

Tania Habimana joins CNBC Africa as host of *Closing Bell*

 By [Emily Stander](#)

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Cofounder of entrepreneurship development company Nonzero, Tania Habimana, has been appointed as the new host of *Closing Bell*.



Tania Habimana

Habimana, a multi-award winning public speaker, has developed a substantial career in understanding how to build a business. In the early days of her career, based out of Europe, she worked on digital transformation in the fashion and retail sector. From here, her career bloomed to what it is today.

Closing Bell takes a close-up look at how the markets are moving on that day, what drove them and how investors, as well as analysts, are reacting. We also take a look at macro-economic breaking news and current affairs that have the potential to affect businesses on the continent and provide our audience with the information they need. "On the show, I'll be interviewing analysts, investment managers, executives and CEOs who'll explain their strategies, share opinions, and provide insights on issues affecting the African business environment," said Habimana.

Here, we hear more about that career, plans for *Closing Bell* and some advice for youth trying to enter the industry...

Congratulations on the new role! How are you feeling about it?

It's a dream come true. I've always been passionate about business in Africa and about sharing African business stories. To be able to contribute in this way, on such a respected pan-African platform – is a dream.

It very much feels like my entire career has been leading up to this moment.

Tell us a bit more about your career path prior to your appointment.

After my digital transformation work, I worked on applying everything I had learned to build a business on the African continent. I started by bringing a European menswear brand to sub-Saharan Africa and eventually ventured on my own, as cofounder for Nonzero – where we specialised in SME development and human capital development.

Throughout this, my career as a public speaker and moderator began to grow. One of my first engagements was with the European Commission where I was invited to moderate the kick-off for Erasmus+ 35 Year Celebration, in the parliament in Brussels. To eventually work on facilitating high-level discussions on the continent such as with the African Union at the Africa Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) launch event in Niamey, where I chaired a discussion on SME development and the role of women and youth.

All this culminated in the new position I'm stepping into.

■ ***You have some accolades behind your name, could you tell us a bit more about those?***

It's honouring to be rewarded and recognised in public, however, it's hard to discuss this without acknowledging what goes on in private.

I am a product of the people who are and have walked the journey with me. There are so many contributors to achieving these accolades: from my family, my cofounder, to my team, my mentors, my connect group and many more people.

■ ***What kind of impact are you hoping to make as the host of Closing Bell?***

What is important is that the work we do, allows people to take action. To turn complex concepts and conversations into simple, straightforward, actionable information for our viewers.

To leave no stone unturned, as the saying goes – and most importantly, no stone unexamined.

I'm also hoping to attract more young people and small business owners to the show and provide a platform where they can learn more about business, policy and the continent's economic landscape.

■ ***How do you plan to apply your extensive knowledge?***

Simply put, I plan to merge my experience within corporate and as an entrepreneur doing business on the continent, to my interviews with CEOs and market analysts, to gather insights and answers that will help the public make better business decisions, better investments and find the best opportunities.

I also intend to bring perspective on impact investing on the continent and movements within the start-up funding ecosystem.

■ ***What are the most important aspects of a successful business plan, in your experience?***

Execution.

I find that too often founders and business owners spend lots of time developing a plan they never execute. They simply do not follow through on the plan they have built.

Meanwhile, entrepreneurship is all about doing. I think entrepreneurs should not be too overly obsessed with lengthy business plans. Sometimes in business, you just have to keep building the plane while flying it. Prioritising market feedback and adjusting accordingly should take precedence over following scripted rules.

🏠 ***If you could give one piece of advice to youth entering the industry, what would it be?***

Learn digital skills.

Whether going into business for yourself or looking to enter the job market, gaining digital skills is so critical in today's climate and on top, it's a free skill to acquire. Contrary to going to varsity, getting access to Google Skills certification training, Facebook and Instagram Marketing, as well as LinkedIn Marketing, are free, and these are tools that can help you better market and sell your products/services (if you're an entrepreneur), and better sell and position yourself digitally (if you're within the job market).

All you need is a device, even a phone will do, and access to the internet.

ABOUT EMILY STANDER

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

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