

# I strive to be an empowering leader, says Zimkita Mabindla

 By Nicci Botha

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Her curiosity about how money works as a young child is what inspired Zimkita Mabindla to become a chartered accountant. But what she really strives for is to be an empowering leader, both professionally and personally.



Zimkita Mabindla

The 43-year-old grew up in Butterworth in the Eastern Cape. She is currently on a career break to help her daughter who has a complex medical condition. Until recently she was a partner at a Big 4 audit firm.

## ■ **What do you love most about your job?**

The access and visibility to young people in the accountancy profession. I have had a very diverse career path, however in every role I have been, I have been fortunate to work the young brilliant minds in our profession. It is energising, empowering and helps one to be future focused. Young South Africans are our future leaders, and being able to hear and anchor their views and their opinions and trying to shape their leadership with my own experiences is priceless.

## ■ **What are the trends in your industry?**

Recently, the accountancy profession has had to deal with a number of negative events which were actively reported on in the media and sadly a small number of CAs(SA) were allegedly involved in these events.

However, the thousands of diligent CAs(SA) who work ethically and with integrity are not widely celebrated, even though many of them have left jobs with no alternative source of income in the interest of doing the right thing and preserving the CA(SA) brand.

In my experience though, thousands of CAs(SA) are living the brand, and have decided to rise above these stories and continue to do their work diligently. This has been really heart-warming to observe and be a part of. A great number of these CAs(SA) are young people, who despite the noise and the negative stories, on a daily basis, bravely work long hours to ensure that the integrity and credibility of our financial markets is maintained – thus serving the public. I am really proud to be a part of this profession.

### 🔴 ***What would you say to your younger self?***

If you did not raise someone, you are not responsible for how they view the world. In my twenties, I spent a lot of time agonising on racists, sexists, disloyal, and dishonest, oppressive people. I spent a lot of my energy trying to figure out what I could have done to change these situations.

I wish I had learned not to internalise their attitudes, but to rather focus on what I can control, and focused that energy more on investing in my personal confidence.

I wish I had known that, if you're not the one who is sick, taking the medication is absolutely futile. If the problem does not lie with you, neither does the solution. I wished I had stopped over-functioning, got myself out of harm's way quicker and diverted the energy towards building my self-confidence so that I can be empowering to those around me.

## ABOUT NICCI BOTHA

Nicci Botha has been wordsmithing for more than 20 years, covering just about every subject under the sun and then some. She's strung together words on sustainable development, maritime matters, mining, marketing, medical, lifestyle... and that elixir of life - chocolate. Nicci has worked for local and international media houses including Primedia, Caxton, Lloyd's and Reuters. Her new passion is digital media.

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