

# New rules for living a creative life, the Gen-Z way - whatever your age

 [Byleigh Andrews](#)

11 Oct 2019

'Sneaker-head' Hayden Manuel broke the clichéd idea of "Cape Town creative" when he shared how creativity, grit and determination led him to become Puma's sports style marketing manager in the latest Red & Yellow lunchtime lecture.



PUMA's Sports Style Marketing Manager Hayden Manuel presenting at in the latest Red & Yellow lunchtime lecture.

Puma is doing good business by doing good, having just signed G7 Biarritz Global Sustainability Fashion Pact, committing to achieving practical objectives together in three areas: climate, biodiversity and oceans.



## #G7Biarritz: Fashion industry giants sign global sustainability pact

27 Aug 2019



The brand's creativity is also breaking ground globally, with Puma Brazil's 'The 9'58 Biography' book having won numerous awards at this year's Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity.

That winning streak continues when we switch focus to our local horizons, as Puma was announced as one of the coolest brands of 2019 overall in the category of shoe/footwear brand, clothing brand and slogan (Forever Faster) at the 15th *Sunday Times* Generation Next Awards.

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"In our second cover story, we look at @hakesy\_vet\_ket and his role as the Plug the business of street culture. Hayden Manuel: The Connect <https://t.co/nlQARAvqSK> (Link in bio)" Photo credit: Photographer: Imraan Christian ( @imraanchristian ) Assisted by: Justin February ( @justinfebruary ) and Waseem Noordien ( @97artist97 )

*A post shared by Hayden Manuel (@hakesy\_vet\_ket) on Apr 16, 2019 at 12:56am PDT*

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more than 7,000 South African youths between

the ages of eight and 23 on what they find on-trend and aspirational.



**#STGenNext19: ALL THE WINNERS!**

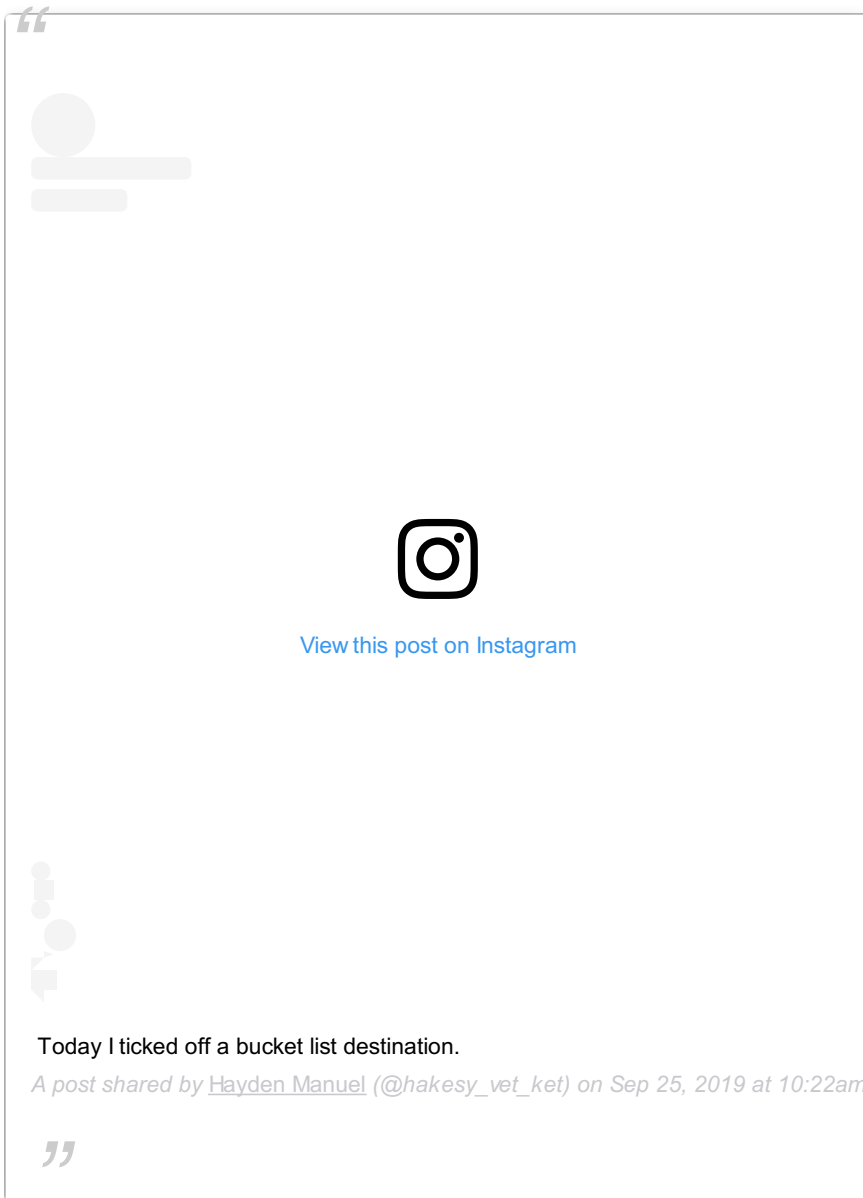
14 Jun 2019



But how do you get to work for such a brand? Luckily Manuel was in the house to share his personal carer journey on 9 October.

If you were to check his Instagram profile, you'd instantly get a snapshot of his life – it's filled with shoes, music, famous people and travel, but Manuel says that's a bit of a misconception.

While all those are big elements of his life, there's a lot more to it than that.



but the process of getting there – most of us have to put in the time answering phones and making coffee to get there, but that doesn't mean we shouldn't trust the process.

He shared his own story as proof of this – as his dad was one of ten kids, he grew up surrounded by healthy family competition, most in the sports sphere.

From his mom's side of the family, he learned about perseverance in business – his gran had dropped out of school at the age of 15 but rose through the ranks to become a buyer based at a fashion head office, often bringing home samples for the family.

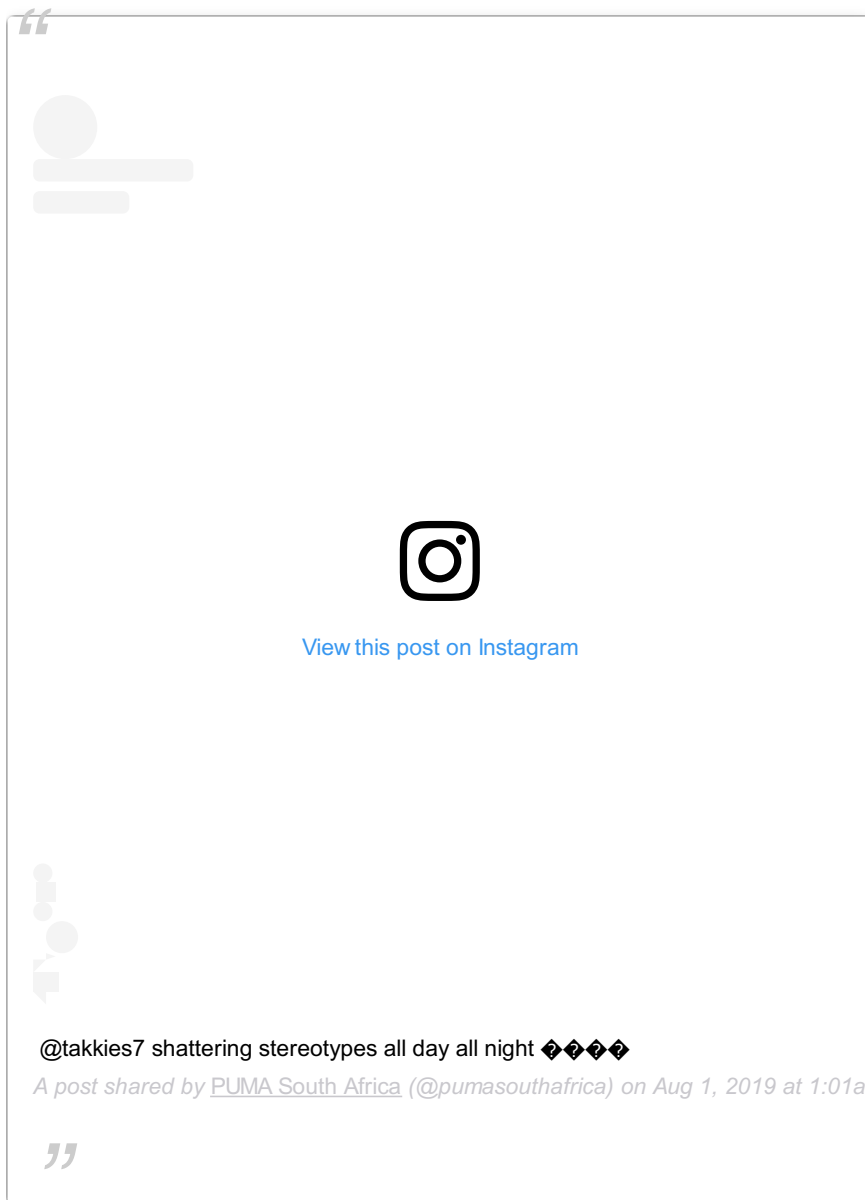
## Varsity culture shock

Manuel added that he'd always loved hip-hop, art and fashion but he can't sing, write or draw so he had to find another way to enter the industry.

When he finished high school he wanted to study at the AAA School but they didn't offer degrees at the time, which is what his parents insisted on, so he took on a more formal degree elsewhere.

He's lived a fairly sheltered existence up to then, so says he experienced a bit of a varsity culture shock as that's the first time he made friends of other races.

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ing admin for a bank for a while, then he  
received a call that he initially felt must be a prank, as Nike wanted to meet with him.

## From the blogs to the boardroom...

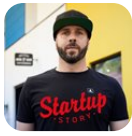
He became the first non-athlete in South Africa to work with the brand, which was the start of a nine-year relationship. The best part of this was that he got to become part of the Nike Kids team, working with the likes of Ricky Rick before the fame set in.

“ 10 years ago I was a varsity dropout with an obsession for rare sneakers, streetwear and rap music. Now I get to shape culture. I'm telling you this life thing is mad wild. [pic.twitter.com/J5uoW0ImOh](https://pic.twitter.com/J5uoW0ImOh)— Hayden Manuel (@hakesy\_vet\_ket) [May 17, 2018](#) ”

Eventually he finished his degree through correspondence, and went on to complete his post-graduate studies through the AAA School, which really opened his mind to creativity.

It was during this time that his '[Bitches Must Know/They Know](#)' blog was started by a few girls in his class, as people always wanted to know where he got hold of his music and sneakers, so in 2011 it started as a way to spread knowledge, and blossomed into the biggest blog in the country, at one stage.

This was because Manuel and friends documented their parties and uploaded their own content shot live at the events, not relying on press releases and reposting.



## #StartupStory: Go green with Sneaker LAB

Evan-Lee Courie 4 Oct 2019



This grew to include radio and YouTube and proved so popular that a line of 100 t-shirts sold on the channel sold-out in just two hours. But that lifestyle's hard to maintain.

### From the rockstar life to corporate thugging

Explaining his shift from the 'rockstar life' to one of 'corporate thugging', Manuel shared that he got tired of the lifestyle at the age of 26, which is when he met Rob Stokes, current chair of Red & Yellow School, and heard about the Quirk graduate programme.

*“ He thought the team was 'awesome' as they were playing beer-pong when he walked in at 11am, but his first six months as an intern were not fun as he had to face the typical millennial anxiety of phone calls – “If it's not my boss, mom or sister calling, I don't answer”- yet now he was expected to not just receive but also make calls on a landline. ”*

Looking back now, Manuel says the interning was the best thing that could have happened to him.

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[View this post on Instagram](#)



Still feels weird when people put so much energy into me. Thank you @yay\_abe

A post shared by [Hayden Manuel](#) (@hakesy\_vet\_ket) on Jun 27, 2019 at 1:03am PDT

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where he was fulfilled for the next five years.

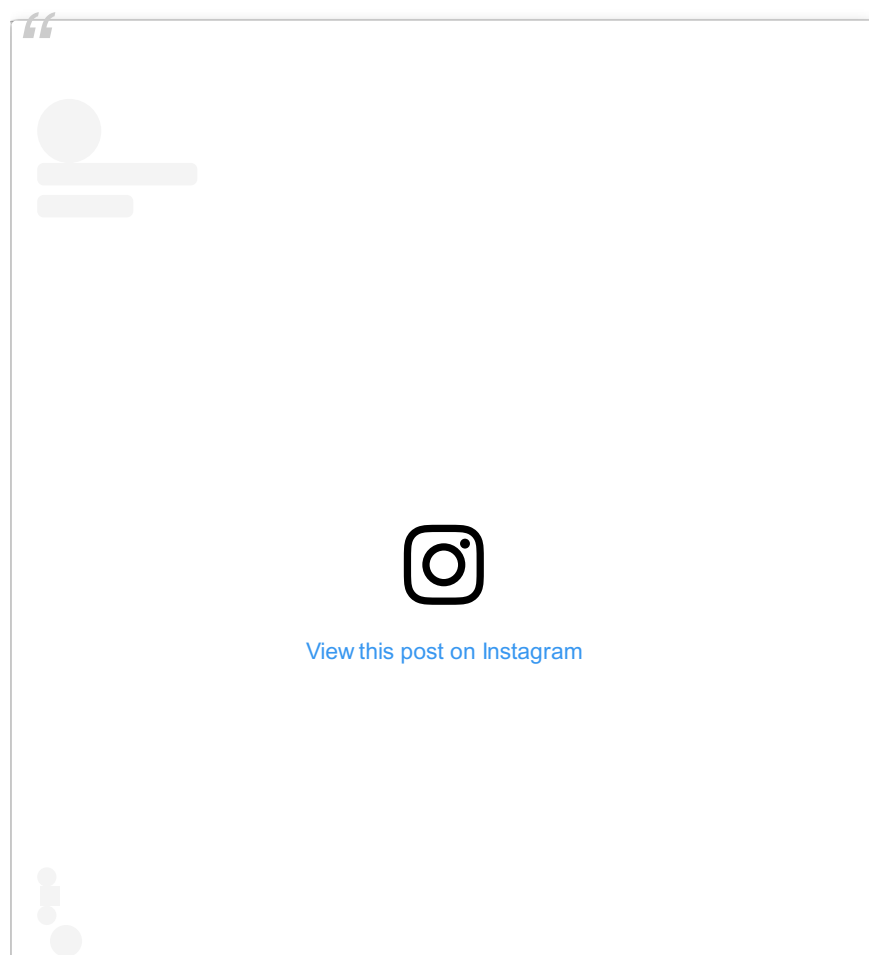
fect fit working on social media campaigns,

When a client moved to Pernod Ricard, Manuel followed, as he felt he'd reached a comfort zone of sorts and that he does his best work when he's been the underdog for a while. Then, Puma called...

Manuel says that most career paths are long journeys, but as much as you need to move forward, Manuel says not to be afraid of taking detours.

Explaining his current role, Manuel says he is creative director for the brand, which involves driving brand heat, supporting youth culture, identifying key moments, and landing key products in the market.

This involves adapting the global strategy to South Africa without copy-pasting, and while showing sensitivity to the country's current cultural tone.



Turn □□ the color ◆◆this spring. LQDCELL Optic.

A post shared by [PUMA South Africa \(@pumasouthafrica\)](#) on Aug 18, 2019 at 12:00am PDT

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the product.

“

Howdoes it make customers feel at every touch point, and what's their overall brand experience?

”

Keeping this in mind means you need to constantly innovate and move forward, said Manuel.

## Tapping into youth culture

All the events they hold result in content that celebrates the event while also creating Fomo so more people are inspired to attend the next event. The founders of Puma and Adidas are brothers, added Manuel, with healthy competition around the two.



### #NewBiz: Havas Media wins \$300m Puma account

1 Nov 2018



Explaining how Puma supports youth culture, Manuel said brands need to put their money where their mouth is, it's about more than latching onto the current trending hashtags. Brands need to give back and empower the tribes they speak to.

Athletes are the new rappers and vice versa, says Manuel. So when it comes to identifying key moment, this is the part of his role that takes up the most time, as you need to be tuned into what's happening around you.



### #YouthMonth: Brands must have their finger on the pulse when it comes to youth culture

Juanita Pienaar 28 Jun 2019



Relationships are key to getting this right and often the people you meet as an intern are the ones who respect your career growth and provide that all-important access.

You need to be intuitive to get this right – Manuel says it comes with time.

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👟👟 walking in RS 9.8 Space 👟👟. 👟👟: @iamsaintrose

*A post shared by [PUMA South Africa](#) (@pumasouthafrica) on Jul 25, 2019 at 10:15am PDT*

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the brand with their Ferrari collaboration with La Familia.

ve way, Manuel spoke of how Puma energised

He shares that the special pairs of sneakers mentioned in the below Facebook post sold out within the hour.



This Facebook post is no longer available. It may have been removed, or the privacy settings of the post may have changed.

Then, there's the 'extended family' aspect of the brand, where Puma's brand ambassadors include the likes of media superstar Nomzamo Mbatha.

This type of relationship goes beyond wearing the product – it's meant to be a long-term relationship, which Nomzamo has proven as she's already been with the team for four years.



#Behindtheselfie with... Nomzamo Mbatha

Leigh Andrews 14 Dec 2016



Puma has invested in Nomzamo's passions as a result, such as mentorship and the opportunity for youth to spend a day with her and learn from her. Content was shot to boost the event, which was along the lines of every young woman deserving a place to be herself and find her voice in this big world.

## True influencers are brand ambassadors

Another Puma brand ambassador is Nsikayesizwe David Ngcobo AKA Nasty C, who has been rapping since the age of 9

and was signed at the age of 19.



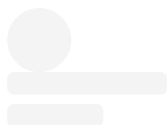
## Final list of nominees announced for 2019 Afrima Awards

26 Aug 2019



He has seen his album streamed 60m times, leading Manuel to call him a true African rap superstar, living the Puma lifestyle. It's not just about saying, "Sponsored by Puma" in your social pics.

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[View this post on Instagram](#)



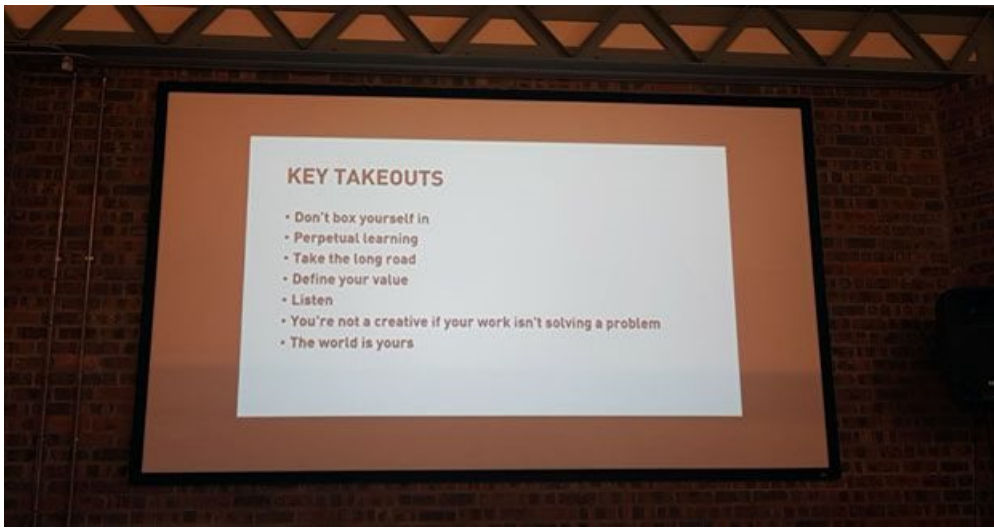
Gimmee da Loot

A post shared by [Hayden Manuel](#) (@hakesy\_wet\_ket) on Oct 3, 2019 at 7:52am PDT

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## Rules for living a productive life as a creative

Manuel's key takeouts:



Hayden Manuel's rules for living your best life as a creative

- Don't box yourself in – creativity exists beyond the traditional roles.
- Go to bed every day smarter than when you woke up – buy a Snapple and read the factoids printed on the cap.
- The most dangerous place from which to view the world is your desk. You need to understand the temperature of the world you are speaking to.
- What do you bring to the table that nobody else has? You can't go to school for experience.
- You need to add to the world, not just through creating pretty pictures. You're not a creative if your work isn't solving a problem.
- Don't be afraid to work on something others see as 'super boring' – get in there and do it well.

But then again, Manuel concluded that he didn't need to tell the mainly Gen-Z audience this, as it's the new way of living as we approach 2020.



## Puma to launch a sustainable sportswear collection with First Mile

2 Apr 2019



Follow [Puma South Africa](#), [Hayden Manuel](#) and [Red & Yellow School](#) on Instagram for the latest updates.

## ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

Leigh Andrews AKA the #MilkshakeQueen, is former Editor-in-Chief: Marketing & Media at Bizcommunity.com, with a passion for issues of diversity, inclusion and equality, and of course, gourmet food and drinks! She can be reached on Twitter at @Leigh\_Andrews.

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