

AN inspired YEAR

Written by Claudia Padayachy

January is a time of bold, new possibilities. In a bid to help you find or renew your purpose, we recall crucial issues we've covered and inspiring stories from some of SA's most powerful game-changers. Discover their success strategies and start 2016 productively and positively!

If you haven't succeeded in realising your professional or personal dreams, there's no reason why you can't try again. Every setback holds the key to success by teaching you new questions to ask, directions to take and aspects to consider. No matter what's befallen you, there's a promising new chapter waiting to be written.

DJ ZINHLE (JIYANE) "As I transition into a new phase of my life, navigating motherhood, work, family and friends, I want to look back at this moment and be proud of the choices I made as a role model not only for other women, but also for my little Kairo, who I hope will have the strength and courage to choose herself and trust in her own power."

These were the words penned by Jiyane in an open letter after it emerged that her former fiancé, Kiernan Forbes (rapper

AKA), had cheated on her. Kudos to her for the classy way she dealt with the blow.

She advocates the words of leadership development expert, Brian Tracy: "You can't control what happens to you, but you can control your attitude towards it. In that way, you'll be mastering change, rather than allowing it to master you."



KATLEHO TSOKU Out of the ashes of her failed restaurant, Tsoku raised a new platform for nurturing female entrepreneurs. After filing for bankruptcy, a chance decision to attend the Australian Entrepreneurial Enablement Programme introduced her to Spark*, a developmental organisation which mentors female business owners.

Now CEO of the South African leg of the programme, Tsoku's also created the SHE by Spark initiative, a unique accelerator programme designed to support female entrepreneurs running ventures that are improving the lives of women and girls. "Finding my way to Spark* really affirmed for me that we're here as vessels for something greater than ourselves," she says.

According to Spark* research, only 8% of small to medium enterprises are run by women and more than 90% of these fail within their first three years of operation. "We want to change these statistics, which is why I created the SHE programme," says Tsoku. "We've helped 10 women go through the Changemaker programme and it's been fantastic. I'm also proud that DESTINY adopted the programme as part of its corporate social investment initiative. It's a great fit, as we both stand for tangibly empowering women.

"The SHE programme aims to take our country to the next level because when you harness the collective power of women, amazing things can happen." Regarding her entrepreneurial endeavours for 2016, Tsoku says: "I'm working on a concept that marries two of my passions: curating experiences and enabling emerging women entrepreneurs to thrive. I'm intrigued by the female entrepreneurial landscape and want to create a positive dent around it. That's the legacy I want to leave."



ZUKIE SIYOTULA 2015 was a year of big achievements for Siyotula, the Executive Head of Oil & Gas at the Thebe Group. These included completing the prestigious Tutu Fellowship and doing the Trek4Mandela expedition, which involved climbing Mt Kilimanjaro to raise funds for the Caring for Girls initiative.

Poised and articulate, Siyotula says the expedition changed her life and helped her conquer her fear of

heights. "I learnt the importance of getting out of your comfort zone. Most of our limitations are self-imposed; you often think things are impossible until you allow yourself to think differently. Say it's a possibility and you'll be amazed at what you can push yourself to do."

Her plans for 2016 include executing Thebe's transaction pipeline. "Our main focus is on growing our oil and gas portfolio," she says.

► SIYOTULA'S 2016 STRATEGIES

- **SELF-REFLECTION:** Spend time looking at things that did and didn't go well in 2015. There are reasons things go wrong and you can learn from them.
- **SET MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES:** Not only smaller things like losing weight, but also bigger goals like enriching your family's spirituality and achieving business targets. Choose only one or two things per area, as a lengthy laundry list of goals will overwhelm you.
- **ENVISAGE YOUR SUCCESSES:** Imagine it's the end of 2016 and write down what achieving your goals looks like. Review this once a month so that you stay on track.
- **INVOLVE YOUR MENTORS:** Share your goals with mentors or trusted advisors who can hold you accountable and call you out, if necessary. Having someone say: "It's already June and you still haven't made progress in X, Y or Z" can be a wake-up call. Without that personal board of advisors, it's easy to lie to yourself and justify inaction.
- **PRIORITISE YOUR HEALTH:** Invest in your wellbeing and fitness so you can be your best self.

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GAIL MABALANE It's been an eventful year for actress, model and entrepreneur Mabalane, who gave birth to her first child, Zoe Leano, in March. She ended her two-year break from acting by joining SABC1's *Generations: The Legacy* a few months later. But while she's kept a low profile, her husband – singer Kabelo – grabbed the spotlight with his autobiography, *I Ran For My Life* (Pan Macmillan), which recounts his battle with drug addiction and first meeting his wife at a prayer session at his local church: "Most celebrities who came there saw it as a safe place to let it all out and Gail was one of those who came." Love in prayer, then? Too sweet, Mr M...

"Most celebrities who came to our church saw it as a safe place to let it all out and Gail was one of those who came."



AKOSUA AFRIYIE-KUMI 2015 was a brilliant business year for the Ghanaian-born designer and her luxury label, AAKS. In just 12 months, she's got her brand of colourful, woven handbags stocked by 34 stores in eight countries.

Afriyie-Kumi, who works with local crafters from rural communities, is committed to empowering women and creating sustainable projects. Her handbags are woven from locally sourced raffia, an organic, biodegradable fibre. "At the start of 2015 I worked with only four weavers, but by the end of the year, there were 40 of them so that we could cope with the demand for our bags," she says.

The AAKS range is available at selected retailers in SA, including Kisua, but Afriyie-Kumi is currently extending her footprint and hopes to collaborate with a local fashion brand. "I'm working on increasing our sales volume in Europe, as well as putting together a cohesive plan for building our weaving centre in the north of Ghana. I'm also trying to increase our social media presence," she says.

Her personal goals include being more proactive and achieving a better work-home balance. "I also want to network more, as I often spend my days far away from the main cities, so I don't get to interact with clients personally. I hope to see more faces this year!"



MOSUNMOLA ABUDU Dubbed "Africa's Oprah Winfrey", the multi-talented Abudu – a dynamic talk show host, TV producer and businesswoman – really blossomed in 2015. Her EbonyLife TV channel marked its second birthday and her show, *Moments With Mo*, celebrated its ninth year as the continent's only syndicated daily talk show. The festivities included rolling out the spin-off show, *Moments*, in Nigeria, Kenya, Ghana and SA.

"If you can think it, you can do it," says Abudu. "That's my guiding principle when setting personal development goals. I want to continue advancing as much as possible, be respected for setting trends that are reference points

and become a *tour de force* in the industry.

"I treat the start of every year as the continuation of my journey to success and stay focused on the final destination. As the saying goes: 'The neurotic lives in the past, those who settle live in the moment and the genius lives in the future!'"

► **MO'S MANTRAS**

- Learn to stay in the future and constantly overcome past failures.
- Find the willingness to do whatever it takes to accomplish your goals. If you have a set goal that's important to you, you should be willing to put everything on the line to achieve it.
- Look at your achievements from the previous year and set about surpassing them in the new year. That way, you can create strategies to help set your goals in motion.

CLOSING THE PAY GAP

With an estimated gender pay gap disparity of 35% in our country, women would need to work an extra four months a year to match their male counterparts' annual salaries. Our shocking report last year revealed that SA's earnings gap comes in with a global average of 23%, compared with Sweden's at 4% and the USA's at 36%. While we've made significant strides in gender equality, particularly in Parliament (the Cabinet now comprises 41% female ministers, 47% female deputy ministers and 41% female representatives in the National Assembly), it's not enough. Women can find some guidance in the Employment Equity (EE) Act, which stipulates equal pay for equal work. But while the burden rests on HR management practitioners to address cases of salary inequity, we all have to do our bit by speaking out.

TAKING ACTION Find a comparator (a man whose job is similar to yours) who's prepared to disclose his salary to you and prove that the pay difference can't be justified. The EE Act can be your guide.

- Ask colleagues and friends doing similar jobs at other companies about their salary structures so that you have something to compare.
- Ask one or two employment agencies specialising in your industry what the average salary is for your job in your province and whether this would differ for a man.
- Make 2016 your year by knowing your own worth and demanding its value. Nobody's going to give you the increase you deserve unless you ask for it.



XENOPHOBIA Abominable xenophobic attacks rocked SA during 2015, with thousands of immigrants physically assaulted and their homes and shops destroyed. Many of them fled to emergency refugee camps, but large numbers also opted to leave the country. Malawi and Zimbabwe bussed their nationals home, while the international community roundly condemned the attacks.

In October, foreigners (most of them Muslims) in Grahamstown were set upon following rumours that an "Arab man with a beard" had committed several murders and mutilations. About 300 shops were looted, foreign students had to be moved to safety and Muslim men were evacuated from the town, leaving their families with no one to support them. A group of local women (Barbara-Ann Ali, Jacqueline Khokam, Jamila Raaes, Rehana Naveed and Rabiah Hossin) calling themselves "The Voices of the Foreigners' Wives" gave heartrending accounts of victimisation. "Our children are still being hidden at home. We still don't feel safe on the streets. We're still being insulted [when we go out]. Rumours are still being circulated about our husbands. We've lost everything and we've had no income for a week," they declared. "When the robberies [lootings] happen, we're told we're also *kwarras* [foreigners] now. Once you're a *kwarra*, it seems you can be freely robbed and even killed."

Hopefully 2016 will be better and we'll be guided by the words of iconic human rights activist Ahmed Kathrada: "Xenophobia, racism and sexism must be fought with tenacity, wisdom and enlightenment. Anything that defines someone else as 'the other' has to go. Tolerance and understanding must flourish and grow."

NANDO'S GOES GLOBAL Nando's led the charge as SA's most successful fast food export during 2015. It's now available on five different continents and has over 1 128 restaurants. This spicy chicken sensation – which counts David Beckham, Jay-Z, Oprah Winfrey and Prince Harry among its fans – could soon be even bigger than our most famous Hollywood export, Charlize Theron. **D**

DESTINY

MAY 2015
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INVESTIGATION

9 Mozambique design collective Piratas do Pau (PdP) – which employs and trains under-privileged youth in Maputo – has launched a premium furniture collection made of scrap wood. It uses a combination of pinewood from recycled pallets and umbila, a local hardwood, to create coffee tables, cupboards and shelving units. All products are sold locally and PdP both reduces waste and encourages people to consider recycling, rather than buying new or imported items.

10 South African fast food chain Nando's is one of the continent's most successful retail brands, expanding to more than 1000 locations in 30 countries and five continents since opening its first restaurant in 1987.

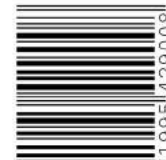


Its sales had climbed 10% to more than £535 million in the UK alone by February 2014. Part of its appeal among young consumers can be attributed to its witty and often controversial commercials, including one which depicted Zimbabwe's President Robert Mugabe reflecting on happy moments as he dined with fallen dictators. *Advertising Age* magazine named Nando's as one of the world's top 30 hottest marketing brands in 2010.



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Like an increasing number of other African designers, Ghanaian-born Akosua Afriyie-Kumi has created a luxury product inspired by her background, employing local craft workers with traditional skills. Her AAKS design label is the brand for a range of colourful, eclectic handbags woven by women in the rural community of Bolgatanga, in the northern region of the country, for export to the UK and SA. The handbags are woven from locally sourced raffia, an organic, natural, biodegradable fibre. Afriyie-Kumi markets them online, a strategy she believes is necessary to popularise African products.



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