

WCW

Connect & Inspire

BUSINESS SURVIVAL IN TIMES OF COVID 19

THATO MOKHOTHU



We recently hosted our event themed "**Business Survival In Times Of Covid 19**", which was graced by the presence of leading businesswomen and changemakers. A woman that we're shining a light on is Thato Mokhothu who shared her journey of entrepreneurship. Her story is far from the glamour and picturesque idea we've formulated about entrepreneurship. Its relatable, honest, inspiring and infectious enough to motivate other young women to take on the baton and go forward with their entrepreneurial journey.

ACCOLADES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

MD of RTT Construction & Consulting Engineering Firm

Atlegang Construction JV
6GB AND 6CE

Shareholder: Tyremart
Estoire(FS) and Kathu(NC)

Allan Gray Orbis
Foundation Mentor

Brand South Africa Play
your part Ambassador

Tony Elumelu Foundation
Influencer

Graca Machel Women
Creating Wealth
participant 2020

3rd place National Winner
of CIDB ERWIC Awards:
Women Mentor 2020



First Shot At Entrepreneurship

After working in corporate for some time, Thato made the audacious decision to start her first restaurant. This was back in 2011. She recounts the story by saying:

"You know that moment where after doing something once, you automatically think you could do it forever and never fail (ask any girl who loves singing but then figures out halfway that not everyone is Beyonce!)."

Thato had that moment too. Even though she had been a waitress in her youth, she came to realize that running a restaurant wasn't exactly her purpose. She also shared how her lack of adequate preparation also contributed to the failed venture. It taught her an incredibly important tenet of business though: a business plan is necessary.

Destiny Helpers & Overcoming Challenges

After purchasing a brick-and-mortar office for her construction company, seeing it grow through tough times and achieving success, she was forced to lockdown her company shortly after the government placed restrictions on movement to contain the spread of the virus. When she recounts the experience, she says,

"During Covid-19, our industry was on full lockdown. I had to retrench my staff members which literally got me into a depression. I had to focus on my consulting engineering and luckily I could still operate and brought revenue to the company. I had arrangement with SARS but I failed to keep up with the payments and that lead to blockage of my tax clearance."

It was only when she was got into a network of women who had more faith, courage and optimism than her, to the point where she could draw some inspiration for herself, that she got up and started thinking about how she would revive her business. Her personal term for the ladies she met along the way is "destiny helpers"

Success & Lessons

Thato's story is one of great resilience and relentlessness in the pursuit of success. The pivot into consulting highlights how she managed to spot an opportunity even amid chaos and misfortune. All it took was for a healthy and supportive network of women around her to wipe her tears and help her see herself through a different lense.

One would also reckon, that past failures have been the greatest teacher for Thato. From the restaurant back in 2011, experiencing cash flow dilemmas and issues with the tax man, it's almost as though those challenges prepared her for the strength she needed to garner for the pandemic. Today, Thato has expanded her business largely through her focus on consulting in the construction industry.

She used 2020 to collaborate with other women which led her to finding a new business partner who has significantly increased her company's CIDB grading. The triumph does not end there. Her company is currently working on a 20-kilometer pipeline in Nketoana Municipality, and she has been appointed in another municipality on a 3-year contract as a consultant of water and sanitation.

Onwards and Upwards Thato!!