



**TSHEPI SINGO**

Head of Human Capital, SA Taxi

## Sharing her Story

*August is national Women’s Month and with this in mind we are celebrating phenomenal women across the Transaction Capital group. This week we profile Tshepi Singo from SA Taxi.*

### **Please give us a brief background into your professional career so far?**

I have been described as a young, humble, eager and resilient future executive. I joined SA Taxi as a Human Capital Business Partner in 2016, was promoted to Senior Business Partner in 2018 and then got promoted to Head of Human Capital in 2019. My role as the Head of Human Capital necessitates that I partner with business leaders to develop and oversee the implementation of holistic human capital solutions that empower business to achieve its strategic objectives.

Not being afraid to say ‘yes’ to things outside my comfort zone has empowered me to take on challenges and that is how I have grown my career.

### **Being a human resource professional, are there still boundaries that you see affecting women more than their male counterparts?**

Throughout my career, I recall many times in the hiring process where a male leader mentioned a candidate’s family as a “negative” in regard to their ability to get the job done. e.g. “Tshepi mentioned she has two children under five years old, we need this person to work additional hours when required, how will she make that happen?”

In these situations, I advise that we need to stop stereotyping. If the applicant meets the requirements we are looking for, it’s up to her to determine how she will manage her work/life balance, with our support. We can set the expectations in regard to the role’s responsibility level and hours required, but we cannot assume or insinuate that based on gender stereotypes she will be unable to succeed.

### **Have you faced any challenges in your career due to being a woman? How have you moved past these?**

I am a young female responsible for a male dominated area in my current role; 95% of the workforce in the cluster I am heading up is male. I faced challenges in my career - anything ranging from societal expectations to beliefs about women’s leadership abilities. I had to demonstrate performance before I could gain trust. Dealing with these issues has been a challenge, I went through a phase of wanting to be “one of the boys” and soon realised that doing that perpetuates the challenges I was facing and landed on an approach which helped me stand out and offer some new perspectives to the organisation by taking advantage of my strong people skills, intellect and nurturing qualities.

One other major challenge I had to deal with was the emotional stress, which was related to having children and my career. Many gave me a hard time and occasionally still do as they feel I should pick one path and commit fully to either raising a family or growing my career. I have found that time management, effective leadership and a strong support system is crucial to my ability to enjoy both roles as family leader and business leader.

### **If you could have dinner with one woman you admire professionally, who would it be and why?**

Michelle Obama and if I am lucky Barack Obama will also show face at the dinner, then it’s a two for one special. I am highly inspired and motivated by strong black women and Michelle is at the top of that list. She has struggled with constant discrimination from others for being an African American women first lady and she had to be civil and decide on how she wanted to represent herself. When she was confronted by disrespect, undermining demeanours and constant pushback she did not fight back, instead she showed people through her civility and grace that she is right where she is supposed to be.