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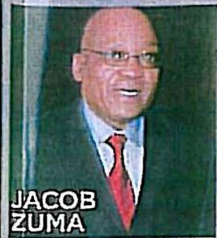
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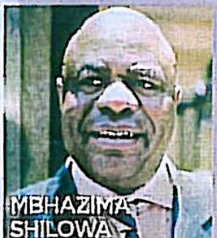
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LEADING WITH AUTHENTICITY

We spoke to three executives with different leadership "brands" who each believe in the power of remaining true to oneself

WRITTEN BY TAMARA OBERHOLSTER

PRITHINEE NAIDOO, HR EXECUTIVE: ENGINEERING & PROJECTS COMPANY (E&PC)

With years of experience in HR management, Naidoo believes in challenging her leadership mandate and going beyond its boundaries to get the best possible results for the organisation.

What's the most rewarding thing about being a business leader?

I'm proud of the number of young people I've grown into leadership positions. It's important to me to ensure that people's potential is nurtured and fulfilled.

What lessons have you learnt from your leadership journey?

I've learnt that you need to value relationships just as highly as results and surround yourself with competent people. You need to delegate. It's also imperative to have a sound knowledge of your subject matter. Skills development and retention are vital in my game, so being innovative and creative is critical. Developing a network of highly reputable leaders has also been an important resource in fulfilling a business partner role to the rest of the executive team. As an HR executive, I need to fully appreciate the triple bottom line of the organisation and directly influence it.



NAIDOO'S ADVICE TO WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP

- Be conscious of individuals. Remember, it's not just people's brains and hands that you employ – it's the whole person. Your leadership needs to be flexible, especially with the current skills shortages we're experiencing.
- Be well versed in the latest trends in your industry, be resourceful and build relationships to create a network.
- You earn respect through delivery. And once you have people's respect, you have them on your side.



CAROL ABADE, CEO: THE EXP GROUP

Having been with the company for 13 years, Kenyan born Abade has experience in various roles, including operations, general management and overseeing new business ventures. Eight people from Exp offices around Africa report directly to her.

Which people or experiences have shaped your leadership style?

I'm a firm believer that your experiences in life, both personal and professional, have a role to play in the type of leadership model you adopt. While I can't pinpoint a single experience or person's influence, I'm able to recognise influences over periods in my life that have shaped some of my values as a leader.

How would you like your employees to see you?

I'd like to be someone who inspires them to change the world. I lead by providing people with an environment where they can innovate, develop themselves and hone their talents, both for the good of those who work with them and the organisation as a whole.

ABADE'S ADVICE TO WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP

- Try to avoid stereotyping regarding gender-based leadership styles. The world is changing rapidly and women have a critical role to play in management.
- Love what you do. Success often comes with its share of failures and you need courage to cope with the tough times.

SUZANNE RAVENALL, FOUNDER AND CEO: BEYOND OUTSOURCING

Ravenall first dreamt of starting a business transformation outsourcing company at the tender age of 19, although it would be some years before this became a reality. She now employs around 300 people and has been directing the company from strength to strength over the past 11 years.

What is your leadership style?

I'm very hands-on and like to get involved with the detail. I enjoy working with competent people who're accountable for what they



do. With a huge passion for people and a desire to see them succeed, I institute a framework and let them spread their wings from there.

How has your leadership brand developed overtime?

Building your own company is very different from entering the corporate business world – you have to learn as you go along. As the business gets older, your leadership becomes more polished and your objectives change. You find better ways of doing things and stop sweating the small stuff.

RAVENALL'S ADVICE TO WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP

- Never, ever give up. Take heart in knowing that millions before you have been in the same place and managed to find a way out.
- When you've made a mistake recruiting someone, admit it and move on immediately.
- Remember, ideas are meaningless without implementation and follow-through. **D**