

"Have the audacity to pursue your dreams," says Nomacala Mpeta

 By [Emily Stander](#)

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After steadily building her career in social media and digital strategy, Nomacala Mpeta has earned her place as a pioneer in digital marketing education in Africa.



Nomacala Mpeta, head of learning at Digify Africa

We spoke with her to find out more about her job as head of learning at Digify Africa, the place of women in digital marketing, and why digital marketing education is important...

■ ***Tell us a bit more about your role as head of learning and the work you do.***

My job is to create and oversee Digify Africa's learning strategy, learning theory of change, learning programme design, quality assurance, monitoring and evaluation, and the training of trainers in the ecosystem throughout all Digify Africa's programmes across the continent.

■ ***Tell us a bit more about your career path before your current role.***

Before taking on a learning-focused path, I was steadily building my career in social media and digital strategy. I started my career in digital marketing in 2011 as a social media coordinator who quickly grew to manage key social media accounts for brands such as BMW South Africa, Celltone Skincare South Africa, and Zimbabwe as well as the famous Nelson Mandela Square and Sandton City Malls until February 2016.

With that knowledge and two years as an entrepreneur, I began not only consulting but creating and implementing integrated communications strategies with a focus on digital for brands such as Save The Children and ABinBev South Africa (formerly known as South African Breweries) kickstart programme between 2017-2018 before making the switch.



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■ ***What do you love most about your work?***

Seeing young people across the continent who did not have any other opportunities graduate and start working in the digital industry. Being part of closing that knowledge gap and helping them gain a better understanding of how these digital skills can help them create a livelihood is unmatched.

■ ***You were recently selected to be part of the IAB SA Transformation council, how are you feeling about that?***

PROUD. Finally, a seat at the table.

■ ***What are you hoping to achieve through your position on the council?***

As a member of the IAB Transformation council - women's subcommittee our work and mandate are doing actual work and achieving our objectives around driving gender equity and addressing issues/challenges we have as an industry. These issues include a lack of women representation in executive leadership positions, lack of representation of women in the digital marketing and media sector, and even lack of skills development.

Redressing these issues can and will move the digital marketing industry forward, and that is incredibly important for my day-to-day work.



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■ ***Why is an education in digital marketing important right now?***

The need to close the digital divide is growing with a digitised world. Developing learning and giving people education that addresses these particular skills gaps is crucial in them being able to participate in the economy and create their own opportunities where there previously weren't any.

■ ***How can digital marketing be used to empower youth, and women specifically, in their careers?***

Most of the jobs we have today did not exist when I started working in the industry 10 years ago. Digital marketing is ever-evolving, and so are the jobs and opportunities that can come from it. Staying up to date with the changes, sparking that personal curiosity, and ensuring your ear is on the ground and you're up to date will go a long way in empowering themselves.

■ ***What is the best advice anyone has given you?***

The best advice I have been given was "Function over Title", which basically means to be more concerned with being effective in my work, delivery, and impact vs chasing after titles and influence.

■ ***What advice would you give to young people trying to enter the digital marketing industry?***

I would tell young people trying to enter the industry to be courageous, have the audacity to pursue their dreams even when it doesn't make sense to anybody else - and dare greatly in ALL that they do. This expert from Brene Brown's book, *Daring greatly* sums it up perfectly:

Daring Greatly is not about winning or losing. It's about courage. In a world where "never enough" dominates and feeling afraid has become second nature, vulnerability is subversive. Uncomfortable. It's even a little dangerous at times. And, without question, putting ourselves out there means there's a far greater risk of getting criticized or feeling hurt. But when we step back and examine our lives, we will find that nothing is as uncomfortable, dangerous, and hurtful as standing on the outside of our lives looking in and wondering what it would be like if we had the courage to step into the arena - whether it's a new relationship, an important meeting, the creative process, or a difficult family conversation. Daring Greatly is a practice and a powerful new vision for letting ourselves be seen.

ABOUT EMILY STANDER

Freelancer specialising in games and entertainment | My first loves are writing, music and video games

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