

# Employee

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EMPLOYEES ARE THE BEST  
BRAND AMBASSADORS

## Eminent HR- Professional

TSHOLOFELO MMOPI

Okavango Diamond Company -HR Coordinator







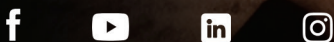
**XAVIER AFRICA**  
REDEFINING EFFICIENCY

**Africa's DNA** is rooted in innovation, creativity and the refusal to accept status quos that do not serve us. This is evidenced by the fact that we introduced the foundational innovations that make our world what it is today – in fact – **we made the first fire**, the oldest drawings found in history are on our walls, we solved the first mathematical equations and quite frankly are the cradle of humanity. But in the process, we lost our way – **where were we when the first lightbulb was switched on?** where were we when the first computer was switched on? Where were we when the first cameras captured pictures? And as the world goes into the next revolution, we risk being left behind again.

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# Employee

AFRICA

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# EDITOR'S NOTE



**YVONNE MOOKA**  
Editor-In-Chief

**T**hree (3) years I decided to quit my job. I was working for Botswana Guardian and The Midweek Sun newspapers; two of Botswana's leading publications. For someone who was doing well in the media, my resignation attracted a lot of questions from different people. While some were against my decision, others gave me their blessings.

Here is the thing: Quitting a job is not the easiest move ever! You have to sit down and think and plan hard. Often times we hear of workplace conflicts. People fight, sabotage, bully and do all sorts of ugly

things to others. This is bound to happen because we spend a lot of time at work. Actually, research shows that the average person will spend 90,000 hours at work over a lifetime. Andrew Naber, US psychologist in his survey found that we spend a lot of time at work and it really affects people's general happiness, and also life outcomes. Mental health in the workplace is a serious issue. We discussed this in our previous issue.

Other than mental health, I always talk to people about character. I learned during my early years in the corporate sector that character can either close or open

doors for you. The late Dr Myles Munroe puts this way, 'You will keep by your character what you attracted by your educational qualifications or good looks.' We have an article on Cultural Sensitivity Communication and we believe it will inspire you, especially as an employee who works or aspires to work in a diverse working environment. We work in diverse environments and your ability to apply cultural communication will help you to advance in your career and navigate a rapidly connected workplace.

Going back to my Guardian/Sun years, when I joined the industry, most of my colleagues were older my mother. Like, over 50 years old. These are what we call industry veterans. There was a vivid generation diversity. As you flip through the pages, you'll be empowered on Job Readiness and see where you fit. It will also help you understand your colleagues better.

As Employee Africa, we want you to be the head and not the tail at work and in your business. The workforce is competitive. Self-Leadership is very critical in today's world. You must be vision-oriented, and that's what our President here at Employee Africa Mr. Mopoloki Makwana always encourages at his coaching sessions. He has written an insightful article on it. We have also featured Botswana's

finest creative and our former Miss Botswana Palesa Molefe. She has always been unstoppable. A force to reckon with.

See, the existence of Employee Africa magazine is to empower employees and business leaders today to create vibrant workplaces. We believe in you. There is greatness in the inside of you.

I hope you will enjoy our fifth edition and I look forward to your incredible feedback.

***yvonnequeen2003@gmail.com***

## ABOUT THE EDITOR

Yvonne Mooka is a multi-award winning journalist from Botswana who joined The BBC after a decade with The Botswana Guardian and The Midweek Sun news-

papers. She is also the founder of Yvonne Media International. She recently joined The New York Times as a correspondent from Botswana.

Write to me at [yvonnequeen2003@gmail.com](mailto:yvonnequeen2003@gmail.com)



.....  
“Performance management  
and recruitment are the  
most essential tools of HR”  
-Mmopi





# EMINENT HR PROFESSIONAL:

**TSHOLOFELO MMOPI,**  
HR Coordinator at Okavango Diamond Company (ODC)

Tsholofelo Mmopi is arguably one of the most decorated and well-experienced Human Resource professionals in Botswana who is guided by adherence to ethical standards and embraces change. **Writes Staff Writer.**

**T**he ever calm and stunning Mmopi is currently working for the state-owned blue chip diamond company, Okavango Diamond Company (ODC), holding the position of Human Resource Coordinator.

## TSHOLO'S ODC JOURNEY

Mmopi joined the company in September 2016 and said for the last seven (7) years of employment at the company, she is reflecting with lots of pride on the progress made especially from the HR aspect.

"When I started, there wasn't really an HR department. But now we have a fully functional HR department, and our staff complement is not really big as we have 46 employees," said Mmopi.

She added: "We managed to set up structures through a performance management structure and the talent management process that we are about to roll out. It may not be fully fledged but we are at a point where things like the staff engagement become more robust and regular,"

Mmopi said when she started at ODC, the company was new and as a result, it was not easy to introduce the HR department but guided by

the business strategy, things went as planned.

"Our operations are quite challenging given the nature of business that we operate within. Our staff complement has grown and as result the needs of individual employees change as the industry evolves. The business also transformed significantly, and the department needed to align," she said.

## HR COMPLEMENTS STRATEGY

Furthermore, Mmopi said HR forms an important part of business and noted that it is also very imperative that HR is included in business strategies, and she is happy that ODC recognizes that.

Mmopi buttressed that it is very important that business strategy is aligned to people (employees).

"Employees are the ones who drive strategy and therefore it is also important. Sometimes, in most companies, HR just takes part in decision making within the management level and we excluded at the board level. Such developments make it difficult to advance HR related issues," she said.



## PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Meanwhile, Mmopi said performance management and recruitment are the most important aspects of HR but admitted that they are not an easy process to undertake or execute.

She indicated that it is very tricky as HR professionals would want to eliminate biasness as much as it can be eliminated, and this encompasses undertaking good performance re-





views on employees.

"There are other factors considered when there are performance reviews, and these include salary increment and promotions. Relationships between the managers and their teams is also key. My encouragement is that, given the complexity of this process, it is important that the line managers should not just manage performance when its reviews are due. It must be continuously managed," stressed Mmopi.

Also, she said the issue of favoritism is constantly being debated whenever there are reviews, adding that it is critical that when a lot of inconsistency is noticed, HR has to intervene to ensure that everything is done the proper way. She believes that HR departments are very crucial.

## CHALLENGES

In terms of the day-to-day challenges that she encounters, Mmopi noted that HR requires one to possess leadership skills and open-minded when approaching matters related

"I work daily with people with different characters and background but in the end, I must embrace all,"

Mmopi

to it.

She is a firm believer that if companies don't focus on people, then less will be achieved.

"It is important that we look after our people and recognize their efforts. However, we cannot make everyone happy at the same time. Moreover, HR decisions that are taken at some point in business cannot make everyone happy. As an HR Coordinator, I work daily with people with different characters and background but

in the end, I must embrace all," she said.

In many instances, Mmopi said issues of mental health and wellness amongst employees are neglected and this contributes to a poor performance culture in many organisations as affected staff are unproductive and demoralized.

"If the organisation has unproductive and mentally fatigued people, it will not achieve anything at all. Healthy employees work to turnaround fortunes of business. Mental health must be prioritized," she said.

As part of her future work, Mmopi said she would like to focus more on psychology through carrying consultancy around mental health and wellness, an aspect that workplaces don't prioritize.

What keeps her motivated to deal with the challenges that she faces along her work is that she has been able to learn and embrace working with different people of diverse backgrounds and tempers too.

"One other thing that motivates me is



to see people in my organisation being happy and productive. My HR office receives and interacts with lots of people and in some instances serves as a counselling office. I offer the staff support on whatever challenges they face within the workplace and I do this for the purposes of giving them a sense of belongingness. We face a lot of stumbling blocks as people and support is very key," she said.

#### COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Meanwhile, she said the COVID-19 pandemic came with both positive and negative impacts on ODC operations, adding that what the company focused a lot, on was striking a balancing act between ensuring optimal protection of employees' lives and sustainability through ensuring that business operates.

"Covid19 put lot of people under stress and the issue of mental health

was rampant as well. ODC had to look at people's health as a priority and working from home was also executed while other people who had to work from office were extended necessary resources to keep safe," said upbeat Mmopi.

Mmopi indicated that what is positive is that the business continued to operate at optimal levels and the employees that worked from home didn't drop the ball and continued to work productively.

#### 4IR READINESS

The experienced HR professional said technology is also impacting the industry but said from the local perspective, she doesn't think that the sector is moving at a swift pace to embrace 4IR.

She regrets that the number of organisations continue to utilize man-

ual systems of capturing records or any other business-related matters and this demonstrates that we still believe a lot in paperwork.

She said the pandemic presented to the world the picture that the work environment will drastically change going forward characterized by a Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous (VUCA) future.

"Everything is destined to change and things need to be done in different ways. My advice to young people who are approaching the world of work either working or looking for jobs, is that one should have an open mind and be adaptive to meet needs of the ever-changing workplace," said Mmopi.

Mmopi further emphasized that: "If you aren't adaptive and equip yourself with knowledge, the world is going to run ahead of you. It is also important to be receptive or accommodative to emerging differences. They can progress or hinder you depending on how one approaches them,"

#### TSHOLO OUTSIDE WORK

**What do you do to refresh?** I do lots of physical training i.e., running as a new hobby, reading and I love travelling to different countries and even locally where I enjoy learning new things and interacting with diverse cultures.

**Book that you're reading: Finding Me:** A memoir by Viola Davis.

The book is about the story of her life as she went through a lot of pain from an abusive father and enduring poverty. The book shows us that as people, we can actually rise above challenges that we face and we should have courage not to be stuck on them.

**Family:** I am a mother to one beautiful daughter by the name Moah, she is eight (8) years old.



# CULTURAL SENSITIVITY

- . Embracing Cultural Intelligence as a Key Determinant
- . Applying Cultural Sensitivity/ Communication to Advance Your Business

**B**ecause of globalisation, the world is shrinking at a rapid speed. As technology also advances, countries that were once thousands of miles apart now appear to be only a stone's throw apart. We are all required to keep up with the accelerated rate of growth. This includes promoting increased workplace diversity. Organizations today have designated a diverse workforce as one of the leading factors influencing the success of their businesses.

Recruiting from a pool of variation has led professionals to inevitably share the workspace with people who belong to a diverse array of cultures simultaneously. We are transitioning from mere variation (diversity) to inclusion, ensuring that every human variation within our organization is valued.

Consequently, we encounter shared values, and, in some instances, we may deem cultural values insignificant. Executives to entry-level employees alike are compelled to adjust their skills, communicate effectively, and meet the global market demand. When it comes to intercultural communication, nobody is exempted from updating their game. Change is inevitable!

## GLOBALIZATION

As the world economy continually integrates, with more countries soliciting bilateral relations, and organizations trading services and products beyond borders, this economic interdependence is deeming national borders less valuable. At the beginning of 2023, the Republic of Botswana resorted to an agreement with the Republic of Na-



mbia that citizens of the two countries will no longer use passports to cross borders. This agreement was primarily established to promote smooth trade between the people of Namibia and Botswana.

Many countries in the West have long eliminated national borders to foster effective trade and travelling. Globalization presents with it wide opportunities for professionals to increase their acumen and for businesses to increase profit capacity due to the unlimited population. However, there are demands that come with

globalization. The intercultural encounters resulting from globalization necessitate the knowledge to conduct business and communicate in a manner that accommodates different cultural norms. Navigating different cultural backgrounds is very difficult.

However, it is very important to adjust one's norms to sustain success and longevity. Global citizens can only interpret and navigate the diverse cultural standpoints if they have accurate knowledge and understanding of economic, political, social culture etc. Working with people with Diverse cul-

# TY COMMUNICATION

inant for successful global marketplace integration  
Your Career and Navigating a Rapidly Connected Workplace



tural backgrounds calls for an innovative communication approach. And it is very safe to say Cultural Sensitivity is the way to go.

## CULTURAL SENSITIVITY APPROACH IN COMMUNICATION

**What is culture?** Culture can be defined as an embedded system influencing the behaviour and lifestyle of a group of people. It is very important to note that culture is learned and can be unlearned. Additionally, there is nothing like right or wrong culture. Human beings tend to make judgements

using the lens of one's own cultures. Culture is a reasoning tool.

Defined by Soon Ang and Linn Van Dyne (2008), Cultural intelligence is the ability to achieve one's goal in a given context.

Professionals today stand at the intersection of globalization and intercultural communication. As the world is rapidly shrinking, our approach to how we handle business and communicate is inevitably challenged. Cultural Sensitivity is what helps us to develop tough skin and confront seemingly insignificant values as possible remedies for the problems we are attempting to solve and be willing to embrace them.

In his book, *Leading with Cultural Intelligence*, David Livermore (2008) discusses the distinctive attribute of CQ. Cultural intelligence is not tied to any one group. The focus is not on learning all the exact facts and ways to act that are needed for each culture. Instead, it focuses on building a wide range of knowledge, skills, and behaviours that can help us make sense of the many different cultures we meet every day.

***"Cultures Don't meet, people do".***

To gain overall competence, global citizens

Cultural Intelligence can enable one to achieve success in the following areas: personal, business, and organisational levels.

## HERE ARE 3 TOP BENEFITS OF HAVING A HIGH CQ:

- Professionals with a higher CQ are

more likely to succeed in multicultural negotiations, and as a result, scoop better profits for their organizations. Today organizations are expanding their influence beyond borders, and they are looking for better sales. With High CQ, you can climb your way to the top management position or better earnings.

- **CONFLICT MANAGEMENT:** Within a more diverse workforce, there are possible conflicts resulting from varying cultural norms and values. A team player with high CQ helps team members to develop trust among each other and avoid unnecessary cultural misunderstandings.

- **ADAPTABILITY:** A changing world requires a disruptive mindset. The mindset that is ready to learn, unlearn and relearn some norms for the benefit of self and those around us. Being able to make alterations to suit the next person guarantees success in multinational contexts interactions. In the words of Robert Louis Stevenson "There are no foreign lands. It is the traveler only who is foreign.", we can recognize the need for open-mindedness in approaching unfamiliar grounds.

## SUMMARY

Education and international experience play a strong role in developing our level of cultural intelligence, but they don't guarantee success. Hence, global citizens must intentionally decide to cultivate their Cultural sensitivity. It is a gradual lifelong learning process.



# AUTHENTICITY IN THE WORKPLACE



**A**uthenticity is staying true to one's own personality, beliefs, values, principles and cultural norms/ practices and spirit or character. An authentic person is highly self-aware and knows and is content with who they are in terms of emotions, values, and competencies. Their outward behavior emulates their self-awareness, and other people's opinions of them shouldn't affect their behavior. Authentic people don't compromise their beliefs or convictions for the comfort of others.

**Writes BOITUMELO KEOAGILE**

## WHAT DOES AUTHENTICITY IN THE WORKPLACE LOOK LIKE?

An authentic workplace has employees who actively listen to others which is very different from 'hearing' others.

Active listeners concentrate on what is being said, (not listen to react, rather, listen to respond) but rather reflect on the content through asking questions for clarity, use non-verbal cues like facial expressions to indicate understanding and then respond in an engaging, non-judgmental way.

Active listening is the foundation of good communication skills and makes the active listening recipient feel valued and understood which helps in strengthening workplace relationships.

Authentic Employees Acknowledge their Shortcomings and Mistakes

There is no finger pointing and blaming in an authentic workplace. No one is perfect, and everyone makes mistakes. An authentic employee readily accepts re-

sponsibility for mistakes made and proceeds with reparative actions. Failure to do so puts cracks in the foundation of a trusting workplace relationship.

## AUTHENTIC EMPLOYEE VALUE EXPERIENCES

Authentic people value experiences over material possessions. There's an abundance of psychology research which reflects that experiences bring people more happiness than possessions. Workplace experiences can include events such as corporate outings (e.g happy hours, family fun days, game nights and volunteering), but they are also the everyday events like team collaboration, brainstorming sessions, working lunches and birthday sessions. An authentic workplace values any opportunity to bring

employees together to work or play without changing their personality for them to belong or fit it.

### THEY STICK TO THEIR VALUES

Successful organizations understand the importance of conducting business according to their core values; those guiding principles governing all business and interpersonal relationships. Authentic leadership ensures the decisive and thoughtful creation of core values and models behavior consistent with those values even during trying and changing times. Core values established prior to the pandemic helped organizations navigate unprecedented remote and other work challenges. Amid tragedy and uncertainty, core values are a constant source of guidance.

Authenticity correlates greater job satisfaction among respondents who can be authentic in the workplace. It accelerates confidence, assists one to feel more engaged, and feel happier. Authenticity in workplace is linked with the ability to be authentic with a greater sense of personal and workplace fulfillment.

Being authentic is important because it contributes to your holistic well-being, encouraging happiness, fulfillment, and high self-esteem. When your actions align with your true nature, you're more likely to pursue your passions, believe in yourself, and feel confident in your opinions and this also improves one's mental wellbeing.

### BENEFITS OF STAYING AUTHENTIC

- Enables one to build stronger relationships with colleagues.
- Employees are more committed to staying with an organization.
- Improves one's effectiveness.
- Improves one's productivity at work.
- Authenticity can be a key component of job satisfaction.
- It promotes good well-being.
- One is able to do their best work and be innovative and efficient.
- Authenticity is an accelerator for growth



mindset as one isn't afraid to get out of their comfort zone to try new things without knowing what the outcome will be, thus leading to innovative initiatives and business processes improvement and performance.

- Psychological safety created in an authentic workplace is the determining factor in why certain teams outperform others. Authenticity accelerates trust, acceptance, cooperation and mutual respect, all attributes of high performing teams.

### AUTHENTICITY QUOTE TO LIVE BY;

"Your time is limited, don't waste it living someone else's life. Don't let the noise of others' opinions drown your own inner voice. And most importantly, have the courage to follow your heart and intuition. They somehow already know what you truly want to become. Everything else is secondary." Steve Jobs

### DON'T BE AN OPEN BOOK

While being truthful and sharing personal stories and experiences are part of being authentic, being on an open book sometimes is not. Professionalism reigns supreme, and endlessly talking about oneself and others and oversharing personal information quickly wears thin and can make others feel the "open book" is awkward, untrustworthy, and even unstable. Authenticity in workplaces encourages

authentic individualism and courageous leadership which employees long for in workplaces. Besides its usefulness in the work environment, authenticity inspires, it inspires our children to become courageous, brave, and resilient adults.

What our world needs today is authentic, courageous, and fearless leaders. Leaders who are committed to growing adverse, kind, resilient employees. Employees with purpose, who deliver impact.

"Before you are a leader, success is all about growing yourself. When you become a leader, success is all about growing others."

Authentic and thoughtful leaders contribute to growth, performance, and the mental being of an employee and an organizational culture employees seek for great impact.

In a business context, the actions and behaviours of good parents can provide a lot of inspiration to turn good leaders into great leaders. While good parents shouldn't hesitate to use their great leadership skills at home as well, to become great parents. There is value in that!

### NB:

A rigid authenticity may not fit all situations. Maintaining strict coherence between what you feel and what you say or do. It is simply not appropriate or discreet or even kind to disclose everything you feel and think in all situations.



# EMPLOYEES ARE THE BEST BRAND AMBASSADORS

WRITTEN BY POPPY LYDIA SELLO  
BRAND MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS EXPERT

**N**othing screams “I believe in this brand’s products and services” like an employee. However, it appears that the advent of influencer marketing obscured this truth. Customers want to “feel” before making a purchase, hence marketing is built on emotion and Marketers have complete control over how they should feel. Words, color, pictures, font, and people all contribute to a message that elicits the intended emotion. And who better to deliver the message than those who work and live the brand?

Customers are more inclined to commit to a brand depending on their experience with the products or services given. And who is it that offers that experience? Employees - they are the first faces customers see when interacting with a brand. Their words and actions are extremely powerful, and when combined with incentives and motivations such engagement can lead to successful marketing campaigns and revenue growth.

However, we have witnessed an increase in the number of local brands investing extensively in celebrity endorsement deals and influencer marketing, which is not a bad thing. These individuals, however, collaborate exclusively for monetary gain. It makes little difference whether they believe in the brand or not, but the situation is different with employees. They know everything there is to know about the brand because they have worked in a variety of settings and

learned everything there, and they are able to communicate the brand with customers by applying their expertise to each individual customer interaction - making them fantastic brand ambassadors.

There may be some reluctance to invest in employee personal brands. After all, it makes employees more marketable and visible, increasing the probability that they may capture the attention of another company. Suffocating employees’ career and professional ambitions, on the other hand, causes more harm than good. When an organization cultivates individual personal brands and encourages its employees to participate in social media, the benefits greatly exceed the hazards. Remember that an engaged workforce leads to improved productivity, a better reputation, and can improve a company’s bottom line.

Despite this, brands have mostly ignored this opportunity, particularly when employees have a strong personal brand. Employees with strong personal brands develop themselves as subject matter experts and thought leaders, lending authority and credibility to their organizations. Instead of depending on celebrities or influencers for social content and marketing activities, more businesses should turn to their own employees.

This responsibility is shared by marketing, human resources, public relations, and finance. It is critical that marketing and human resources



strategies coincide in order to achieve this. HR must maintain staff motivated, happy, and inspired, and marketing must give opportunities for customers to see, hear, and appreciate that inspiration and motivation.

It’s critical to educate all employees on the brand’s vision and ensure they feel really committed to it. The brand must be co-created with employees

rather than imposed upon them. They will remark, 'This is not my company,' if they are not participating in some form or if they do not see their fingerprints all over it. HR needs to step up in this area and make employees feel like they are contributing rather than just taking part.

Ad spending and creativity alone do not determine the success of an organization's overall branding strategy. No matter how sleek the TV commercial, large the billboard, or engaging the social media campaign, a business's advertising efforts can fall flat if employees are not viewed as brand ambassadors.

“

IT'S CRITICAL TO  
EDUCATE ALL  
EMPLOYEES ON  
THE BRAND'S  
VISION ”





# BUILDING PERSONAL BRANDS

Are you just another employee in the office or you're the employee?

.....

If another person had to do your job, would your clients, employer or team members have the same experience they have when working with you?

**T**hese questions have nothing to do with the kind of work you do but have everything to do with the kind of experience you deliver, consistently.

## **That's what personal branding is about.**

Delivering a predictable experience consistently in whatever you find yourself doing.

As an employee, this means that you have been able to establish an identity and reputation unique to you, within your professional field by showcasing your skills, expertise, values, and personality in a way that makes you different from others and positions you as a valuable asset.

## **Building a personal brand is beneficial in a lot of ways, but let's look at a few:**

- It helps you become more visible in your industry and puts you in front of new opportunities.
- It attracts the attention of people who value experts, which can help you advance in your career by opening doors for you.
- It makes you stand out from the crowd and differentiates you from other professionals.
- Provides you with a valuable network of like minded individuals, industry experts and potential mentors who give you support and guidance.



- Having a personal brand can help you position yourself as an authority and a leader in your industry, because when you share your knowledge and perspectives you increase your credibility and influence, which in turn makes people start trusting you.

### **So the big question is, how do you build your personal brand as an employee?**

There are a whole lot of ways but for the purpose of this writing, I'll be talking about just five(5) of them.

#### **• Be authentic and have strong values:**

Have something you stand for. Don't be that person who agrees with everyone and everything.

People should be able to see you or hear something about you and vouch for you saying "She's not that kind of person" or

"he wouldn't do that".

If you say you stand for the truth, let it be known. If you stand for honesty, let it show. Don't say one thing and do another. Talk about your values consistently and share why it's important for people to hold such values too.

#### **• Decide on a specific micro niche and focus on it:**

It doesn't matter what industry you work in, there is a micro niche for everyone.

A marketing professional working in a digital marketing agency may decide to focus on email marketing within the ecommerce industry.

This would help him/her to specialise, establish authority, target a specific audience, and foster personal growth.

One of the biggest pieces of advice I have received from an expert I admire is, "Stop being too many things to too many people."

Decide on a micro niche and focus on building a brand around that.

#### **• Build a strong online presence:**

Leverage various platforms and social media channels such as linkedin, facebook, twitter, etc.

Create and share relevant and valuable content which would help to show your expertise.

Optimise your profile with relevant keywords that would get you easily noticed

and visible.

**Note:** Building an online presence doesn't mean you should spend all your time online. You should be able to come up with a strategy that would help you be effective online and also not allow your work to suffer.

#### **• Have a brand story that connects people to you:**

This can be from your experiences, failures, struggles, etc.

I recently learned that your brand story doesn't have to be a negative story, or a grass to grace story.

So don't worry if you don't have any sad stories or struggles.

It should just be something that helps people connect with you and it also depends on the environment you find yourself in.

#### **• Professional Networking:**

Actively attend industry conferences, seminars, and networking events. Connect with other professionals, share your experiences, and exchange ideas.

By building relationships and being a visible presence in the industry, you expand your network and enhance your personal brand.

In conclusion, start building your personal brand today. I know you have a lot of potential inside you and the world is waiting for you to showcase all of it. Cheers.





# TECH & ITS IMPACTS IN THE WORKPLACE

.....the Mindset Shift Needed to Thrive



As I always say,  
“A book can save you 10  
years if you READ it.” You  
get decades of knowledge  
condensed in a few hours  
of reading. You save  
money, time and  
mistakes by  
reading.

**T**he world is advancing at an unprecedented pace and the impact of technology in the workplace is undeniable. It has transformed the way we work, communicate, and interact with one another.

Today, the use of technology in the workplace is pervasive. It is not limited to just one area but is used in various aspects such as communication, sales, human resource, marketing, customer service, etc.

However, as with any change, there are challenges that come with the integration of technology in the workplace. The good news is that these challenges can be overcome with the right mindset and skills.

In this article, we will explore the impact of technology in the workplace, including trends and potential opportunities for employees, as well as the mindset shift needed to thrive in a technology-driven workplace.

But first, let's look at both the positive and negative impacts of technology in the workplace:

## **The Positive Impact of Technology in the Workplace**

The integration of technology in the workplace has numerous advantages, making work easier and more efficient. One of the key advantages of technology is increased productivity.

Automation software has streamlined processes, reducing the time taken to perform routine tasks. This has allowed employees to focus on more complex tasks that require critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

Another advantage of technology is streamlined communication. Technology tools such as email, video conferencing, and instant messaging have eliminated communication barriers, allowing employees to communicate seamlessly regardless of their location. This has made remote working a reality, enabling companies and entrepreneurs to operate on a global scale without the need for a physical office.

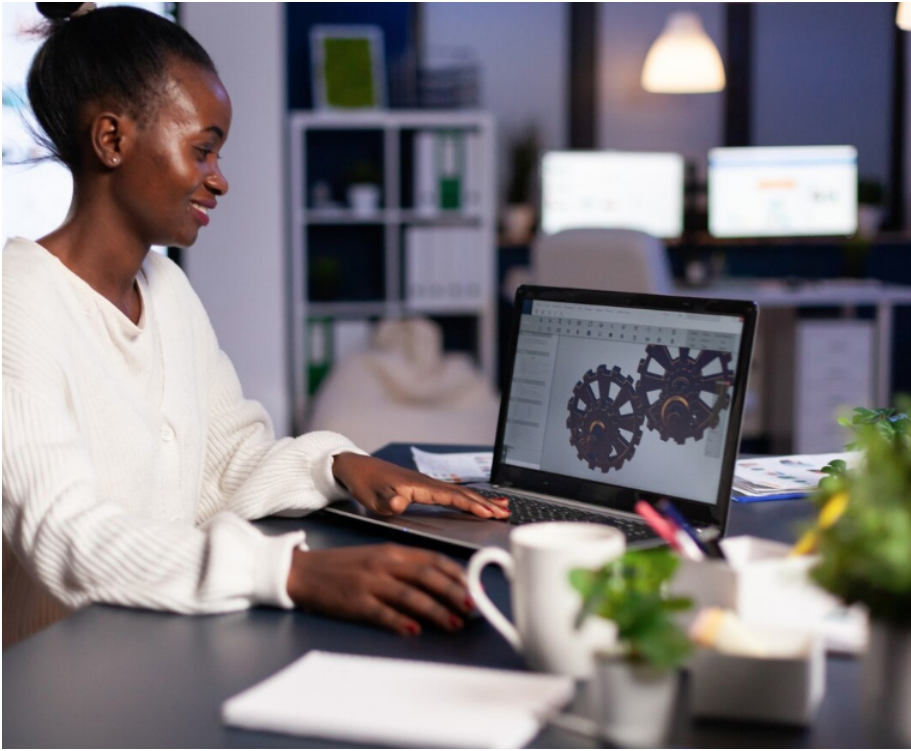
Additionally, technology has enabled organi-

zations to gather and analyze vast amounts of data, providing valuable insights that can inform strategic decision-making. For instance, data analytics tools can help companies identify trends and patterns that can be used to improve business processes, enhance customer experience, and identify potential opportunities for growth.

## **The Negative Impact of Technology in the Workplace**

While technology has numerous advantages in the workplace, it also has its fair share of disadvantages. One of the most significant disadvantages is job displacement. Automation and artificial intelligence technologies are increasingly replacing human workers in jobs that are repetitive or require minimal critical thinking skills. This has led to job loss and a shift in the nature of work.

Another disadvantage of technology is technological distractions. The use of technology in the workplace can be distracting, with employees spending a significant amount of time on social media, browsing the internet, or re-



sponding to personal emails. This can result in reduced productivity and can have a negative impact on employee engagement and motivation.

Overreliance on technology is another disadvantage. While technology can make work easier and more efficient, it can also lead to overdependence, where employees rely too heavily on technology tools to perform tasks that require critical thinking and problem-solving skills. This can result in a lack of creativity and innovation, which can limit the growth and success of organizations.

#### **FIVE MINDSET SHIFTS NEEDED TO THRIVE IN A TECH-DRIVEN WORKPLACE.**

##### **• Embrace Lifelong Learning**

The integration of technology in the workplace has created a need for employees to continuously learn and adapt to new technologies. Lifelong learning ensures that employees remain relevant in the ever-changing job market and can adapt to new technologies and industry trends.

Lifelong learning involves a commitment to learning throughout one's career and this can be achieved through MOOCs (Massive Open Online Course) offering free education.

##### **• Upskill or Reskill**

Upskilling refers to the process of improving an individual's existing skills to keep up with the changing industry trends and business demands. Upskilling involves the development of new skills that are in high demand in the job market. For instance, a software developer

learning a new programming language or a marketer learning new digital marketing strategies to enhance their skills and stay relevant in their profession.

Reskilling, on the other hand, involves learning entirely new skills to switch to a different industry or career path. For example, a cashier learning data analysis skills to become a data analyst or a manufacturing worker learning coding skills to transition to a career in software development.

##### **• Develop Emotional Intelligence (EQ)**

Emotional intelligence involves the ability to understand and manage one's own emotions and the emotions of others. Emotional intelligence allows employees to connect with one another on a deeper level, collaborate effectively, and navigate the complexities of a technology-driven workplace.

Emotional intelligence allows employees to build strong relationships with colleagues, clients, and stakeholders.

Emotional intelligence leads to better interpersonal skills which involve the ability to communicate effectively with others, build relationships, and work collaboratively.

Empathy is also a component of EQ and is about the ability to understand and share the feelings of others, which is essential in building strong relationships.

EQ also leads to resilience which involves the ability to cope with stress and bounce back from setbacks, which is important in a fast-paced, constantly changing work environment.

##### **• Cultivate a Growth Mindset**

A growth mindset involves the belief that abilities and intelligence can be developed through dedication and hard work. By adopting a growth mindset, employees can embrace change and view failure as an opportunity for growth rather than a setback or an obstacle to be avoided.

In a technology-driven workplace, cultivating a growth mindset is important as it encourages employees to embrace challenges, learn from failure, and continuously improve their skills.

A growth mindset also involves an openness to feedback. This involves seeking feedback from colleagues, supervisors, and clients to identify areas for improvement and growth.

##### **• Be an Avid Seeker of Knowledge**

Fall in love with books. Not academic books, but books in general. Wisdom likes to hide, and its favourite hiding place is in books.

Reading is like a software update for your brain. Find a way to feed your mind. Books are the cheapest way to get an education.

As I always say, "A book can save you 10 years if you READ it." You get decades of knowledge condensed in a few hours of reading. You save money, time and mistakes by reading.

As Frederick Douglas said, "Knowledge makes a man(woman) unfit to be a slave."

If you only depend on your employer, your teachers or the media for knowledge, anything they don't know, you too will never know.

#### **Conclusion**

The impact of technology in the workplace is here to stay and keeping up with trends involves staying up to date with the latest developments in one's industry, attending conferences, and networking with industry experts.

Technological advancement is inevitable, and it's important for workers to embrace it as an opportunity to evolve and transform their roles for the better.

Keeping up with trends is an opportunity for employees to remain relevant in this new era of work and contribute to the growth and success of their organizations.

Organizations can also play a role in helping employees thrive in a technology-driven workplace. They can invest in training programs and provide opportunities for employees to learn new skills and technologies.

They can also foster a culture of openness and feedback, where employees are encouraged to share their ideas and collaborate with one another.



# JOB READINESS-

## FOR NEW AFRICAN WORKFORCE AND THOSE TRANSITIONING BETWEEN JOBS AND INDUSTRIES

Article by Anisa Bimbo, PRM



**T**he COVID-19 pandemic has brought about significant changes in the macroeconomic landscape, leading to a shift in the way we work. Global rising inflation has certainly raised the cost of living, and we are feeling the pinch! As we navigate through these changes, it is essential that new entrants to the workforce and those transitioning between jobs are equipped with the necessary skills to succeed in the new ways of working.

According to a recent study by McKinsey & Company, only 16% of African employers believe that graduates are adequately prepared for the job market. This highlights the need for a focus on critical skills that are in high demand in the current job market.

**What is job readiness, exactly?** Job readiness can be defined as “the degree to which an individual possesses the requisite knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform effectively in a given job or occupation” (Hackett & Byars, 1996). This definition is supported by research in the field of industrial – organizational psychology. It focuses on understanding and improving workplace performance. It goes without saying that this is linked to job performance and satisfaction - which is something I certainly value from a wellness perspective.

By understanding these skills and competencies needed, we as the workforce can better prepare ourselves for the job market and increase our chances of suc-

cess. Here are some useful themes that speak to some of the skills we have established we need to have as jobseekers.

### **Develop Relevant Resume/CV Writing Skills**

In today's job market, having the skills to build a strong CV is more important than ever. As we emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic, competition for jobs has intensified, making it crucial that job seekers have a CV that stands out from the crowd. Recent research shows that employers are looking for candidates who can clearly demonstrate their contributions and the value they have added in their previous roles.

To achieve this, it's important to use cur-



rent templates and customize your CV to the specific job you are applying for. Additionally, having it peer reviewed, including relevant details succinctly and in a structured manner, can help increase your chances of landing your dream job. Remember, your CV is often the first impression a potential employer has of you, so make sure it's a strong one.

Therefore, developing skills to be able to craft an outstanding CV is crucial. With the advent of free informational material online in the form of videos, short courses, articles, and other relevant material, it has become more accessible and feasible to develop these skills in the comfort of your own home. Alternatively, there are professional services which are aimed at doing this for us to make it even easier to compete. Developing this skill and evolving it with the times we live in will go a long way and surely aid in yielding the results needed.

### WORK ON YOUR SOFT SKILLS

Employers are not only looking for candidates with technical skills, but also those who possess strong soft skills such as communication, teamwork, adaptability, and high emotional intelligence. It's important to develop these skills through practice and experience, and to be able to articulate them during an interview or on your resume.

Emotional intelligence is a crucial soft skill that employees must develop to succeed in the workplace. A recent study by the World Economic Forum found that emotional intelligence is one of the top 10 skills that are most in demand in the work environment. In the African context, where the job market is highly competitive and constantly evolving, having strong emotional intelligence can give job seekers a significant advantage.

Research has also shown that individuals with high emotional intelligence are more likely to be successful in their careers, as

they are able to communicate effectively, adapt to change, and resolve conflicts in a healthy manner. Furthermore, a study by Harvard Business Review found that employees with high emotional intelligence are more likely to be promoted, earn higher salaries, and hold leadership roles.

The good thing about having a strong emotional intelligence is that it also positively impacts one's personal life. In addition, having a growth mindset develops you in the different areas of your life and surely attracts opportunities and a good network. It is therefore important for employees to invest in developing their emotional intelligence skills and demonstrate them well.

### INTENTIONAL PERSONAL BRANDING

Personal branding is the process of creating a unique image and reputation for oneself in the professional world. It involves developing a clear, consistent, and most importantly, authentic mes-





sage about one's skills, values, and experiences. Usually, communicating that message through various channels such as social media, networking events, and personal interactions.

First impressions are crucial in the job market. Research has shown that a professional appearance and strong personal branding through your own personal values and beliefs, can significantly impact a job seeker's success. According to a study conducted by CareerBuilder, 41% of employers said they are more likely to promote employees who dress professionally, and 37% of employers said they are less likely to promote employees who have visible tattoos.

The latter can be taken with a pinch of salt depending on the industry and environment at hand. It is therefore important to understand these dynamics beforehand and ensure that you adapt well to the culture and expectations thereof.

In addition to physical appearance, personal branding can also play a role in job readiness.

A study by LinkedIn found that a strong personal brand can help job seekers stand out in the competitive job market. In addition, 77% of employers said they are more likely to hire a candidate with a strong professional brand. In the African market, where job opportunities can be limited, investing in a professional appearance, and developing a strong per-

sonal brand is key to job readiness and success.

#### **CULTURAL ADAPTABILITY**

According to a recent study conducted by the World Economic Forum, cultural adaptability is one of the top skills required for success in the modern workplace. As African companies increasingly operate in a global context and the workforce becomes more diverse, the ability to work effectively with people from diverse backgrounds is becoming increasingly important. In fact, research has shown that culturally diverse teams are more innovative and tend to outperform their homogeneous counterparts. Clearly, it is essential for new entrants and those in job transitions to develop cultural adaptability skills to succeed in today's workplace.

#### **STRONG TECHNICAL AND DIGITAL SKILLS**

Another important factor is the possession of currently relevant and required technical skills. There has been quite a shift in our operating landscape that some technical skills have become obsolete, and some are newly emerging. As the job market becomes increasingly specialized, employers are looking for candidates with specific technical skills that are relevant to their industry. It is therefore prudent to research your industry and required skills and align well with those.

Moreover, in the post-COVID job market, digital skills are essential. As companies digitize their operations, employees must be proficient in technology to remain relevant. According to a survey by the International Finance Corporation, 80% of African employers cite a lack of digital skills as a barrier to business growth.

For instance, the rise of remote work has become a game-changer in the job market. According to a report by the International Labour Organization, remote work has increased by over 70% in Africa since the onset of the pandemic. Therefore, individuals who can work remotely must possess the necessary skills to do so effectively. As the African job market evolves, it is essential to keep up with emerging trends.

In conclusion, we have seen that we are now operating in more competitive environments that have also evolved. It is key to also stay true and authentic to oneself as you develop yourself and exist in this eco-system.

As much as the world is changing and expecting a lot from us, it is imperative that we evolve in a way that suits our environment and allows us to still enjoy what we do. Let's get out there and reach our highest potential as we adopt and develop some of these skills highlighted. And remember, learning never stops!



# CELEBRATING AFRICAN WOMEN

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# MAKING EDUCATION FASHIONABLE

PROF MAMOKGETHI PHAKENG

[ 10TH VICE-CHANCELLOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN ]



**M**eet Mamokgethi Phakeng, South African-born Professor of Mathematics Education, B1 NRF-rated Scientist and internationally recognized Keynote Speaker.

She exceptionally served as Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cape Town for 4 years and 7 months.

She holds a Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Mathematics Education and a Master of Science (MSc) in Mathematics Education from the University of the Witwatersrand and a Bachelor of Science (BSc) in Pure Mathematics from the University of North-West (formerly the University of Bophuthatswana).

Professor Phakeng is a B1 NRF-rated Scientist, which indicates she has considera-

ble international recognition.

She previously served as Founding Director of the Wits Centre for Mathematics & Science Education, Vice Principal of Research and Innovation, and acting Executive Dean of the College of Science, Engineering, and Technology at the University of South Africa (UNISA).

She has also served as a member of the board of the CSIR from 2015 to 2017, President of Convocation of Wits University from 2011 to 2016, National President of the Association for Mathematics Education of South Africa (AMESA) from 2002 to 2006, and Chairperson of the Board of the South African Mathematics Foundation (SAMF) from 2005 to 2006.

In 2008, she became the first black South African researcher appointed to co-chair a study commissioned by the International Commission on Mathematical Instruction.

Prof Mamokgethi Phakeng is the Founder of Adopt-A-Learner, which aims at recognizing, promoting and encouraging learner excellence in mathematics and science in black schools; and providing financial assistance to outstanding but financially underprivileged learners between Grades 7 and 12 by means of annual scholarships.

“Don’t wish it was easier, wish you were better. Don’t wish for fewer problems, wish for more skills. Don’t wish for fewer challenges, wish for more wisdom”



“The truth is....it will never get easier, and challenges will always be there - how you deal with them is the real challenge”

Prof Mamokgethi Phakeng







# BE YOUR OWN COMPETITION!

**MALEBOGO MELBA MPUGWA**

EXECUTIVE HEAD OF HUMAN RESOURCES  
DE BEERS GROUP

MESSAGE TO  
WOMEN

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**B**e your own competition and strive to be the best version of yourself. Being the best version of yourself means:

- **Show gratitude.** What separates privilege from entitlement is gratitude – Brene Brown
- **Forgive easily.** Especially yourself. The weak cannot forgive. Forgiveness is an attribute of the strong – Mahatma Gandhi
- **Be kind.** Especially to yourself. Everyone you meet is fighting a battle you know nothing about. Be kind. Always. – widely attributed to Philo and Ian Maclaren
- **Stand for others' success.** Strong people stand for themselves, but stronger people stand up for others. - Chris Gardner
- **Have grit** – passion and perseverance to meet your goals. Stay the course. Hold yourself and others to a higher standard

WHEN IN DOUBT,  
TAKE IT ALL TO  
GOD. AFTER ALL,  
WHAT IS THE  
ALTERNATIVE?

## BIOGRAPHY

She is an experienced human resources executive with a strong track record in talent management, performance management, business transformation, organisation design and leadership development. An executive who has global experience in leading diverse, cross cultural teams.

A true collaborator who brings together different perspectives to create win-win outcomes for all stakeholders. An award winner of the Top 100 Global Inspirational Women in Mining (2018). Non-Executive Director in a global insurance company. An assessor for London Business School Executive MBA applicants. A pioneer for change and growth who is dedicated to coaching and mentoring emerging future leaders that are purpose driven and embody putting people and planet first.

Mpugwa believes that this is an opportune time to reframe this world so that it is better for everyone and to widen up spaces of opportunity for the next generation of leaders.

**A**s we all continue to navigate through these challenging times, it's important to take a step back and evaluate where we are in our personal and professional lives. So, I wanted to check in with you and see where your headspace is as we end Q1 and I draw close to 6 months as CHRO for De Beers Group.

How are you doing with respect to your goals, both personally and professionally? Are you making progress or do you feel stuck? Perhaps it's time to re-evaluate your approach and identify areas where you need to change or improve. Remember, growth requires stepping out of our comfort zone and taking action.

While it's important to have strong relationships, it's equally important to ensure that those relationships are mutually beneficial. Take a moment to reflect on your current relationships and see if they align with your

goals and values. If not, it might be time to make some changes.

Speaking of changes, have you considered switching from time management to mind management? Time is a finite resource, but the power of the mind is infinite. By focusing on mind management, you can improve your productivity, creativity, and overall well-being.

I want to remind you of the incredible power of the mind. Our thoughts shape our reality, and with a positive and growth-oriented mindset, anything is possible. So, keep pushing forward, stay focused on your goals, and remember that you have the power to create the life you want.

Finally, remember to keep updating your journal and checking in with your accountability partner. I look forward to hearing about all the amazing things you continue to accomplish this year!







# BE PART OF A MASTERMIND GROUP

MS KATLEGO T. KABOTHO



One of my mentors, Mr. Napoleon Hill, explains in his book, *Think and Grow Rich*, that the power of the Mastermind is crucial in business. He defines it as;

“The coordination of knowledge and effort between two or more people who work towards a definite purpose in a spirit of harmony...no two minds ever come together without thereby creating a third, invisible intangible force, which may be likened to a third mind”, also known as, the Mastermind.

This speaks to the fact that two minds are better than one. This is true in problem-solving and strategic planning for the business. In the past month, I have found myself in situations that would have been handled better if there indeed was a mastermind group. The load is shared and the burden is made easy. Please read the book if you already have not.

1. Surround yourself with people, friends, and family who will be there for you, people who can understand your challenges and help you through them.
2. Never ever give up, at times there is a need to perhaps re-evaluate strategy and change a few things in order to achieve certain goals, shifting but never ever giving up.
3. Read, read, read, read books that will help you grow. Equip yourself with knowledge, then apply that knowledge to the best of your ability.
4. Put in the work, in most businesses, especially start-up businesses, everything starts and stops with you. Therefore, put in the work because if you do not, that's the end of you.
5. Belief in oneself, without this, we might as well call it a day. Belief in yourself will help you harness the power within and will fuel your vision and keep you going.

*“The load is shared and the burden is made easy”*

6. Finally, and my favorite, have faith. This will carry you when nothing else will. For me, it is my faith in God, this has kept me and is still keeping me afloat. Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen, Hebrews 11:1.

My fellow entrepreneurs, keep the flame burning, through the struggle and strife, keep going. It will all pay off!

## BIOGRAPHY

Katlego's decade-long work experience encompasses a Sales and Marketing Manager position at one of the country's top medical supplies companies, where she worked for three years. She was the only female in senior management, this elevated her to her current position by exposing her to the corporate world. Previously, she held a position as a senior Medical Laboratory Scientific officer at the Scottish Livingstone Hospital laboratory (SLHL), a public laboratory under the Ministry of Health. Katlego worked there for a little over half a decade, in the different diagnostic departments of the laboratory. Prior to SLHL, she worked for a year at one of the biggest private medical laboratories in the country.

During her years in SLHL, Katlego studied and qualified as an Epidemiologist (MSc) with Stellenbosch University in Cape Town, South Africa. She has a unique combination of technical knowledge, corporate experience as well as an evidence-based research skill set all from a medical perspective, this not only sets Maranyane apart from the rest but also adds to the strong team of knowledgeable and experienced experts. Growth is a mindset, and

we cannot wait to see where this journey leads us, please, join us and let us journey far together.

Katlego is the vice chairperson of the Association for Women in Science Botswana, otherwise known as AWIS- BW. This non-profit organization association is mandated to develop an interactive and resourceful scientific platform for young women in Botswana.

The association inspires and empowers future generations to be proud of their national scientific contributions to the 4IR and twenty-first (21st) century and to promote and mobilize Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) in Botswana by encouraging young females to engage in sciences and providing forums for educational support.

Kabotho farms is another business that Katlego has founded and maintains, through the farm she produces strawberries, a business Katlego does on the side as part of her efforts to build multiple streams of income. She does this as well as small-stock farming. Through Kabotho farms Katlego maintains a farm manager and several other employees during harvest.









Accomplished Executive Director of Human Resources offering more than 26 years of comprehensive experience developing HR functions, cultivating positive work environment, and collaborating with all levels of management. Expertise in planning and driving staff engagement and alignment to the Bank's purpose, implementation of strategic reward systems, staff engagement and driving a client centric culture. Offers an MSc. Strategic Management with proven history of success in policy development, employee relations and conflict resolution techniques. Currently leading the journey of a commercially astute Human Capital Team that is delving into using big data to draw insights that are driving the culture change journey.

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# COMMUNICATION TRANSFORM PERCEPTIONS

TAAZIMA KALA-ESSACK

Experienced Lead Consultant  
HOTWIRE PRC

Even as we speak of fighting gender bias and pushing for greater gender parity, we need to recognize that it does not sit solely with institutions or even global bodies. It does not sit with any gender. It begins with all of us, and in the small, deliberate, and considerate inclusive behaviors and support, we can and must show every day. If you are in any position of influence or power, support those around you and use that influence for good. Help each other; support each other. As Rupri Kaur once said, “I stand on the sacrifices of a million women before me thinking what can I do to make this mountain taller so the women after me can see farther - legacy”.



## BIOGRAPHY

Tazima Kala is a Chartered PR consultant working in Botswana. She is passionate about the power of the written and spoken word, as well as how communications can truly transform perception, engagement and even relationships. She writes extensively on this as a guest contributor for numerous local and international platforms.

A lover of travel, literature and learning, she is passionate playing a more integral role in helping professionalise the PR discipline with greater ethical best practice, strategic thinking and building organisational cultures premised on empathy, kindness and community. In this space, she has applied learnings on behavioural psychology and organisational culture to develop a dedicated tool to help cul-

tivate greater happiness and associated productivity to enhance team dynamics and performance.

She is a Member of the Public Relations Institute of Southern Africa and sits on the Boards and Committees of the Association of Communications Agency Botswana, the Chartered Institute of Public Relations (CIPR) International, and NGO, Learn To Play.







# PACK YOUR NURTURING INCLINATION TO YOUR AREA OF EXPERTISE

**NIKITA MAKWANA**

Entrepreneur, Chinese Language & Culture educator, Intercultural Strategist,  
Recording artist, Speaker & Podcaster.



**T**he ability to nurture is one of a woman's most powerful characteristics. We all know, have seen, and heard about women's natural inclination to bring out the best in their loved ones and everything around them. Oh, and yes, you have been that kind of a woman.

When we go into the business corridors, we sometimes leave this nurturing superpower behind. We even forget that we have it at times. Sometimes we are unaware that it can be used as we build our careers too.

I challenge you to channel your nurturing skills into your field of profession. It is already within you. You do not have to search for it from the outside. It is your arsenal and when utilized, it will propel your business and your career to greater heights.

As you nurture your business, just like the flowers you've planted in your backyard garden, it will be sustained and it will stand the test of time. As you nurture your team, they will bear the fruits you anticipate.

You have done it before in your family, for your loved ones, and your friends and you've seen them blossom and there is no doubt that this nurturing ability will do magic for your career too.



## BIOGRAPHY

**B**acked up with almost 5 years of work experience, Nikita Makwana is an entrepreneur, Chinese Language & Culture educator, Intercultural Strategist, Recording artist, Speaker & Podcaster. She is selected a 2023 Forbes Under 30 Summit Africa Delegate as a change maker and entrepreneur in the field of language and Culture.

She holds a master's degree in International Education of Chinese from Beijing Language and Culture University, China. She also holds a degree in Sinology from The University of Botswana. She is the founder of International Language Hub, an enterprise that pivots on foreign language teaching and providing Intercultural Intelligence training. She has over 3 years of experience

in teaching the Chinese language and Culture at The University of Botswana (CIUB/Okavango Research Institute) and Botswana International University of Science and Technology.

For almost 5 years, she has worked as an intercultural strategist, helping individuals, executives, and teams manage the difficult and complex processes that come with expatriation, international collaboration, or performing projects in a multicultural setting. A core host of the Makwana's podcast

She is a recording gospel artist. She released her debut Modimo Makgonatsotlhe 2021 & Ke nako Yame, a new song launched in April 2023. Her music streams on BTV, Radio stations, Youtube & Spotify.



# MS. ABA

**AUGUSTINA AUSTIN**  
COUNTRY | GHANA

MULTI-FACETED ARTIST: A PRESENTER, BROADCASTER,  
PUBLIC SPEAKER, PERFORMER AND CREATIVE ENTREPRENEUR

---

**Personal Quotation**

*“You’re only as strong as your  
mindset, as successful as  
your strategy is”*





# MS. ABA

SHE IS A COMMUNICATION STRATEGIST, BUSINESS OWNER AND THE FOUNDER OF BYAUSTIN, A COMMUNICATION FIRM FOCUSED TO HELP INTERNATIONAL COMPANIES AND BRANDS STRATEGIZE AND IMPLEMENT AN EFFECTIVE BRANDING STRATEGY.







**M**S.ABA also known as Augustina Austin, is a multi-faceted artist: a presenter, broadcaster, public speaker, performer and creative entrepreneur.

MS.ABA discovered she had a natural skill to present and perform after winning Face of Ghana Holland 2009, a beauty pageant focused on benchmarking beauty with a mission to contribute to the Ghanaian community in the Netherlands. As a Beauty Queen, MS.ABA moderated events related to the Dutch-Ghanaian community. This kick started her career as an international presenter.

As a presenter, MS.ABA has interviewed and interacted with noted Africans like Rehman Kasule, Bozoma Saint-John (Netflix), H.E. Ameenah Gurib-Fakim, Lucy Quist, H.E. John Kumah, H.E. Gifty Ohene-Konadu and more. In entertainment, she has shared the stage and interacted with Sauti Sol, Wiyaala, Dobet Gnahoré, Skiibi and more noted art-

ists. As a speaker, her journey and experiences are highly acclaimed for events that focus on Africa, entertainment, women empowerment and business development. MS.ABA has been a speaker for Africa Talks, Village Diaries Amsterdam, Purpose Woman Seminar and more.

MS.ABA is a freelance presenter, voice-over artist and broadcaster. You can listen to her every Sunday from 7pm (CET) on Hiradio on her weekly show: Africa on Focus, a radio show aimed to promote entrepreneurship and success stories to African Millennials.

Africa on Focus the Podcast, the recap of the radio show is available on Soundcloud, Spotify and iTunes. The show has featured Dentaa Amoateng MBE (UK), Esther Dankwah (Africa Olympics, NL), Busi Sizani (Uber, NL), Leroy Niemel (NL), Eddie Kadi (UK), Palgrave Boaky-Danquah (Kandifo Institute, GH) and more.

When she is not presenting, MS.ABA is performing between the Netherlands and Ghana. In October 2020, she released her debut EP Rooted. Available on Spotify, Apple Music and YouTube Music. In 2022, she is yet to release her follow-up EP.

In 2018, MS.ABA was awarded by the Tema Citizens Club of the Netherlands for outstanding vision, dedication and distinguished service to the Ghanaian community of the Netherlands. In March 2019, the presenter was nominated as Best Radio Presenter of the Year and awarded Best Female MC of the Year by Afro-Diaspora Influential Awards.

MS.ABA is a communication strategist, business owner and the founder of BYAustin, a communication firm focused to help international companies and brands strategize and implement an effective branding strategy.



# MENTAL HEALTH IN THE WORKPLACE

BY AMANDA HELMAN

Mental health in the workplace is a multi-faceted feat. It entails the whole of an employees' wellbeing in four main areas:

- Emotional health
- Physical health
- Spiritual health
- Relational health

Workplaces can cultivate change not only in the individual but the environment between employees that leads to change in the home and the community as a whole.

## 1. EMOTIONAL HEALTH

World Health Organisation Organization Africa acknowledges that there are higher risks of mental and emotional health needs that are not being addressed for many employers. Some examples of mental health symptoms include the following: withdrawal, isolation, frequent callouts or leave of absence, ongoing sadness, change in work ethic, increase in workload, shift in conversations, frequently late, and lack of initiation. Hidden areas of emotional health include racing thoughts, anxiousness, sadness, and pain that happens with ongoing thoughts of hopelessness. The thinking patterns of employees are more



challenging to identify.

WHO Africa acknowledges the need to have additional ways to support employees in the area of mental health. Funding and lack of resources is an area of focus to better support many African countries. It is an important topic to ensure conversations are held about mental health to reduce the stigma.

## 2. PHYSICAL HEALTH

Physical health is also impacted by emotional health. Employees

who have experienced any form of childhood trauma or ongoing trauma according to the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) will be impacted. ACEs study was conducted in the United States and directly link trauma and negative experiences with a higher correlation to medical diseases due to the impact on the emotional and physical state of the body. Example ACEs include sexual trauma, physical trauma, domestic violence, poverty, divorce, medical trauma, emotional abuse, community trauma or violence, and physical neglect. The higher the



Communities that discuss mental health, trauma, and negative experiences provide the opportunities for employees to be vulnerable and receive support.



ACEs score, the greater physical and emotional impact on the individual over time. It is important for employers to be aware of the impact of ACEs.

### 3. SPIRITUAL HEALTH

Spiritual health includes any form of faith or belief in something greater than oneself. Several studies and research have found that belief in something greater than oneself has led to more peace and awareness of one's dependence on others. Communities that discuss mental health, trauma, and negative experiences provide the opportunities for employees to be vulnerable and receive support. Stigma around conversations about mental health is important to evolve. Spiritual practices that

have found to impact the body include peace and specific mindfulness to help ground the body.

### 4. RELATIONAL HEALTH

Relational health includes the relationship with self, with a significant other, or with family and friends. Often, many employees may not have healthy relational health in any of these areas. Without any community or close friendships, it leads to higher risk of mental health and isolation.

It is important for the work environment to be a place of safety, support, and encouragement to all employees.

The four areas of wellbeing and mental health in the workplace is

a needed focus across all countries in Africa, and across the globe.

It is important for employers to be aware of the impact of mental health and how to advocate for greater mental health awareness in their specific environments.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Preventing Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs): Leveraging the Best Available Evidence. U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Division of Violence Prevention; 2019.

**2021 Regional Office of WHO Africa: Mental Health Statistics**





# MOKY, THE AFRICAN STORYTELLER

**M**oky Makura was born in Nigeria, educated in England, and has lived in London, Johannesburg, and Lagos. She has been a TV presenter, producer, author, publisher, and a successful entrepreneur in her own right. She is currently the Executive Director of Africa No Filter, a donor collaborative focused on shifting the African

narrative.

Moky started her media career as the African Anchor and field reporter for South Africa's award-winning news and actuality show – Carte Blanche. She conceptualized, co-produced, and presented a lifestyle TV series for the pan-African pay-TV channel MNet called

“Living It”, which focused on the lifestyles of the African continent's wealthy elite. She also played a lead role in the groundbreaking and popular MNet Pan-African drama series Jacob's Cross.

Her book Africa's Greatest Entrepreneurs with a foreword written by Richard Branson featured on the top 10 best-selling business books in South Africa when it launched.

Moky has since compiled and published a number of non-fiction titles under her imprint MME Media. Titles include South Africa's Greatest Entrepreneurs, Going Global which tells the stories of South Africa's most successful global companies, and a biography of one of its top entrepreneurs; Herman Mashaba, called Black Like You.

Moky started a fiction book series called Nollybooks aimed at getting young Africans to read, and then adapted the series for television co-producing over 21 television movies for the South African TV station etv. The books are available on Worldreader and Okadabooks.

*“Until lions learn to write,  
hunters will tell their stories  
for them!”*

*Personal Quotation*

**MOKY MAKURA**

TV PRESENTER, PRODUCER, AUTHOR,  
PUBLISHER & ENTREPRENEUR





# PALESA, A SHINING DIAMOND



“NEVER BE LIMITED BY  
OTHER PEOPLES  
IMAGINATION”

- DR. MAE JEMISON

● **YEAR 2021:**

Palesa Molefe was crowned Miss Botswana and went on to represent Botswana at the 70th Miss World 2022 pageant in Puerto Rico.

● **YEAR 2022:**

Establishes Palesa Olorato Molefe Foundation

“2nd most influential woman in Botswana 2022”  
-MosadiTota

● **YEAR 2023:**

**DIAMONDS ARE FOREVER**

Palesa Molefe hosted Miss World 2021, Karolina Bielawska on her visit to Botswana - the first time a reigning Miss World queen made a visit to Botswana in history and they had the rare opportunity to hold real Botswana diamonds at DTC Botswana.



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