworks aren't very supportive.

"A lot of time and paperwork are required to be able to administer yourself properly as a small and medium enterprise, and the turnaround times also tend to be long and a little bit laborious. So, for me, it's the intent of our government in making sure that they develop SMEs that will support our economy, as well as the legislative environment that supports those efforts—these two aspects need to converge," Mafoyane explains.

In addition to time-consuming legislative frameworks, she says that hindrances to the sustainability of SMEs include policy instability, high interest rates that do not support the growth of SMEs and the lack of education in basic skills and entrepreneurship.

"I certainly have seen an incredible change in SME growth when they are given the right tools. I would never have believed that SMEs have the potential that they do, but they flourish once given the type of basic opportunity that a programme like ours provides.

"Last year, SEED released a report looking at the state of entrepreneurship in South Africa, revealing that, of the

businesses that are post-revenue, only 5% have a turnover of greater than R5 million.

"At Black Umbrellas, the number of businesses with a turnover between R1 million and R5 million have increased substantially from 13% in 2017 to 26% in the second quarter of 2019. Our best performing SME last year had a turnover of R170 million," Mafoyane enthuses.

Throughout its years, Black Umbrellas has won two International Business Innovation Association (InBIA) awards. InBIA is American-based and it's an organisation that represents 2 200 incubators across 62 countries globally. The association seeks to promote the growth of new business and educate the business and investor community about the benefits of incubators.

"It is really important in terms of the work that we do, that we benchmark ourselves, not just against our peers locally but against what other incubators are doing globally. They are the unit that helps us know what the global standards for incubators are. What they do annually is, they offer their members this consolidated view of who is doing what across this geography and that's the basis upon which we participated, first in 2015 when we won our first award and then again in 2019.

"The international accolade is a really great acknowledgement to say the work we do here is the best of the best across the world, and I think it's an important recognition for our staff who work tirelessly in developing these SMEs so our donors and funders can support the work we do. We no longer have any doubt in our minds about what can be achieved, even in a small incubator at the bottom of Africa—you can produce businesses whose success measures up at a global level," she says.

Mafoyane says that while great work is being done in the SME sector, some important questions need to be answered.

"The SME market as an incubation market is fairly unregulated. How do we ensure that everyone is not starting an incubator because it's an easy mechanism

for raising grant funding? How do we ensure that all of the incubators that exist in South Africa are measured for impact, to ensure that these achievements that we're seeing through our business incubator are growing in multiples? Because as beautiful as they are, if I am only touching 300 small businesses a year in a country of 60 million people, it's going to take an extremely long time to start seeing the impact.

"So, the more of us who are doing the work that we do and the more focus there is in the enterprise and supply development space on measured impact, the better it will be for everyone concerned," Mafoyane concludes. **BBQ**

Our Performance Milestones

The SMEs we support continue to make significant positive strides to the outlook of this country and have collectively achieved the below milestones:

Indicator(s) • April 2019

Businesses in incubation since inception
1526

Total jobs created and preserved
11 859

Turnover generated by SME since inception
2.9 billion

Net asset value
1.2 billion

Salaries paid
R718 million

Tax raised by SMEs
195 million

Sophisticated style and bold off-road capabilities



The Isuzu mu-X is at home on any terrain

Isuzu started in the early 1970s with the launch of the Chevrolet Light Utility Vehicle (LUV) in South Africa. In 1972, the Isuzu LUV started production in Port Elizabeth.

In 1979, the facelifted LUV was launched with the KB nomenclature for the first time and the KB40 was launched—the first petrol- and diesel-powered four-wheel drive pick-up from Japan.

The Isuzu D-Max, as the KB is now known, continues the legacy established by the LUV as a refined and dependable product engineered to suit the fast-changing needs of South African consumers.

The Isuzu mu-X comes from this legacy of LCVs and SUVs preceded by the Isuzu Trooper, sold in South Africa in 1992, and the ever-popular Isuzu Frontier, which was designed and built in South Africa and launched in 1998. There are still many of

these vehicles on our roads today, some which have covered over 500 000km. The Trooper and Frontier were one of the first SUVs introduced into the local market.

The mu-X is the first vehicle launched under the newly-formed Isuzu Motors South Africa, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Isuzu Motors Limited of Japan. Although new in South Africa, the mu-X is also sold in Australia and is the market leader in the Philippines.

When looking at the mu-X, the KB DNA is apparent with its bold good looks and aggressive stance. Available in both 4x4 and 4x2 models, it is powered by Isuzu's popular 3.0L four-cylinder intercooled turbodiesel engine producing 130kW of power and 380Nm of torque.

The power train features a six-speed automatic gearbox with sequential sort mode. With this power, the mu-X makes light work of any road situation, whether

on or off-road, in town or on the open road. A three-tonne towing capacity allows the driver to make light work of caravan or trailer towing. The 4x4 version is fitted with Isuzu's Terrain Command 4x4 system, which allows the driver to electronically select the 2- or 4-wheel drive modes. Low range is also available for heavy 4x4 conditions.

This ensures that the mu-X is ideally suited for travelling off-road or into the wild. The fully independent suspension includes a five-link setup at the rear, ensuring excellent ride comfort, and for on and off-road conditions as well.

The new mu-X's robust good looks ensure this model stands out from the crowd while, at the same time, embodying the Isuzu DNA. LED daytime running lights and Bi-LED projector headlamps with auto levelling are standard on both models, and aluminium side steps, 18-inch



alloy wheels, privacy glass and LED rear combination lamps enhance the vehicle's appeal. The mu-X's seven-seat configuration ensures that the vehicle is ideal as a "mom's taxi" or over the weekends for family breaks and holidays.

Outdoor-orientated families equally feel at home in the mu-X when travelling to places off the beaten track. The folding rear and centre rows of seats ensure a multitude of seating options available, depending on the requirements. Electronic climate control also ensures all passengers are comfortable. Rear passengers also have access to their own air vents.

A keyless entry and start system also ensure ease of operation when accessing the vehicle. A whole host of storage compartments ensure all loose items can be safely and easily stored when travelling. The leather seats ensure ultimate seating comfort for all passengers. The driver's

seat boasts a six-way electronic adjustment feature, ensuring the driver is comfortable and in control at all times. Cruise control is also standard, along with fingertip controls for audio and phone functions. The multi-function infotainment centre includes a nine-inch colour touch screen, which includes satellite navigation, Bluetooth connectivity and audio streaming with Apple CarPlay and Android Auto functionality. USB slots are also included in the front and rear of the vehicle. The rear-facing reverse camera ensures the driver can park in difficult parking situations.

Safety was top-of-mind when Isuzu engineers designed the mu-X. Standard features include ABS braking with electronic brakeforce distribution (EBD) as well as emergency brake assist (EBA) and electronic stability control (ESC). The traction control system (TCS) and hill start assist (HAS) ensure safe operating in all

conditions, whilst hill descent control (HDC) ensures total control on tricky, steep 4x4 descents. Other safety features include a full array of airbags, front and back, including side and full-length curtain airbags linked to seat pre-tensioner seatbelts. A high-tensile steel passenger safety cell protects the passengers.

The mu-X comes with the Isuzu Complete Care programme including, a five-year/120km bumper-to-bumper warranty and Isuzu roadside assistance, a five-year/unlimited km anti-corrosion warranty and a five-year 90 000km service plan, with service intervals of every 15 000km/12 months.

Models:

Isuzu mu-X 3.0 4x2 AT6
Isuzu mu-X 3.0 4x4 AT6 

John Elford

Mamokete Projects

Constructing sustainable solutions for the future



MAMOKETE
PROJECTS

Mamokete Projects started trading in 2009 and quickly gained a reputation for providing a holistic approach to construction and property development in South Africa.

As a 100% black women-owned enterprise, Mamokete Projects has gone on to become a highly diversified company and leader in its field. It is ideally positioned to now offer state-of-the-art project management and quantity surveying, as well as civil and electrical engineering services to both the public and private sectors.

With its keen understanding of the industry and a well-established national client portfolio, Mamokete Projects has developed a reputation for taking on and overcoming South African construction industry challenges nationally with its delivery of groundbreaking and ultra-modern responses on behalf of its clients. Maximising its years of industry knowledge and know-how, Mamokete Projects has developed a competitive advantage as a result of effective teamwork, significantly enhancing its ability to deliver quality projects on time and on budget.

The company offers the streamlined services of general building (which includes undertaking both new building developments and renovations), civils (which includes the completion of storm damage projects, roads, pipelines and steel reinforcing), mechanical engineering, water and sanitation, building reservoirs and abstraction works, registrations, and corporate social investment and empowerment.

Central to our business approach is the effective management of the company's skilled team of professionals. Mamokete Projects sets out to instil in its staff an intensive service culture, offset by an overriding

commitment to paying close attention to detail in all that it undertakes.

At Mamokete Projects, our vision is to build sustainable communities through state-of-the-art construction technology, in line with the Construction Charter. Our mission is to meet customer needs by offering a wide spectrum of construction services at the best value, to be competent and timely in delivering our services, with due regard for quality, and to build and preserve professional integrity in the construction industry through quality workmanship.

At the helm of Mamokete Projects is the CEO, Dr Nomzamo Tutu.

In the constant pursuit of progression, Tutu has always been inspired to move forward while contributing positively to society by adopting a 360-degree approach to her life's work. This led to the first pit stop in her career as a qualified medical practitioner. With a desire to develop further, she went on to acquire a host of qualifications, including a Bachelor of Surgery (MBChB), a Postgraduate Diploma in Occupational Health (DOH), a Postgraduate Diploma in HIV/AIDS Management in the World of Work and a Bachelor of Science Degree (BSc).

Exchanging medicine for the rugged world of construction in 1999, Dr Tutu took on a new challenge as a managing member of uVolwethu Consulting and Executive Director of Tarice Trading and now, Mamokete Projects.

In 2004, Dr Tutu was appointed by the then Minister of Labour, Mr Membathisi Mdladlana, as a Medical Assessor, assisting the Director General of Labour in the formal hearing of Section 91 objections. She also provided advice to the presiding officer and assessors at hearings on medical matters and assisted presiding officers in the determination of permanent disablement in terms of occupational injuries and diseases,

in accordance with the Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act (COID Act) 130 of 1993. She acted in this capacity until 2009.

At the beginning of 2012, she was appointed by the then Minister of Public Works in South Africa, Mr Thulas Nxesi, as a member of the fourth Engineering Council of South Africa (ECSA). She has served a four-year term and has been re-appointed for a further four years, 2016-2020.

Dr Tutu is responsible for new business development and the provision of strategic direction for the company, ensuring that all services are delivered at the highest quality, meeting all standards.

Mamokete Projects adopts a zero-harm view to the implementation of its Safety, Health, Environment and Quality Strategy. The company accordingly ensures that it complies with all legislative health and safety imperatives, paying close attention to, especially, the Occupational Health and Safety Act, No. 85 of 1993 and the Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act, No. 130 of 1993. It has entrenched a best practice ideal with regard to such issues and applies a no-compromise policy, which permeates the entire company. Its keen adherence to health and safety issues is monitored by a highly qualified professional health and safety team, which forms the backbone of the company.

A sense of community

Mamokete Projects is dedicated to empowerment and aiding in community building, engaging the services of local communities in the areas in which it is active as a means of playing a role in vital upskilling, knowledge transfer and support initiatives. The company is focused on assisting in the development and advancement of new, permanent job creation. This



CEO, Dr Nomzamo Tutu.

will lead to the upliftment of, especially, historically disadvantaged individuals and communities.

The company recognises that South Africa faces enormous socio-economic challenges and acknowledges the need for meaningful corporate social investment, as an imperative, by the private sector. The company makes every effort possible to make telling contributions to empowering those disadvantaged members of society regardless of race, creed or gender.

Transformation as key

Mamokete Projects has long recognised the vital role that private sector businesses can and must play in the active promotion of Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment in South Africa. As a 100% empowered company, Mamokete Projects is especially sensitive to the need for empowerment in the wider business environment; this is an ideal that it openly embraces. Mamokete Projects believes that by creating a supportive business culture, it will foster diversity and promote

transparency, not only amongst its own staff and owners, but amongst its various service providers as well.

Environmental commitment

Mamokete Projects believes in and fully supports the need for environmental sensitivity within the broad construction field. The company acknowledges that attention to this component of the overall development mix has become increasingly vital. Mamokete Projects ensures that there is a continued reduction and, ultimately, minimisation of negative environmental impacts and degradation in future construction projects.

The company has established a solid client base and has completed a number of high-profile projects including the new construction of roof covering for King Shaka International Airport and the Darvill Wastewater Treatment upgrade, construction of weir, abstraction works and access roads civil works, and the construction of a 3km long dn900 rising main from water treatment works to command reservoirs.

Mamokete Projects' organisational structure has been deliberately formulated to reflect business considerations, given that the projects the company delivers are core to its functionality and sustainability. Staffing, therefore, depends on the task at hand.

The company maintains a small permanent staff complement and accesses an extensive network of professionals as project needs and key deliverables change. The company's staff is comprised of engineers—site agents who are engineers in general building—civil and electrical senior foremen, quantity surveyors, safety officers and general labourers.

The company prides itself on maintaining the very highest levels of efficiency, time management and professional service delivery with regard to projects it undertakes for its clients.

Mamokete Projects follows the best practice construction ideal in its commitment to contributing appreciably to the economic growth and development of South Africa through its diverse interventions. **BBQ**



AKA Africa

Those in charge of governance are the key drivers of transforming the accounting profession

The governing laws and regulations and King IV requirements for the appointments and performance reviews of auditors lie with Those Charged with Governance (TCwG)—which consists of the Board of Directors and Audit Committee.

The B-BBEE Act is a key legislative requirement and TCwG should be the drivers of compliance in terms of the applicable B-BBEE regulations by demanding a level of compliance by audit or accountancy firms that is not less than 100%. The audit firms should be held accountable to ensure the attainment of the desired level of compliance by enforcing B-BBEE compliance reporting to TCwG on critical CA Charter areas such as ownership, skills development and management control.

This B-BBEE compliance check should also extend to those firms that are already rated as compliant. This will provide details about how they attained the scores they have by seeing the tangible execution of the strategies that are said to be implemented by the audit firms. The aim is to get to the heart of what the firms want to achieve on paper in terms of a B-BBEE certificate vs. the staff demographics and their spending pattern on skills development.

The Shareholders, Board and Audit Committee can proactively enforce this requirement at the time of consideration of appointment of new auditors and as an ongoing monitoring for the current auditors.

The aim should not only be for TCwG to enforce that the audits be conducted



by the audit firms that are compliant with the CA Charter, but to also ensure that the companies that are audited are also compliant with the B-BBEE regulations. The mandatory firm rotation brings an opportunity for TCwG to be the drivers of transformation upon the consideration of the change of auditors.

Any familiarity bias by the Board members or key management of the company who should not be influencing the audit firm appointment process might drive companies' preference for an audit firm appointment, however, it is key to also consider the social responsibility of the

Board of Directors, of which B-BBEE is the element thereof. The one common issue of the firm's experience relevant to the companies' sector can be overcome by requiring that the large firms with the relevant experience have joint-audits with smaller firms.

The implementation of joint-audits will also be a proactive measure for a smooth hand over to also reduce the amount of time and resources spent on new auditors gaining knowledge about the business in preparation for the mandatory firm rotation.

There is a need to align the B-BBEE requirements to the company's strategic objectives that will ensure there is a cascaded contribution to the transformation goals by all key role players in the company's procurement process, including auditor appointment. The company's service agreement provisions that have a B-BBEE score as a key consideration can also result in a consequential impact of client loss by the audit firms if the agreed upon B-BBEE target level is not met, which will also drive behaviour in terms of how the audit firms are prioritising and driving the implementation of the CA Charter.

The CA Charter is gazetted so it is time that TCwG, especially the Audit Committee, start engaging your appointed auditors with regard to how they will comply with requirements of the CA Charter and starts thinking about how this will be driven by the companies you are serving, to ensure that the audit firms that have embraced transformation are appointed. **BBQ**



Aiming to build **Africa**

AKA Africa provides world class service in South Africa as well as the continent of Africa as a whole by ensuring people development and organisation's enhanced administration and governance, thereby "building Africa".

AKA Africa is a 100% black-owned professional services company and a LEVEL 1 rated empowering service provider according to the B-BBEE codes of good practice.

AKA Africa is a company specialising in the provision of,

- Assurance (incl. External audit);
- Accounting;
- Taxation;
- Payroll;
- Audit quality assurance;
- Transformation advisory (incl. BBEE consulting);
- Governance and compliance review;

- Performance information consulting;
- Financial management consulting; and
- People development which is central to our service offerings.

Our team possess the accumen of a modern-day finance professional having successfully worked in both the public and private sector. The team shares a common vision and an interest in the development of people and the country. We seeks to deliver quality service and meet client expectations by ensuring that we accept engagements which we have the required expertise for.



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