

marie claire @work

INSPIRING IDEAS AND PEOPLE



GAME CHANGER MAMOKGETHI PHAKENG

She started school under a tree in Mpumalanga in 1972. In July she'll become UCT's deputy vice-chancellor: research and internationalisation

What do you consider your greatest career achievement?

Being awarded a B2 rating by the National Research Foundation, which means I have considerable international recognition as a scientist, just 10 years after obtaining my PhD.

What was your biggest career mistake that turned into your greatest lesson?

Staying in a job too long. I saw the writing on the wall and unfortunately didn't make the jump soon enough. I learned three lessons. First, keep your ego in check - don't think you can swim in quicksand. Secondly, who you work for and with is as important as what you do.

And finally, you cannot afford to lose even a shred of reputation.

What are your secret weapons at work?

My infectious personality enables me to inform and entertain in equal measures, and I seem to be able to connect with audiences of all ages and backgrounds. I always give more than is expected, without focusing on what is in it for me.

What drives you?

I live to give hope. I want to change the world and I know that I cannot do that on my own, so I live my life to contribute towards a society where everyone focuses on serving others.

MY MEDIA DIET

I LISTEN TO **702'S EYEWITNESS NEWS** AND READ **BUSINESS DAY** TO STAY INFORMED DURING THE WEEK. ON WEEKENDS I READ **MAIL & GUARDIAN, SUNDAY TIMES** AND **CITY PRESS**. ON **SOCIAL MEDIA** I FOLLOW HASHTAGS AND TWITTER HANDLES THAT GIVE INFORMATION ON STUDENT ACTIVITY IN DIFFERENT UNIVERSITIES.



HOT DESK

DEAR ENTREPRENEUR

By Zanele Kumalo

I HAVE A DAY JOB but also co-own a start-up. Along with four partners I opened a destination food-bar playground in Joburg. Apart from being a dim sum and beer bar by night and coffee shop by day, it's a pop-up space for dynamic events. It hasn't been easy, especially since we're all either working on other projects or have employers to keep happy. But despite the stresses of starting a new venture, it doesn't feel like work when you're putting together something you believe in. None of us has done this before so we're learning major lessons along the way. Luckily, each partner comes with specialised skills and passions - from cheffing, accounting, architecture and design, media and marketing, to music and entertainment. We're all focusing on what we know best.

The biggest lessons I'm learning stem from creating a partnership. Choose hard workers you respect, who have great reputations in their fields, and whose tastes mirror your own. You have to trust that everyone will make principled decisions regarding their respective responsibilities. Talk to your bank manager about how much you can contribute financially, and communicate this clearly with everyone. The same applies to how much time you have available. Although we can never predict the future, we're positive that we're going to make a success of this. In case things don't work according to plan, a fair exit strategy is critical. I hope we never need to use it.



4

APPS TO MAKE BUSINESS TRAVEL A BREEZE



EXPENSIFY
Keep track of your expenses with this virtual accountant.



ONTHEFLY
Search for the cheapest flights around the world, comparing airlines, dates and cities.



TRIPIT
Sync and share an itinerary from Gmail with your hotel and car rental bookings.



GATEGURU
Get real-time flight information and find your nearest Wi-Fi spot at the airport.

COMPILED BY CATRIONA ROSS PHOTOGRAPHS ELKSE KNITZINGEN, FRANK ELLIS, EYESCAPE

5 MINUTES WITH ZAHIRA ASMAL

As the managing director of The City and Designing South Africa, Zahira creates events, publications and workshops on how design can help bring about social change

What I love about my work is seeing the opportunities for engagement and improvement in our cities. Design should enable people to live better lives.

When it comes to my vision for South Africa, I'm interested in passion-driven city-making, and nurturing the forces that are responsible for this development. Cities can be made by a diverse mix of role players who use innovative ideas and sustainable engineering to create better urban spaces.

Currently, we have a tender-based system that kills creativity. It's also more susceptible to corruption. In the system I wish to create for city-making in South Africa, professionals would need to dream big, develop ideas and form interdisciplinary teams - so they don't just create spaces but thriving neighbourhoods, and not just buildings but ecosystems.

The place-making project at Johannesburg Park Station started as an idea.

I've been a migrant in many cities around the world and know what it feels like to arrive in a big city and be bewildered. I imagined marking my arrival in Johannesburg with a statement of design, architecture and art; a place to stop, reflect, or meet a friend. We began setting up a local team and I looked for the funds to match government contributions. Renowned global architect David Adjaye, with whom I'd worked on his exhibition Urban Africa, came on board as the lead architect. As a result of this project, I've been selected to participate in the 2016 International Architecture Biennale in Rotterdam.

Possibly my greatest success has been adhering to my own moral code even when times were extremely tough and an easier path presented itself.

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