



Beyond the ordinary



**BEYOND
OUTSOURCING**

Performance Improvement
- Predictable Outcomes™

Beyond Outsourcing

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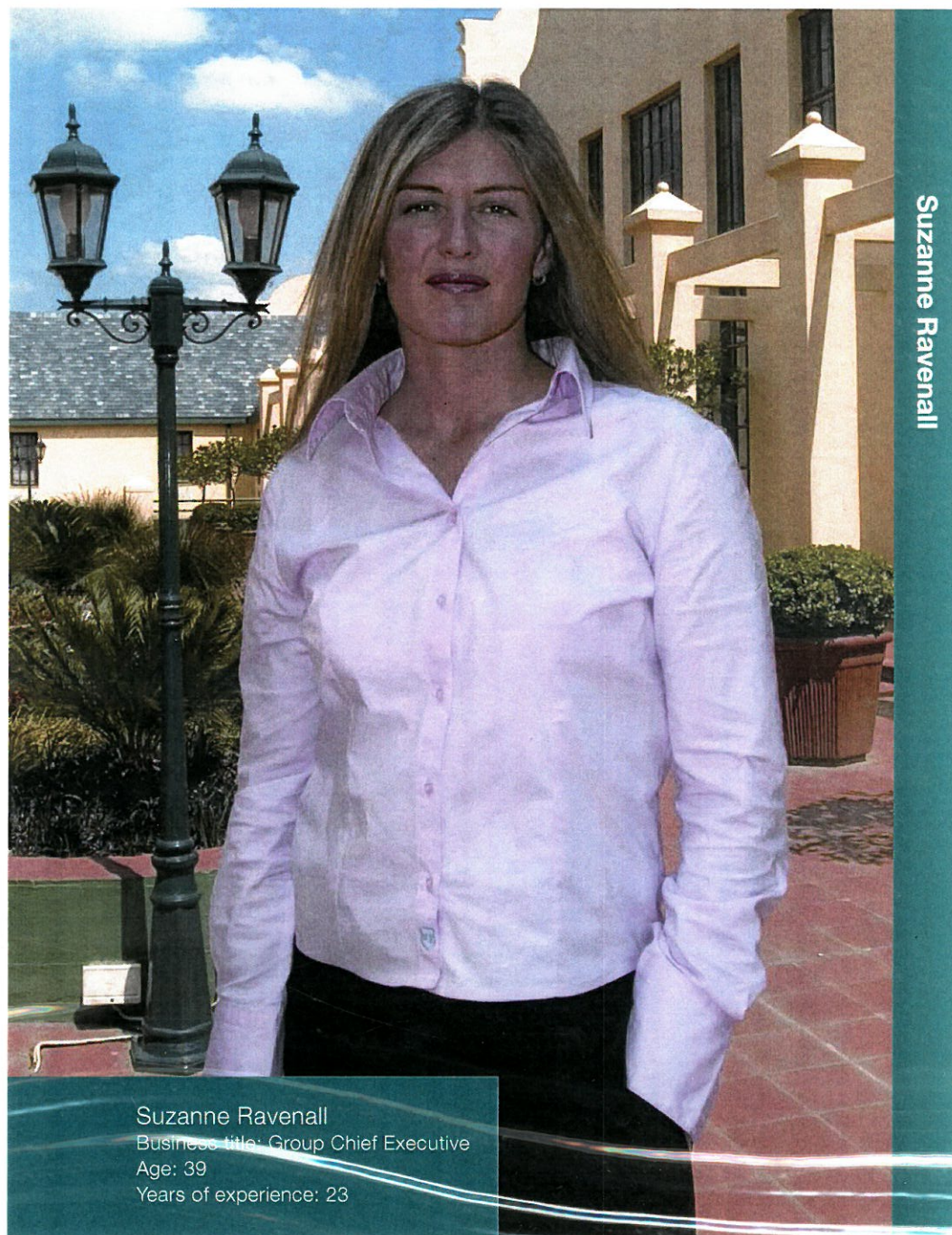
Management style

Ravenall believes that leadership and management are vastly different. 'Many people don't understand the difference between the two,' she asserts.

The Beyond Outsourcing Group Chief Executive believes that management is about operations control on a day-to-day basis. 'Leadership, on the other hand, is about looking forward in terms of vision and strategy, creating an environment for the business and the people to flourish within, getting the right people on the bus and driving it with them to achieve the vision,' she maintains.

Ideally, both are necessary to run within this ever changing environment.

Ravenall regards the setting and the reviewing of strategy with key stakeholders as one of her most important responsibilities. 'This is vital to ensure that we have a clear way forward. Then I need to ensure that the key components are in place in order to deliver on the strategy.'



Suzanne Ravenall

Suzanne Ravenall
Business title: Group Chief Executive
Age: 39
Years of experience: 23



LEADERSHIP EXCELLENCE SOUTH AFRICA

OCT 08



Significantly, she says one of her most important responsibilities is that of sourcing talent. 'I am passionate about ensuring that we have the right talent on board,' she reveals.

Once 'the right talent' is on board, retention is key, and so Ravenall drives the value system of the company to ensure that there is a healthy environment. One of the many ways in which she achieves this is via a share scheme for staff members. Launched this year, it has made a large percentage of the company's shares available to directors and staff. 'It's a great way of rewarding people and engaging and encouraging those that are assisting to build the business,' she reports. Stakeholder relationships are managed with 'brutal honesty'. 'We believe in unimpeachable integrity. We have a strong set of values that are both practical and specific. Core models for success demonstrate that 50% of the success of organisations are made up of behaviours and practices, all of which stem from our value system. We focus hard on making sure that these values live within our environment particularly with our

staff. If people are not okay with these values, and they are not values shared by them personally, that's absolutely fine – but we would rather that they probably didn't work here. It sounds like a hard line I know, but we are passionate about issues such as integrity and empowerment, so we don't compromise them,' she explains.

Work philosophy and managing the balance

Ravenall is constantly learning. 'I am so grateful that I decided to build this business because I have learned so much. Naturally, I have learned a great deal about business, and leadership, but I have also learned so much about life and people. The journey is exactly that, a journey. You will never know enough and each day offers something new,' she reveals.

This meant that she made some errors, but she has ultimately benefited from them. 'I have had many challenges, but I have learnt from them. Have I made mistakes? Yes. Have I learned? Yes. Has my life been enriched as a result? Absolutely.'

The journey is exactly that, a journey. You will never know enough and each day offers something new.

She stresses that making mistakes is part of the learning process. 'We try not to make too many mistakes but, when we do, we learn from them. If you lose the learning, you have lost the whole essence. My approach is to learn as much as you can, then plough that back to as many people as you can touch.'

This motivational leader reveals that she is inspired by people. 'I am continually impressed by what people achieve.

On the one side, people coming from adverse backgrounds and struggles and the amazing talents they are able to find amongst this, or it can be the little things that people do – the offer of help; the fact that they go the extra mile... our staff are amazing; I believe we are fortunate to continuously experience this,' she maintains.

If there was one piece of advice she could give to aspiring leaders regarding a work philosophy, it would be not to lose the lesson. 'Constantly evaluate and reflect on what went well, what didn't go well and what you can do to change the situation in future,' she urges.

Reason for excellence

Beyond Outsourcing is currently in a continued growth phase. We are now licensing our toolkits and entering an international expansion phase, and that's really exciting,' says Ravenall.

This growth, however, is accompanied by challenges – largely because the company is sailing into uncharted waters. 'Our major challenges involve finding the right partners in each location as we move into Africa, and also protecting our intellectual property,' Ravenall explains.

These challenges are being addressed by careful planning and a thorough search for the right people and partners.

When it comes to the latter, a lack of skills remains an ongoing and significant challenge – but, under Ravenall's guidance, the company has addressed this in a creative and innovative manner.

'Instead of complaining about the lack of skills, we have brought unskilled people into the business, trained them and ultimately ended up with a person who has the right attitude and the right skills,' she explains. This process has resulted in a new commercial product which enables client companies to do the same thing.

In a similar vein, Beyond Outsourcing has also trained managers so successfully that this has become a saleable product for the company. 'We have experienced success when it comes to management growth. Our "Managers as Coaches" programme teaches managers necessary skills – we have used it internally with great success and this is now being offered to external customers too,' says Ravenall.

There have been many successes in the business, but Ravenall's greatest achievement to date has been building a terrific team of people. Not that she takes any credit for this: 'We are going into a new growth cycle now and I am so pleased that »

Academic qualifications

SSC certificate

First job

Secretary

Mentor

Many people have added value;
no specific mentor

Best management decision

Starting Beyond Outsourcing

Most recent management challenge

'All business challenges are exciting; my
greatest challenge, however, has probably
been recruiting the wrong person for the
job as everything stems from there.'

Time-out activities

Reading, gardening, spending time with
the family and dogs, long holidays with
no cellular telephone coverage

Favourite toy(s)

Dogs

Retirement destination

Somewhere close to a beach

we have a really good brand and great people
throughout the business.'

Looking forward

Over the next five years Ravenall would like to
see the company expand into the international
marketplace – overseas and also into Africa. 'This
means that we will need to think globally. It will be
vitally important for us to find additional competent
people who can take the business to another level
of sophistication,' she ponders.

Naturally, along the way, her role will change: 'I will
still be steering the ship, but I do appreciate that
this will become a greater and more challenging
ship to navigate as we grow,' she says. There is
little doubt that finding the right people and
partners will be the greatest challenge. 'We are
entering an untapped market; never before have
we truly attacked African and international markets.
As such, we will need great and accountable
people to drive this process,' she reports.

'We are all now trading in a global economy,'
Ravenall says. 'This is a scenario which requires a
change of approach. As leaders we need to be
more open-minded and more collaborative, both
locally and internationally. We need to hunt as a
pack rather than as individuals.'

Beyond Outsourcing's product range will also
expand substantially. 'We have already acquired a
number of new licences to enhance our business
as we strive to deliver performance improvement in
people and operations. For instance, through our
new management development arm, we now
provide behaviour coaching and sales performance
improvement training.'

**Local competitive business
environment**

Beyond Outsourcing is in a unique position: it

Favourite quote

'Cherish your visions and your
dreams as they are the children
of your soul; the blueprint of your
ultimate achievements'
– Napoleon Hill

**Employment history**

Commenced employment as a secretary
with Hogg Robinson Travel in the United
Kingdom in 1985; started as area sales
manager for a terry company called Stena
Sealink in 1987 and went on to fulfill many
roles in sales/marketing and training; account
director at FMCG/Mercury One 2 One in
1992; came to South Africa 15 years ago;
contracted to Transtel in 1994; moved to
Vodacom for a four-year contract working
in various contracting roles in 1994; started
this business in 1997.

doesn't have direct competitors. 'On a local front,
we don't appear to have any direct competitors.
There are other outsourcing companies in South
Africa, of course, that play within the verticals that
we operate in, but they don't provide exactly the
same services,' Ravenall reveals.

More and more companies are outsourcing, she
says, as they realise that they simply cannot do it
all. 'They recognise that partnerships to deliver
service either to staff or customers, where the core
competency of that partner can be utilised, is key.
South Africa is slowly catching up to the rest of
the world in regard to business transformation
outsourcing. While business transformation
outsourcing is used more widely in other parts of
the world, the local environment needs to undergo
a development and educational phase before it will
mimic international trends.'

Of course, Beyond Outsourcing has not been
without its challenges. Like all companies, it has
had to deal with power cuts, rising fuel prices and
crime, for instance. Power cuts have been
addressed by installing generators. Fuel prices, »

on the other hand, have had to be passed onto customers. At the same time, the company has made a massive effort to assist employees who have been impacted by crime. 'We have an employee wellbeing service for staff members and their immediate families that assists victims of crime through counselling or for those staff members who may be encountering financial difficulties by providing them with financial planning assistance. This service is paid for by the company – we believe that we have a responsibility to provide a mechanism to assist staff to overcome these challenges,' says Ravenall.

Environmental challenges have been addressed by going paperless. This has also reduced costs (the stationery bill and courier costs dropped dramatically) while the company could dispose of filing cabinets, freeing up extra floor space.

Furthermore, Beyond Outsourcing recycles all its PCs and it encourages staff members to drive cars that are less than five years old.

International achievements

While no offshore acquisitions are planned, this does not mean that Beyond Outsourcing is limiting its scope of activities to the South African market. It is aggressively moving up into Africa, with Nigeria being its first target market. 'We would like to be represented in all the major countries on this continent,' says Ravenall. Africa is only the tip of Beyond Outsourcing's iceberg. 'We are building our technology and processes into toolkits that we can licence all over the world,' explains Ravenall. Ravenall admits the international market will be challenging. 'We have never done this before, so it's bound to be demanding,' she comments. But, of course, this does not deter this inspirational leader; after all, it is clear that she thrives on challenge.

A demonstration of her ability, Ravenall was one of 11 people in 2007 that were recognised for being one of the top female entrepreneurs in the world by the Leading Women of the World organisation. ■

'Suzanne does not only lead, she does it with heart and inspires those around her to take on challenges previously thought of as impossible. When she enters the room, the lights go on and, when she leaves, the lights stay on in people's minds as they are enabled to bravely take on a new tomorrow.'

– Riaan Steenberg
Head of financial modelling & consulting

'Suzanne is a dynamic leader with a passion for people which is reflected in the staff dynamics and skills development programmes at Beyond Outsourcing. I have learned so much about the company from her. Her enthusiasm and energy levels really motivate me.'

– Brenda Haynes
Account co-ordinator

'Suzanne has been a true inspiration, not just to me but to each and every individual she interacts with. She encompasses all that a leader should be. She doesn't just command respect but respects every individual in this organisation. With her at the helm, this company knows no bounds.'

– Lourens Van As
Project manager



Company profile

Industry sector: Business Transformation Outsourcing

Description of business activity: Beyond Outsourcing provides Business Transformation Outsourcing, Labour Management and Training, either through singular service offerings or full performance improvement solutions.

Products/services offered: Beyond Delivery Programme Management, Management Consulting, Business Process Re-engineering, Change Management; Beyond Technology infrastructure and development services (provision of proprietary software and alliance partner software solutions focused around the HR and CRM space); Beyond Managed Services (outsourcing, co-sourcing) through a managed services factory in the areas of Human Resources and Training, Customer Relationship Management, Supply Chain Management, Enterprise Asset Management and Back Office Management. Labour Managed Services (attraction/training/placement) and Training & Development (sales performance improvement, management development and behaviour coaching).

JSE-listing: N/A

Annual turnover: N/A

Nett profit: N/A

Number of staff: 300

Empowerment Level: Level 3 contributor