

Student Biographies

MBA

Class of 2020

Suama **Abiatar**



Nickname: Winny
MBA Modular
Namibia
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How are you finding your MBA programme so far?
It has been exciting to meet the bright minds I will get to bring with me on this journey.

Can you give us an idea of where you are at in your career?
I have 10 years experience spanning Financial Consulting Services, Insurance and the Health Research Industry.

What aspect of your career are you most proud of?
Finding my passion for strengthening the health sector.

Where do you work now?
I am Senior Finance Officer(Grants Manager) at the Desmond Tutu HIV Foundation in Cape Town.

Have you always wanted to do this?
I am still learning a lot. I'm ensuring that I apply what I've learned as quickly
No, I wanted to be a teacher. In some ways I can say I got to be one, but not in a traditional sense.

Do you have any mentors? If so, what have you learned from them?
I find mentors in the books I read, my family members and my friends. My grandmother has always reminded me that no one goes hungry in a group and that if God wanted people to be alone, we would have been created with thorns. We are a collective, but each of us is part of a whole.

On that note, which books have offered you the greatest "mentorship"?
Sapiens -Yuval Noah Harari, Journey to Ixtlan-Carlos Castaneda, Brida-Paulo Coelho; They speak to a personal journey and growth, which is an area of interest for me.

What made you want to come and do your MBA at the UCT GSB?
UCT is rated top in Africa and its teaching approach exposes me to African cases which makes the education transferable for my context. The attraction was also the location and the academic team who gets to deliver the material.

What is the worst advice you've ever received and why?
I can't say I have, because even worse advice led to great lessons.

If you could have a sit-down session with anyone, who would it be?
Carlos Castaneda. I would like to find out if the journey to self discovery ever makes life easier.

Paula **Akimanzi**



Nickname: Aki
MBA Modular
Uganda
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How much work experience do you have and what kind of work have you been doing until now?
I have 8 years of work experience. I have worked in the telecommunications sector, Oil & Gas and Banking. I am currently working as an Investment Banking analyst. Prior to this, I was a Client Analyst for Oil & Gas in the bank. Before joining banking, I worked as an Oilfield Engineer.

What is your current or most recent position and where?
Analyst, Investment Banking at Stanbic Bank Uganda

Outside of work, what are you most passionate about?
God. Family & Friends.

What led you to making the decision to do an MBA? Tell us why and how you got here?
I wanted to study an MBA mainly to enable me to progress in my career. As an Engineer-turned-Banker, it was critical for me to obtain the technical and leadership skills that would enable me progress in my banking career.

What attracted you to the UCT GSB in particular?
I studied my undergraduate degree at UCT, and I understood the quality of education that comes with a degree from UCT.

What are your top 3 best books of all time - provide a one liner explanation?
1. "Gifted Hands" by Ben Carson. I read this book when I was about 16 and it enhanced my spiritual life and relationship with God, but also encouraged me to strive for excellence.
2. "The Secret" by Rhonda Byrnes. This book taught me the importance of visualization, positive thinking and the law of attraction; and how these concepts can transform your life.
3. "The Alchemist" by Paulo Coelho. This book awoke me to the notion of having a purpose and being aware of the signs that the universe or life may send your way.

If you could have dinner with someone you admire or someone who interests you - who would you choose?
Oprah Winfrey. Because she seems to achieve so much and still remains centered. It's key for me to find that balance; to not get so caught up in the everyday grind and forget to slow down and maintain a strong spiritual foundation in my life.

Have you managed to do that through the start of your MBA?
How is it going so far?
So far, it has awakened me to the fact that I could be doing more, contributing more to the world around me. It has caused me to question what I'm currently doing and what more I could do? And although I don't have the answers yet, asking the questions is a good start.

Joel **Baur**

MBA Modular
Switzerland
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How long have you been working in your industry and which industry is it?
I've spent 4 years in the construction industry.

Thinking back to being a kid and the profession you wanted to go into as a child, what was it and did it happen?
I wanted to be an architect - I am an architect and entrepreneur in construction.

What do you feel is your proudest achievement?
1 beautiful daughter, married for 12 years, founding and managing 2 companies, developing a building system.

What is your current role?
MD at CITRA - Live Different.

If you could sum up your MBA experience so far in one word, what would it be?
" Great".

Can you think of a piece of advice from an icon or mentor you'd like to share?
"These are my principles. If you don't like them, I have others" - Groucho Marx

What made you decide to do your MBA?
The prospect of consolidating and framing what I've learned since I started my first company, building trust in corporate stakeholders and investors, learning from and getting together with likeminded people.

How did you end up at the UCT GSB as opposed to a different institution?
Closeness to where I work and live, and I chose it for its reputation.

UCT GSB's brand motto is 'A new world needs new ideas'. Are you bringing new ideas into the world, and if so - how?
Innovating in construction every day, and leading with passion and heart.

What are your top 3 best books of all time - provide a one liner explanation?
1. "Plato and Platypus Walk into a Bar" by Cathcart and Klein
2. "100 Years of Solitude" by Garcia Marquez
3. "Duma Key" by Stephen King

If you could have a last dinner with anyone we might know, who would it be?
John Oliver, just to have fun.

What change would you want to bring about in the world and why?
Fairness, better living quality for the less privileged and joy.

What are you most passionate about?
Enjoying every day, freedom and love.

Constance **Bbosa**



Nickname: Coni
MBA Modular
South Africa (Ghanian heritage)
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What led you to making the decision to do an MBA? Tell us why and how you got here?
One of the leading development strategies imperative for emerging markets such as South Africa is the empowerment of its women. It is with this awareness in mind that I have been deliberate about my own strategic progression. Pursuing an MBA has always been my ambition and although I currently enjoy a fulfilling career, I saw an MBA as an opportunity to increase my knowledge and elevate my managerial competency.

How many years of working experience do you have and which industries have you worked in? Tell us about your work experience?
I have been in banking for over 14 years.

What are you most passionate about?
I have a passion to see young women instilled with the belief that they can aspire to gain knowledge, use it as best as they can within their sphere of influence, and inspire others to follow.

Tell us about your icons or mentors? Share some advice that you have received from a mentor/leader?
My parents are my greatest inspiration. Throughout my life they gave me the perfect balance of guidance and freedom, such that I could succeed in any path I chose. Their advice was to always remain true to my principles.

Why did you select UCT Graduate School of Business? What was it about us that attracted you to us?
The MBA program at the GSB provides a solid grounding in international business, with a strong focus on business in emerging markets. I considered this, along with factors such as reputation, global appeal, learning environment and location. Having been a UCT student, I also had first hand experience of the high standards of conduct and academic excellence expected from the GSB.

Lastly, tell us about your MBA experience thus far?
The quality of teaching and emphasis on self analysis and discovery have been eye opening beyond my expectations. Additionally, the research has been intense yet rewarding, while the teamwork has been engaging and constructive.

I am fully immersed and thoroughly enjoying the experience so far!

What are your top 3 best books of all time - provide a one liner explanation?
1. “Sense and Sensibility” by Jane Austen - Conflicting perspectives must either become one or remain separate depending on the reader’s point of view.
2. “Becoming” by Michelle Obama - A perfect encapsulation of what it takes for a black woman to navigate through life, deal with challenges and find her calling.
3. “Long Walk to Freedom” by Nelson Mandela - A constant reminder of Africa’s injustice and the power of resolve.

Robin **Bleekers**



Nickname: Ferret
MBA Modular
Johannesburg/Cape Town, South Africa
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Tell us about your icons or mentors? Share some advice that you have received from a mentor/leader?
My Dad, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Calvin & Hobbes, and Immanuel Kant - “Cash is King”, “Act in such a way that you treat humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of another, always at the same time as an end and never simply as a means.” “To be yourself in a world that is constantly trying to make you something else is the greatest accomplishment.”

What has been your greatest achievement?
Seeing the strategy I designed for the Ikusasa Student Financial Aid Programme becoming a reality.

What is your occupation at the moment?
Foundation Associate - Letsema.

What are you most passionate about?
Leaving the world a better place and developing others.

Why did you select UCT Graduate School of Business? What was it about us that attracted you to us?
The social emphasis, considering the Bertha Institute and the nature of the courses as well as the strong expertise UCT GSB is renowned for in the field of Finance.

How much work experience have you had so far?
Six years Management Consulting in diverse industries.

UCT GSB’s brand motto is ‘A new world needs new ideas’ | How are you bringing new ideas to a new world?
I currently work with social enterprises and NGOs to help them bring to life incredible solutions to difficult problems.

What are your top 3 best books of all time - provide a one liner explanation?
The Lord of the Rings Trilogy, His Dark Materials Trilogy and The Power of Positive Thinking - The power of perseverance against all odds, the importance of optimism and joy in adversity.

If you could have a last dinner with any famous person (leader or celeb etc), who would it be and why?
Richard Branson to understand how he has such an incredibly entrepreneurial mind.

What change would you want to bring about in the world and why?
A fairer and more just world, because we cannot continue sustainably on this trajectory.

Lastly, tell us about your MBA experience thus far?
Incredible and very informative. It has given me a very different perspective and I can only see it getting more interesting.

Wesley **Chetty**



Nickname: Wes
MBA Modular
Cape Town, South Africa
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Do you have any mentors? What have you learned from them that you will never forget?
"Your attitude will determine your attitude" My father who is my mentor told me that.

Was this part of what led you to do your MBA?
I was keen on furthering my career and also I am all for self improvement and learning more.

Why did you decide to do it at the UCT GSB?
The prestige of the school and the great reputation.

What are 3 books every student must read?
1. "David and Goliath" by Malcolm Gladwell
2. "Outliers" by Malcom Gladwell
3. "Quiet Strength" by Tony Dungy

On the other hand, have you ever received bad advice that you don't advocate the use of?
Win win win, or be successful! Everyday when you step out the front door you want to be successful or win so to remind or tell somebody is pointless.

What do you see when you think of the future?
It's one where my family can live the life that they want and we are closer together through our pursuits.

If you could have a last supper with anyone in the world, including leaders of the past - who would you choose?
Steve Biko. I would love to know his thoughts on our country at present but also look at his mindset and why he believed what he did.

How long have you been in the working world?
For 6 years, I have worked in marketing, logistics, property and sport.

What is your position today?
Project Manager at Ithemba Labantu Pty Ltd.

What change would you want to bring about in the world and why?
I think consistency is something that we don't see enough, people don't do things consistently. I would like to be in a work environment and world where consistency is present.

Lastly, tell us about your MBA experience up until this point?
Are you enjoying it?
It's been great, opened my eyes to new things, ideas and ways which people think.

Luke **Davis-Ferguson**



Nickname: Lucas, Lucozade
MBA Modular
Cape Town, South Africa
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What has been your greatest achievement?
Quite proud of the fact that while being a managing director we have managed to increase revenue by 200% in the last 3 years. This has taken hard work, strategic thinking and an incredible team!

If you could have a last dinner with any famous person, who would you choose?
I'll skip having dinner with a "famous person" and have one last dinner with my late gran. She was an incredible person!

What is your current position?
Managing Director

What did you want to be when you were little?
I wanted to be a pastor of a church. It hasn't happened yet as I currently feel I am able to be more effective in the business world but maybe one day I'll relook at it.

Who is your greatest icon?
My father has been an incredible icon to me. He was retrenched at the age of 55 and then decided to start his own company from scratch. His hard work and tenacity has been truly inspirational!

Why did you decide to come to the UCT GSB?
The GSB is the top ranked business school in Africa which made it a no brainer but besides that I love how they have a massive leaning towards developing economies and it just seemed like the logical choice if I am based in South Africa.

Our motto is 'A new world needs new ideas'. Do you embody this motto in your work?
We are currently doing that in my company. By updating our business model and digitizing everything it has given us a competitive advantage, allowing us to grow our revenue significantly.

What are your top 3 best books of all time - provide a one liner explanation?
1. The Bible - The word of God and full of wisdom.
2. "Predictably Irrational" by Dan Ariely - Giving insight into the thinking of people.
3. "Shoe Dog" by Phil Knight - The memoir of an incredible entrepreneur.

Are you enjoying your MBA experience?
Loving the experience so far. Leadership has been challenging and I am looking forward to journeying down this road.

What are you passionate about?
Equipping and lifting people up.

What advice would you give yourself if you could go back in time?
Read more and have fun.

Varesh **Dayal**

MBA Modular
Durban, South Africa
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What have you done that you're most proud of?
Opening my heart.

Could you tell us a bit about your career journey so far?
I have done a few different jobs but most of my experience, 11 years has been in engineering quality in software, consulting for seven years and worked on projects of varying team sizes, scales, duration and industries: banking, digital media, insurance, telecommunications, gambling, and a few other industries.

Where do you work now?
Associate Manager at Accenture, Advanced Technology Center, Client Delivery and Operations.

Have you received any good advice or mentorship along the way?
1. Yoda - "Do or do not, there is no try"
2. Henry Ford - "Whether you think you can or whether you think you can't, you're right"
3. Qui-Gon Jinn - "Be mindful of the future, but not at the expense of the present"

Doing your MBS is a good way to "try" and to be mindful of the future and present. Is that what led you here?
I'd always wanted to do one since I first heard about it in my childhood but forgot about it. When I became a manager, having so much influence over others' lives was not something I took lightly, "with great power comes great responsibility", so I learned and studied until I came across and remembered the MBA. Ultimately though, I wanted to have more freedom to work on bringing my own ideas and creations into the world. When I do something, I like to do it right. I also believed it would open doors different to the path I have been walking.

What made you choose the UCT GSB?
The UCT GSB was voted as one of the top 100 universities to do an MBA in the world and they especially have been updating their courses and materials to be relevant to the day and age. The electives topics were especially intriguing to me.

How are you finding the MBA programme? Enjoying it?
I am really having fun with the learning. It has opened a new world of possibilities for me. I am excited about the future.

What are your top 3 best books of all time - provide a one liner explanation?
1. "Stillness Speaks" by Eckhart Tolle - A succinct modernized version of wisdom that draws on spiritual teaching.
2. "Ask and it is Given" by Abraham-Hicks - An explanation into the concepts related to manifestation.
3. "The alchemist" by Paulo Cuelho - A story of a boys yearning to travel, find fortune and the wisdom he finds along the way.

If you could have a last dinner with any of those authors, who would you choose?
Eckhart Tolle. He is one of the most influential spiritual speakers of all time. I would truly want to learn how to live his wisdom. Related to Gandhi's quote, "Be the change you want to see in the world".

JP **Delvit**

MBA Modular
South Africa
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Predict how the future will look.
The future will be filled with adventure.

And, on the other hand, if you could go back into your past, what would you tell yourself?
Live with passion, every day.

What are you most passionate about?
My family.

Are you much of a reader? Which books would you recommend?
1. "The Old Man and The Sea" by Ernst Hemingway
2. "Thinking, Fast and Slow" by Daniel Kahneman
3. "The Fountainhead" by Ayn Rand

There's a lot of reading during the course of the MBA. How are you finding it so far in general?
It has been challenging and fulfilling, which is leading to personal growth. This, in turn, is fueling curiosity. It is also a privilege to have exposure to such passionate and knowledgeable lecturers and classmates alike.

How many years of work experience did you have leading up to this?
14 Years experience, over 4 industries. Financial services industry, film industry, adventure tourism/sports travel industry and hedge fund industry.

Why did you decide to do your MBA here at the UCT GSB?
It has always been a dream to attend the UCT GSB. I believe it to be the best business school in Africa. It has strong accreditation and offers a diverse programme.

As you know, our motto is 'A new world needs new ideas'. Are you bringing ideas into the new world?
I am trying to use the focus of the programme to challenge and broaden the way I currently see the world, so I can bring a refined approach to daily interactions and decisions that can hopefully, even in the smallest way, shift consciousness in the direction of a greater good.

What change would you want to bring about?
If I could in even the smallest way help shift consciousness towards abundance and away from zero-sum thinking, then this may help to address some of the crippling factors that seem to be limiting peace and prosperity of society.

What is some of the best advice you've ever gotten?
Live and let live.

Than **Du Plessis**

MBA Modular

Cape Town, South Africa

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What are your top 3 best books of all time and why have you chosen these?

1. "Maximum Achievement" by Brian Tracy. In this book Brian summarizes very easy to use principles for any business leader to start their journey of self development (Must read).
2. "The Richest Man in Babylon" by George S. Clason. Such a simple step by step guide to start your journey to financial freedom.
3. "Think and Grow Rich" by Napoleon Hill. A must read for self development.

If you could have a last dinner with any famous person (leader or celeb etc), who would it be and why?

Robert Nesta (Bob) Marley. Bob was an amazing story teller and his music really transcended all cultures, languages and religions. I am sure that it would be an unforgettable experience.

Have you always wanted to be doing what you're doing now?

No, I thought I would either be a doctor or a scientist.

And what did you become in the end?

I am a Senior Professional Officer: Facilities Management in the City of Cape Town.

Do you have any icons or mentors you'd like to tell us about?

I have had the pleasure of working for extremely good managers and for a director that had an MBA and was able to provide guidance, leadership, strategy and provided a framework to bring change to the organisation as a whole. I would like to build on what I learnt from this leader and build my own legacy within the organisation.

And for yourself, do you have any achievements you are really proud of?

Being enrolled in the GSB's MBA programme.

What has it been like for you?

The GSB's MBA programme has tested my current frame of reference and has challenged me to grow and learn at a rapid pace. The experience has been amazing and I have already met so many brilliant minds and great industry leaders.

How did you find out about the programme?

I came to my first information session for the GSB's MBA programme more than 10 years ago. I was fascinated by the idea of the programme, its promise for entrepreneurship, and what it provided in terms of leadership development and business acumen. I also had set a goal of completing my MBA before the age of 35.

Why did you choose to do it at the UCT GSB? Was it the session?

The school has impeccable administration, a great reputation and has the best MBA programme in Africa. Its programme spoke to my values, and the speed with which they handled my application left me very impressed.

Richard **Eberlein**

MBA Modular

Cape Town, South Africa

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What is your current or most recent position and where? Please indicate if you prefer to have the company/organisation remain anonymous.
I am currently the Head of Sales: Retail and Digital for HomeChoice.

What led you to making the decision to do an MBA? Tell us why and how you got here?
Having not had the opportunity to study after school and committed to putting myself through the university of hard knocks. Through learning through failures and successes, I felt that as I near the halfway mark in my career, it was time to test my learnings against the academics. I decided to engage on a journey of personal growth which has brought me to the MBA journey.

What are you most passionate about?
I am passionate about growing the tourism and hospitality industry in Cape Town and the greater Western Cape.

What achievement are you most proud of?
Knowing that I have the opportunity to impact people's lives around me.

Tell us about your icons or mentors? Share some advice that you have received from a mentor/leader?
An Alumni of UCT GSB Paul van Schijndel who passed away a few years ago was a mentor for me many years ago when I was going through a change in my life. He left some advice that I have continued to work with over my career; "trust but verify".

Why did you select UCT Graduate School of Business? What was it about us that attracted you to us?
After many years of deliberating of whether or not to do my MBA, there was only one institute that would give me the engagement and networking connections, and that is the UCT GSB

What are your top 3 best books of all time - provide a one liner explanation?
1. "The 5am Club" - How I found quality time in my busy schedule
2. "The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People" - Begin with the end in mind
3. "The Naked Chef" - Inspired me to be creative

What advice would you give to your younger self?
Fail fast, learn from your mistakes and have fun on the journey.

If you could have a last dinner with any famous person (leader or celeb etc), who would it be and why?
It would be with my late father. He gave me the opportunity to be the person I am today.

Lastly, tell us about your MBA experience thus far?
Timing is everything. At this point in my life, I am hungry to engage and learn. Therefore each reading, assignment, test and engagement with the lectures brings a new moment to improve me.

Aasim **Ebrahim**

MBA Modular
Cape Town
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Tell us a bit about your work history.
I worked in government for nearly 10 years. I also worked in the financial industry for 2 years.

What has been your greatest achievement so far?
Marrying my wife!

What is your current or most recent position and where?
Senior Professional Officer.

Thinking back to being a kid and the profession you wanted to be in, what was it? And did it happen?
I wanted to be a police officer but no, it didn't happen.

What are you most passionate about?
Finance.

What made you decide to do an MBA? Tell us why and how you got here?
More money... but hopefully I could possibly earn more. I also did the GMAT and got accepted.

Why did you select UCT Graduate School of Business? What was it about us that attracted you to us?
The location. I'm in Cape Town and I work close by so that was the obvious choice.

What are your top 3 books of all time?
Only 1 book. That is the Quran. It has never changed.

What advice would you give to your younger self?
Have more patience and be more humble.

What is the worst advice you've ever received and why? How would you improve the advice?
"Save when you're young". I would have said "Look for additional income streams to supplement your income".

If you could have a last dinner with any famous person (leader or celeb etc), who would it be and why?
Christian Bale. He was the best Batman.

What change would you want to bring about in the world and why?
I want to find a cure for Aids and Cancer. And give all the medication for free.

Lastly, tell us about your MBA experience thus far?
It is good. It's really stretching me with all the readings.

Alex **Erdmann**

MBA Modular
Cape Town
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What work have you been doing so far?
I've been consulting in waste management for 5 years.

What has been your greatest achievement?
Fulfilling my academic ambitions.

What is your occupation at the moment?
I'm currently the COO at Kusaga Taka Consulting.

What did you want to be one day, as a child?
I wanted to follow in my father's footsteps as a businessman. I'd say it's still a work in progress.

Who was your greatest mentor? Share some of their advice.
My Father. He said nothing is impossible, believe in yourself and make decisions that will lead you to your goals.

What drove you to do an MBA?
The urge for self improvement.

How did you end up at the UCT GSB?
The UCT GSB has a great reputation and I wanted to associate myself with the school.

What are your favourite books?
1. "Rich Dad Poor Dad" by Robert T. Kiyosaki
2. "Steve Jobs" by Walter Isaacson
3. "Red Notice" by Bill Browder

What do you wish younger you had known?
Enjoy the present. It's good to be ambitious but take time to appreciate where you are.

What is the worst advice you've ever received and why?
"You need to know when to jump ship". To improve this advice I'd say don't jump ship for the wrong reasons. Sometimes in order to be successful one needs to go through tough times.

What change would you want to bring about in the world and why?
I'd like to make a difference to world pollution. We only have one earth and I think it's imperative that we look after it.

Lastly, tell us about your MBA experience thus far?
I've truly enjoyed the MBA experience so far. The course has a strong focus on sustainability which I can relate to.

Gabriel **Fernandes**

MBA Modular
Mozambique/Cape Town
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What are you most proud of workwise?
Managing multicultural teams.

What is your current or most recent position and where? Please indicate if you prefer to have the company/organisation remain anonymous.
Project Manager - EnerMech

What profession did you think you would go into as a child? Did you?
Mechanical Engineer, yes.

How many years of work experience have you acquired so far?
5+ in Oil & Gas and Fabrication.

Do you have someone in the business world you admire? Why?
Richard Branson - his laid back attitude, ability to have fun.

Why did you want to take on the challenge of doing an MBA?
As an Engineer I needed to uplift my financial skills and empathy.

What are you most passionate about?
Being the best person I can be - being good to people / doing the right thing.

Why did you choose the UCT GSB?
Convenience and it's the best.

We live by the motto that a new world needs new ideas. How do you think you contribute to this?
I am multicultural, and have an open mind to dealing with problems.

What are the best books of all time in your opinion?
1. "Little Prince"
2. "The Places You Will Go" by Dr. Seuss
3. Roal Dahl Short stories

What advice would you give to your younger self?
Forgive, and take an inside-out approach.

What is the worst advice you've ever received and why?
Not to do an MBA - I am doing it.

If you could have a last dinner with any famous person (leader or celeb, etc.) who would it be?
Richard Branson, Shakespeare

What change would you want to bring about in the world and why?
Less poverty - less human rights violations.

What do you have to say about your MBA thus far?
AMAZING!

Gabriel **Gabriel**

Nickname: Squared
MBA Modular
Namibia
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Do you have an icon or a mentor? Tell us about them.
A former colleague. He made me believe that as a young Engineer, the workplace was mine (and other young Engineers) to conquer and make a positive contribution that will result in career progression.

How long have you been in your industry?
9 Years. I am in the Electricity Supply Industry, working for Namibia Power Corporation (Pty) Ltd, a power utility that generates, transmits and trades electricity in the Southern African Power Pool.

Who would you consider a hero or leader?
Sadio Mane, he is a brilliant soccer player and is doing a lot for his country. I would like to draw inspiration from him.

Why the UCT GSB?
Well, I did my undergraduate at UCT which makes me aware of the quality of this great institution. A Google search of the best Business Schools and MBA programs reaffirmed my initial choice of UCT GSB.

What have you learned from starting your MBA experience?
It's only been 2 weeks of lectures, but I have reflected on my current personal and professional life so many times already. I have to mention that learning to prioritise and manage time is one of the greatest lessons thus far.

What are you bringing to the new world?
With the current global trends in technology and brilliant innovations, the world needs leaders and innovative thinkers that will bring about the 4th Industrial Revolution. I may not have the brilliant new ideas, but I am able to create an enabling environment for developing such ideas through peer engagements that are geared towards this and when eventually I put a UCT GSB MBA degree with that Moto written all over it.

What advice would you give to your younger self?
I think things have fallen in place for me naturally, at the right times. I wouldn't choose to have lived otherwise.

What is the worst advice you've ever received and why? How would you improve the advice?
I really do not have a recollection. Maybe it is because I did not greatly regard bad advice that I've received.

Stanton Wesley **Govender**

MBA Modular

Durban/Johannesburg, South Africa

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How's your MBA going so far?
I am really enjoying networking and learning from other peoples unique experiences.

What made you decide to do it at the UCT GSB?
The opportunity to learn in the context of an emerging market and the specialization options on offer.

Are you currently working while you complete your MBA?
Yes. My current position is Group Reliability Manager for Africa within one of the world's leading Industrial gas companies.

UCT GSB's brand motto is 'A new world needs new ideas'. How are you bringing new ideas to a new world?
By promoting a more inclusive world, this brings more diversity and with that new ideas.

What was your history ilke before this in terms of work?
I have 10 years of experience working in Operations and Maintenance in industries such as, Steel Manufacturing, Pulp and Paper, Chemicals and Industrial Gas. Throughout this period I have been involved with Lean Manufacturing and Digital transformation initiatives.

...and your greatest achievement so far?
My greatest achievement has been becoming a father.

Is that what you are most passionate about?
I am passionate about life and the importance of family.

If you could choose 3 books to be crowned the best of all time, what would they be?
3 x The Bible - Logical consistency, empirical adequacy, and experiential relevance.

What advice would you give to your younger self?
Don't be so serious.

And on the other end of the spectrum, what does the future look like to you?
I am always optimistic about the future and from my view it looks quite bright.

What change would you want to bring about in the world and why?
I would like to empower those less fortunate to unlock their potential as we all have something unique to offer.

Sumeshen **Govender**

MBA Modular

Durban, South Africa

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What advice would you give to your younger self?
Work life balance is key. continue asking questions and don;t be afraid to take random opportunities.

What has been your greatest achievement so far?
Qualifying as a CA.

What are you most passionate about?
Sports and science.

What led you to making the decision to do an MBA? Tell us why and how you got here?
I wanted to study again, I wanted to develop my ability to think holistically and critically. I wanted to move out of my comfort zone and try something different.

And how are you finding the MBA programme in its initial stages?
It started off really slowly but then some deep meaningful content prompted me to think clearly about values and purpose which has been valuable thus far.

How are you contributing to the notion that a new world needs new ideas?
I doubt I'm the most creative but I do have a more practical sense to me and I help bring the most practical ideas forward. Having all these fascinating ideas is useless if you can't implement them.

What factors made you decide on the UCT GSB?
The modular format works for me, the international network is attractive and the ranking, which indicates that the programme is of a high quality.

Have you ever heard bad advice that you could improve on?
Take things as they come, let things happen... I would forget that and replace it with "try to control the outcomes and don't leave anything to chance".

What does the future look like to you?
Hopefully I'll be an MBA graduate in 2021. Other than that I don't really plan far ahead.

If you could have a last dinner with any famous person (leader or celeb etc), who would it be and why?
Steve Jobs, just understand his thinking around how to convince people about a concept when it is not easy to see the value in it.

What do you currently do and where do you work?
I'm an Executive Assistant to the Director of Customer Solutions at Old Mutual.

What change would you like to see in the world?
I'm not into wishful thinking.

Christopher **Hurt**

Nickname: Chris
MBA Modular
Washington, DC
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Why did you choose the UCT Graduate School of Business?
UCT has the geographic benefit of being located in beautiful Cape Town! This is pretty far from my comfort zone within the US, helping me stretch and grow. The student body is more diverse in ethnicity and thought than I could have found at home, which in turn is opening my views in new directions.

What are your top 3 best books of all time - provide a one liner explanation?
1. "Siddhartha" by Hermann Hesse is the book I most often re-read to remind me that material possessions have no importance in life but relationships do.
2. "Tribe" by Sebastian Junger explores the fractures between the volunteer US military and the nation it serves, as well as what forms a community and holds it together.
3. "The Omnivore's Dilemma" by Michael Pollan discusses how our food is farmed and raised affects our environment and how the end product affects the consumer, and makes me think more deliberately about my nutrition.

Thinking back to being a kid and the profession you wanted to be, what was it and did it happen?
As a kid, I loved walking through buildings in construction and watching progress, and seeing how the different components went together. Now as an adult, I work in that industry, working with clients to develop their needs into a design, and then constructing that design to give them a final product that I can be proud of!

How many years of working experience do you have and which industries have you worked in? Tell us about your work experience?
I've worked since 2004 when I graduated from the US Naval Academy. Within the Civil Engineer Corps I had several roles, as Assistant Operations Officer, Detachment Officer-In-Charge, Production Officer, Assistant Public Works Officer, and Construction Manager. After 2013, I left the Navy and went to work for AMEC, which eventually became Wood PLC. There, I was a Construction Project Manager, which was similar to my previous work. I worked with US Government , municipal, and commercial clients to construct and renovate buildings and roads.

What has been your greatest achievement?
Professionally, it was serving as Detachment Officer-In-Charge of 87 enlisted sailors in Afghanistan. We successfully deployed, constructed over 10,000 man days of effort, and returned home in 6 months without injury.

Lastly, tell us about your MBA experience thus far?
Busy! There are few moments to focus on myself at this time; my time is given to my wife and our dog, my studies, and my fellow full time group members.

Maahir **Jakoet**

MBA Modular

Cape Town, South Africa

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What advice would you give to your younger self?
There is nothing heavier in the scales than good character.

What do you do?
I am currently a Portfolio Manager at the Old Mutual Investment Group.

What are you most passionate about?
I'm passionate about business while at the same time bringing prosperity to impoverished communities. I believe we can do a lot with business and it can only be sustainable through closing the inequality gap we have in the world today. I do feel that an MBA through the GSB will help me navigate my path to continue to achieve toward a profession where passion and purpose meet.

Tell us about your icons or mentors? Share some advice that you have received from a mentor/leader?
I have various mentors, young and old, from clerks to CEO's. Do the right thing when nobody's watching. I have already passed this on to my kids

Why did you select UCT Graduate School of Business? What was it about us that attracted you to us?
Besides my alignment of values to UCT GSB, I wanted a school that has a strong reputation in Africa and Internationally.

What achievement are you proud of?
I believe my greatest achievement is still approaching. To mention a few, being married to my beautiful wife and the ability to father my two awesome kids. Others are graduating from top universities and working for renowned organisations. A few of my physical achievements include completing multi-stage mountain bike races and endurance road bike races. In life, I believe one keeps achieving by pushing forward and the road to success is never a straight line.

What are your top 3 best books of all time - provide a one liner explanation?
1. "Born a Crime" by Trevor Noah
2. "From corner café to JSE giant" by Carie Maas
3. "The Subtle Art of Not Giving a F*ck" by Mark Manson

All three books have real life experiences

Tell us about your MBA experience thus far?
I have been stretched physically and mentally, to say the least. I am grateful for the opportunity and the support as they go hand in hand. I have learnt a lot and I hope to continue to experience the 'wow factor' that the GSB has to offer.

What change would you want to bring about in the world and why?
I would want everyone to choose one person to help in a small way and I would want the person being helped to do the same for someone else.

Tazwell **Johnson**



Nickname: Taz
MBA Modular
Cape Town, South Africa
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Have you always wanted to be in business?
As a kid I was obsessed with being a "businessman", to me that meant someone with a suit and briefcase, I never knew what they did but in my mind it was important; and that is what I wanted to do.

What did you end up doing for a living?
I work in Fund Accounting at Allan Gray.

And what are you most proud of?
The fact that I got accepted for this MBA. I never followed the traditional route of studying a 3/4 year degree directly after school, then working a bit and coming back to study further. To get an undergraduate degree, alone, came with it's fair share of challenges, so being able to make it into the MBA programme means a lot.

How are you finding it so far?
Hectic in terms of time-management but so insightful in terms of learning things you thought of before and also learning things about myself.

What was your career like leading up to this MBA?
I've had 15 years of work experience so far, mostly in financial services, the last 5 of which were in the Asset Management Industry in the Fund Accounting space.

Have you had any mentors along the way?
My mother, the lessons I received from her were mostly implicit. There were many but the most notable is hard work, humility and stewardship. Hard work and humility I picked up from her dealings with her job and her employer and stewardship through her dealings with people - even though she had a little, she would still give her last to someone, even a stranger in need.

Why did you select UCT Graduate School of Business? What was it about us that attracted you to us?
Location, Credibility and the course structure and content.

What are your top 3 best books of all time - provide a one liner explanation?
1. "Outliers", I've always thought highly of the most successful businessman and entrepreneurs (as if that type of success was unattainable for the layperson and this book demystifies that.
2. "Intelligent Investor", if you are passionate about finance and investing, this book is a must.
3. "The art of war" brilliant look at the start of strategy.

What does the future look like to you?
At the rate we are going, with the advancements in Artificial intelligence and technological convergence, I think Technology will eventually surpass human advancement.

What future change would you want to bring about in the world and why?
For everyone to realise the importance of sustainability because I don't think the needs of tomorrow can be met if we continue the way we do today.

Kudakwashe **Kandemiiri**



Nickname: Kuda
MBA Modular
Zimbabwe
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If you could have a last dinner with any famous person, who would it be?
Kevin Hart. I admire his work ethic, determination, and ability to maintain his level of humour.

What has been your greatest achievement?
My greatest achievement to date has been using my tech skills to identify issues and make improvements in the working conditions of 15000+ workers across South Africa, South America, and Europe in the Apparel, Beverage, and Agriculture industries.

Have you always wanted to work in tech?
I have always wanted to work with technology since I got my first computer in 1999. My dad studied computer science, and exposed me to tech at a young age, so I am fortunate enough to have landed my dream childhood profession.

Why did you select UCT Graduate School of Business? What was it about us that attracted you to us?
The GSB is my choice of institution because of its focus on emerging markets and international business. The GSB's values of Excellence and Transformation are also closely aligned to my personal values.

What would you tell someone about your MBA experience so far?
The MBA has been very challenging, but I expected nothing less. I am being forced to push my boundaries, and I'm loving it! The amazing lecturers and classmates have been the cherry on top.

Which books would you recommend to others?
1. "Who moved my cheese" by Spencer Johnson - The best book I've read on change management, and adapting to change.
2. "The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership" by John Maxwell - This book's increased my overall Leadership skills by not only making me a better leader, but a better person.
3. "The Alchemist" by Paulo Coelho - I found this book to be up to the interpretation of the reader, but it taught me a lot about life, purpose, and spirituality.

How did you get to this MBA programme?
My personal goal is to support African entrepreneurs and small businesses in growing successful, scalable tech-driven businesses, which can compete on a global platform. The African continent has an abundance of potential and the opportunity to complete my MBA, at the GSB, will uniquely position me to be part of the realisation of such potential.

What has your career journey been like so far?
I have a commerce background, specialising in Information Systems and Business Management. As an Information Systems specialist, with 6 years of experience in the world of Business Analysis and Agile Software Development, I ensure smooth delivery of technological solutions. Most of my experience has been in the Ethical Supply Chain, and Financial Services industries.and consumer expectations overall. This has significantly influenced the future of business and strategy.

Thielshad **Karriem**

MBA Modular

Cape Town, South Africa

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What did you dream of being when you were a child?
I wanted to be a tea lady because I was great at making cups of tea for my parents, I'm still great at tea making but I'm better at being an engineer.

What advice would you give to your younger self?
You are ok just the way you are.

What drives you?
Change and growth in myself and others.

Who do you admire?
Frida Kahlo, accepting who she was and never conforming to the norm and standard at the time.

How did you decide to do an MBA?
Watching leaders value the wrong skills made me want to be better and lead better.

Why the UCT GSB?
The focus on innovation and sustainable development.

We live by the ideal that a new world needs new ideas. Do you plan on walking this talk?
I'd like to learn about SDGs and my plan is to use what I've learnt and encourage.
If you could recommend only 3 books to someone, what would they be?
Homo Deus, The Art of War, Rich Dad Poor Dad.

What is the worst advice you've ever received and why? How would you improve the advice?
You need to be as aggressive as a man to compete in a male dominated industry.
I would change this to: You need to bring your strengths to the table in order to thrive.

What does the future look like to you?
I have yet to decide, but I know it can be whatever I want it to be.

What change would you want to bring about in the world and why?
I want people to value growth and change more than comfort.

If you could have a last dinner with anyone we might know, who would you choose?
Ellen Sirleaf, I'd like to understand how she was always able to break barriers and create change.

How has your MBA programme been so far?
I've reconsidered my own thoughts and ideas in this short time and I cannot wait to see how different that would be at the end of this degree.

Hussein **Khan**



Nickname: Tich
MBA Modular
Kwa-Zulu Natal
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What made you apply at the UCT GSB?
It was recommended by my HR Executive.

Could you tell us about something that you've achieved that you're proud of?
After losing my business in KZN in the midst of the 2008 global financial crisis, I moved to Cape Town in 2009, and rebuilt my personal and professional life. Starting all over again, achieving what I have thus far and most importantly creating stability for my family is currently my greatest achievement.

Tell us about your icons or mentors? Share some advice that you have received from a mentor/leader?
I have had the good fortune of working with some phenomenal leaders from whom I have learned different yet important lessons. What advice currently sticks in my mind is to be patient and play the long game. Focus on achieving long term goals and not be distracted by short term frustrations.

Where do you work at the moment and where is your company based?
I am currently a National Sales Manager for Novus Holdings. We are based in Cape Town but have a national footprint.

How many years have you been working for?
I have 31 years of working experience. I have been involved in sales and business development for the better part of my life. My work revolves around the creation of opportunities and opening of new doors. I have worked extensively throughout South Africa and across local borders. I have recently started to develop opportunities in East Africa.

Could you describe your MBA experience up until this point?
It's been hectic but great in terms of building capacity.

If you could have a last dinner with any famous person who would you choose and why?
Imtiaz Sooleiman (CEO of Gift of The Givers) - to get an understanding of his journey behind setting up such a phenomenal humanitarian organisation.
How he manages and coordinates its activities and most importantly, how this has impacted his personal growth and development as a person.

What kind of global change do you want to be part of?
End oppression in all its forms. I believe that no human has a right to oppress another. Not in our homes, not in our countries and not in our world either.

You know that at the UCT GSB, we embrace the notion that a new world brings new ideas. How are you living this motto?
I am still vested in the traditional manufacturing sector. Nonetheless, in my current role, I have initiated an innovation program. The purpose of which is to identify how to repurpose our current equipment to produce non-traditional printed formats.

Ceri **Laird**



Nickname: Champ
MBA Modular
Cape Town, South Africa
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How many years of working experience do you have and which industries have you worked in?
I have 5 years of work experience in Architecture, Interior design and Furniture Design. I deal with high-end residential home designs and once-off unique, custom furniture pieces.

What has been your greatest achievement?
Getting into the GSB MBA program.

What is your current or most recent position, and where is/was it?
Currently, I am an Architectural Designer at SAOTA in Cape Town.

What are you most passionate about?
It's a toss up between computer gaming and anything active (gym, rock climbing, hockey and hiking).

Tell us about your icons or mentors? Share some advice that you have received from a mentor/leader?
My father was my biggest mentor growing up. He would always push me to do the best. He led by example, achieving multiple accolades and degrees over the years.

How did you get into this MBA program? What were the events leading up to this?
My father did his MBA around my age and said it was an incredible journey and the skills you learn were second to none. As time passed, I found myself more and more interested in the company operations and finance. I did some research on what I could do to better support my company in these areas, and an MBA was the top choice. A couple of Google searches later and I found the UCT GSB.

And what made you decide on the UCT GSB after you'd found us?
The GSB is a triple accredited school with international recognition, and the best in Africa. It was the clear choice when it came to where I wanted to further my studies.

UCT GSB's brand motto is 'A new world needs new ideas' | How are you bringing new ideas to a new world?
Just like design, the environment that we work in is ever changing, companies need unique solutions to their individual needs. I feel my out-of-the-box thinking, problem-solving skills and an interest in the future give me the tools to tackle each problem - head on.

What are your top 3 best books of all time - provide a one liner explanation?
1. "Lord of the flies" by William Golding
2. "Good to Great" by James C.Collins
3. "The Wind Singer" by William Nicholson

If you could have a last dinner with anyone, who would it be?
Robert Downey Jr. I think it would be really fun based on his life experience and personality.

Lastly, tell us about your MBA experience up until this point?
Exciting, interesting and challenging.

Richard **Levesque**



Nickname: Rick
MBA Modular
Johannesburg, South Africa
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How many years of working experience do you have and which industries have you worked in? Tell us about your work experience?
Two years in Logistics - Multi model-logistics in the SADC region. Then, I have been working at a large financial institution as a Portfolio manager and Stockbroker for the last 10 years. Focus is on private client and institutional business.

Thinking back to being a kid and the profession you wanted to be, what was it and did it happen?
I wanted to be a professional cricket player.

Why did you select UCT Graduate School of Business? What was it about us that attracted you to us?
The African focus.

UCT GSB's brand motto is 'A new world needs new ideas' | How are you bringing new ideas to a new world?
I'm an out-the-box thinker who is project driven. I love bringing new ideas to life and they always end up being so different to the initial plan but it's the journey that really counts.

Could you recommend 3 books for other MBA students?
1. "Confessions of an Economic Hitman" by John Perkins - The way in which money and debt are used as instruments of influence on a global scale.
2. "The Intelligent Investor" by Benjamin Graham - The start for any budding investor is in this book.
3. Any of the Jack Reacher books by Lee Child - Just a great character.

What advice would you give to your younger self?
Enjoy it and follow your heart!

What is your current or most recent position and for which company?
Portfolio manager and Stockbroker for the last 10 years at FNB Stockbroking and Portfolio management. Focus is on private client and institutional business.

What is the worst advice you've ever received and why? How would you improve the advice?
When a crisis happens, and they do happen, stay calm! Greatest advice.

What does the future look like to you?
Higher integration through increased penetration from technology. Virtual reality!

If you could have a last dinner with any famous person (leader or celeb etc), who would it be and why?
Hansie Cronje - Just a great guy.

Lastly, tell us about your MBA experience thus far?
It's been an absolute jol! Great team! Great lectures!

Joshua **Levithan**



Nickname: Josh
MBA Modular
Johannesburg
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Why did you decide to do an MBA?
I wanted to be able to speak the language of Business with confidence.

Could you tell us about your career so far?
I started my career at 16 working as a runner on several film sets. Upon graduation, my first job was a part of the team which worked on the absa - Barclays split. Once the separation was complete I moved into the IT space working for a Digital start up called Nomad Now

What has been your greatest achievement?
A film I helped create whilst doing my undergrad was entered into the Cannes film festival for best student film.

What do you do for a living?
Senior Account Management .

What did you dream of being as a child?
I wanted to be a film producer, I did this and did not enjoy the environment. Changed professions.

What are you most passionate about?
Films, series and digital transformation.

What change would you like to see in the world?
More of a focus on sustainability.

Why did you select UCT Graduate School of Business? What was it about us that attracted you to us?
UCT GSB has the most impressive alumni out of all the african business schools. The mountain and the sea does not hurt either!

What are your top books of all time? Why?
1. “Tools for Titans” - A book detailing how today’s leaders are successful.
2. “Harry Potter” - Need I say more?

If you could have a last dinner with any famous person (leader or celeb etc), who would it be and why?
Kevin Hart, he is one of the most entrepreneurial personalities currently. The amount he gets through in a day most of us do not get through in a week. I would love to know what keeps him inspired and how he manages all the different obligations.

What advice would you give to your younger self?
Pay attention in class. Do not waste time, rather enjoy it!

CJ Liebenberg

MBA Modular
Lutzville, South Africa
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Could you tell us a bit about something you consider a great achievement in your life?
While I was in second year at university I tutored a grade 12 high school student in math and science. He needed to improve his marks drastically in order to get admitted to the Architecture program at Kovsies. At that stage I merely did it for the pocket money and because he was a friend, but only after he had been admitted to the program and ultimately became a successful architect, he credited his success to me. I have achieved many academic, cultural, sports and professional successes over the years, but none was as humbling and satisfying as realising that I had helped someone achieve his destiny through what seemed to be a small act at the time.

And when you were younger, who were your mentors or guides as you were to this student?
My parents. They taught me that whatever decision causes you the most discomfort ends up being the decision that creates the most personal growth.

Is that what made you want to do your MBA?
As a young professional I aspired to do an MBA since I started working. The decision was made easy when my company informed me that it'll be funding it.

Why did you decide to do it at the UCT GSB?
UCT GSB's focus seemed to be on business in the African context and entrepreneurship to a greater extent than other business schools.

How has it been so far?
I enjoyed the team building weekend, however the orientation week was too long and I found the preparation courses unnecessary. Overall my experience of the first module was good.

What kind of future do you see for yourself now?
Atypical, adventurous and successful.

We've asked the MBA participants what their favourite books are because it can be such an interesting exercise, what are yours and why?
1. "The Alchemist" by Paulo Coelho - a simple but inspiring tale about destiny.
2. "Man's Search for Meaning" by Viktor Frankl - inspiring book about leading a purposeful life.
3. "Kane and Abel" by Jeffrey Archer - just a good story.

If you could meet anyone, alive or dead who would it be?
Jan Smuts. He was a strange but compelling man - a military leader, statesman and philosopher. He was a great friend of Churchill and regarded by Einstein as "...only one of 11 men that truly understood the concept of the theory of relativity". Smuts was a paradox - he was one of the architects of the United Nations, and a great champion of human rights, yet he could not see the need to reform the condition of the African majority in his own country.

Simbarashe **Mabwe**



Nickname: Simba
MBA Modular
Zimbabwe
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Could you tell us about your work experience and your career so far?
I have more than 10 years experience in biomedical and clinical research work. In addition, I have a well-rounded soft and technical skill-set. My preferred workplace is one that is intellectually challenging, exciting and, in which I fully engage my skills.

What drives you and gives you purpose?
Empowering others to achieve more than they believe they can.

Did you ever end up becoming what you wanted to be when you were young?
I wanted to be a teacher. This did not happen but during the long breaks at University I did teaching on a temporary basis.

Who do you consider mentors and what have you learned from them?
Through reading their books I have received mentorship from Steven Covey, John C Maxwell and Anthony Robbins.

Doing an MBA is a big decision. Why did you decide to do it?
I would like to maximise the value of my contribution to UCT and realize my potential.

H**ow are you finding your MBA?**
It has been exciting- took me out of my comfort zone through the Back-to-Basics team-building exercise, introduced to the world of accounting, economics and complexity theory. I believe I am already a better person and it is amazing what 3-weeks of dedicated and focused effort can bring about within a person.

What made you decide that the UCT GSB was the right place to do the programme at?
Well, it is the place to be, triple accreditation, case-based teaching and a scenic location.

If bringing new ideas to a new world is important to you, how are you doing that?
I believe in continual improvement and challenging the status quo.

Which books are you happy you read?
1. “The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People” by Steven Covey
2. “The 360° Leader” by J.C Maxwell
3. “Money Master The Game” by Tony Robbins. I believe in maximizing the law of dividends.

Themba **Magubane**

MBA Modular

Kwazulu Natal, South Africa

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Do you have any icons or mentors who have inspired you along the way?
One of my greatest icons is Peter F. Drucker. I am always inspired by his leadership insights, especially the book about managing oneself.

If you could have a last dinner with any famous person who would you invite?
It would be Prince Harry of the UK for his courage to take a decision of stepping away from his royal duties for personal reasons.

Thinking back to being a kid, what did you want to be? Did you become this?
I have always wanted to become an engineer. I therefore ensured to graduate with an engineering degree even though it was challenging.

Where do you work at the moment?
I am currently a Senior Project Metallurgist at De Beers Marine in Cape Town.

What has your career been like so far?
I have 14 years of working experience, all of which was acquired in the mining industry. I have acquired extensive knowledge and experience in mineral processing, base metals refining and strategic project execution.

What has been your greatest achievement in this time?
Playing a pivotal role in the execution of a greenfield capital project, which entailed designing and implementation of the world class diamond sampling system on a new sampling vessel platform.

What are you most passionate about?
I am passionate about success.

What has it been like starting your MBA?
The MBA is incredible thus far, and it's fascinating to view this world differently. I am growing in leaps and bounds and I shall continue to thrive in my personal and professional life.

What made you want to do your MBA in the first place?
I wanted to acquire knowledge that will shape my career trajectory. I decided to study through the GSB because of its great reputation and accessibility. I consider myself lucky to be accepted as part of the 2020/21 modular group.

Why did you select UCT Graduate School of Business? What was it about us that attracted you to us?
I chose the UCT GSB because of its triple accreditation and because it is local and easily accessible

What are your top reads?
1. "Who Moved My Cheese?" by Dr Spencer Johnson
2. "The Power of Habit" by Charles Duhigg
3. "The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People" by Stephen R. Covey

These books are about personal change.

Ndiime **Magubbwi-Hamanzuka**



MBA Modular
Lusaka, Zambia
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Who are people you look up to, personally, and have you ever gotten any advice from them?
I'm inspired by Mizinga Melu-CEO for Absa Zambia. She has scored a lot of firsts for a woman in an industry that has for long been dominated by males.

What is your current or most recent position and where? Please indicate if you prefer to have the company/organisation remain anonymous.
Senior Manager-Strategy Execution.

UCT GSB's brand motto is 'A new world needs new ideas' | How are you bringing new ideas to a new world?
I live the motto by embracing technology, and suggesting ways in which we can use it to manage our client databases, (my organisation still relies on manual excel spreadsheets).

How much work experience do you have and in how many industries have you worked?
Collective 13 years experience in finance and administration spanning 4 different industries: Audit & Advisory, Agriculture, Financial Services (Banking and Insurance) and Telecoms.

What attracted you to the UCT GSB?
I particularly picked the UCT GSB on account of its excellent reputation and track record - being ranked among the top 50 MBAs in the world, and the best in Africa.

What are your top 3 best books of all time - provide a one liner explanation?
1. "Conversations with myself" by Nelson Mandela - The inspiring words of Nelson Mandela
2. "Dreams from my father" by Barack Obama - Embrace who you are, your future self will appreciate it.
3. "Desert Flower" by Waris Dirie - From the deserts of Somalia to the bright lights of New York, dreams do come true.

What change would you want to bring about in the world and why?
I'd be keen on changing the way public office is managed and run in Africa generally, and especially Zambia. This would accelerate the eradication of the perceived poverty in a country generously endowed with so many natural resources.

Tell us about your MBA experience thus far?
It has been a great mind-opener to what is possible. Some concepts have been reinforcements of what I already knew, while others have completely been new and enriching. How personal values impact the organization and vice versa, how economists helped Uber design a pricing model, how personal experiences shape and inform the decisions we make. Greatly enriching discourses.

If you could have a last dinner with any famous person (a public figure), who would it be and why?
Ms. Ellen Sirleaf Johnson. I'd love to understand and tap into what it takes to be such a powerhouse of a woman-breaking so many barriers and ceilings in both political and economic spheres.

Ayesha **Mahomed**

MBA Modular
Pietermaritzburg
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Can you tell us a bit about your career, so far?
I have five years of work experience, I am in the reinsurance industry.

What are you doing currently, aside from studying?
I'm a Territory Head at Santam Re (Underwriting Department).

What is your passion in life?
Advocating for gender equality! The corporate world was a rude awakening for me.

Who is your greatest icon, and why?
My mother will always be the greatest icon in my life! Being kind and courageous in spite of harsh circumstances is something my mother has instilled in me.

What made you decide that you'd like to study at the UCT GSB?
Is this a trick question? The culture and the long list of accreditations and accolades are some of the things that attracted me to the GSB. Not to mention, it's based in the best city in the world!

UCT GSB's brand motto is 'A new world needs new ideas' | How are you bringing new ideas to a new world?
Stay tuned.

Which 3 books do you consider firm favourites?
1. "The Kite Runner"
2. "And the Mountains Echoed"
3. "The Handmaid's Tale"

They're all super touching.

Could you share some bad advice with us that you've received?
Why was it bad?
I should stop worrying so much about studying and should start thinking about marriage! This will, forever be, the WORST piece of unsolicited advice I've been given. I would tell young women to keep empowering themselves! Knowledge is POWER!

Let's say you could have dinner with anyone right now, who would it be?
Malala Yousafzai and/or Greta Thunberg. These are the leaders that are shaping the future of our world. I'd love to be in the presence of their wisdom.

If you could drive any change, what would it be?
Gender equality and equal opportunity. Everyone deserves a platform to thrive in!

How has your MBA been so far? Challenging?
It's been incredible and exhausting and scary and exhilarating and nerve wrecking and the ands keep coming. It's only been two weeks and I've experienced so much already, so, I'm excited to see what the rest of the journey has in store for me!

Cecilia **Malila**

MBA Modular

Cape Town, South Africa

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Can you tell us a bit about your history of work?
My work history covered a period in the manufacturing industry and later pivoted into the printing industry. In 2004 i was offered a position at the South African Revenue Service (SARS) and in 2008 joined the Large Business Centre, a division within SARS. I am currently employed as an operations manager within the account maintenance division within SARS, and hold 15 years (at time of writing the BIO, currently it is 18.5 years) experience in the public sector.

What has been your greatest achievement?
There is not one in particular. In my family we celebrate all achievements. For one, we celebrate the opportunity which is not afforded to many, to be able to study and obtain a qualification.

What are you most passionate about?
Education and travelling. The two things that I believe every human being should aspire to do in life. It has the ability to open up the world as you know it in a new light - allowing you to see different perspectives of life.

Why did you select UCT Graduate School of Business?
UCT's reputation speaks for itself.

What does the future look like to you?
The future is a place of peace, freedom and joy. A place where there is no discrimination, a place where all are accepted.

If you could have a last dinner with any famous person (leader or celeb, etc.) who would it be and why?
"Last" dinner? My husband. He is my famous person and if it were my "last dinner" I would not want to spend it with anyone else, no matter how "famous" they are.

What kind of global change would you like to see?
I believe everyone should play a role in alleviating poverty. No one should go to bed hungry. Seeing a malnourished child is the only inspiration you need to want to make a difference.

Lastly, tell us about your MBA experience thus far?
The MBA is quite interesting. It pushes you to think differently, allows you to explore, gain understanding and share knowledge. The course contributes exceptionally towards developing better leaders - allowing you to recognise strengths, develop weaknesses and teaching you how to overcome challenges.

Gibson **Mapfidza**



Nickname: Gibs
MBA Modular
Zimbabwe
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What is the worst advice you've ever received and why? How would you improve the advice?
Growing up my mother taught me to avoid companionship, perhaps as well meaning advice. "Your only friends should be books", she would sternly command me. I grew up an introvert. However, this world is looking for connecters and associations. Collaboration and networks are big things today. I feel I could have mastered these skills better growing up.

How did you end up at the UCT GSB instead of choosing somewhere else to study?
I find most of UCT GSB former students very grounded and systematic in their approach. The ranking and awards also tells a great story.

If you could cite any achievement you've made, what would it be?
As a Project Manager, I delivered a USD 70million in Lilongwe in 2014 whilst working for Old Mutual Africa .

Where do you work and what do you do?
I am currently the Managing Director at Mashonaland Holdings Limited, a listed property investments.

What excites and drives you? What is your passion?
I am most passionate about winning, succeeding and becoming the best, in everything I do. Strategizing, planning, execution and outfoxing competitors. company in Zimbabwe.

Thinking back to being a kid and the profession you wanted to be, what was it and did it happen?
I grew up wanting to be an Accountant, but I am blessed to have gone into property investments. I love it there!

Tell us about your icons or mentors? Share some advice that you have received from a mentor/leader?
Joe Mutizwa (former CEO of Delta Zimbabwe). One thing I learnt from him is leadership authenticity .

What are your top 3 best books of all time - provide a one liner explanation?
1. "Illuminate" by Nancy Duarte
2. "Seven Habits" by Steven Covey
3. "Team of Teams" by General McChrystal. The books position on leadership as a value-based and inside-out endeavour. It all starts with you. For leadership to have positive influence, it needs to demonstrate integrity and credibility.

Lastly, tell us about your MBA experience thus far?
It has been insightful. Firstly, to be physically in a class of more than 12 citizens with a wide array of perspectives is simply amazing. The collaborations in groups, with less than half a month of knowing each other, is incredible. I am very much looking to do a lot of learning, not just academic stuff but learning markets through classmates.

Zukisa **Mataku**



Nickname: Zuks
MBA Modular
Eastern Cape, South Africa
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How are you finding the MBA programme?
Awesome, it was scary in the beginning because I missed the orientation week, finally found my feet in the group. I am looking forward to the 2022 Graduation ceremony.

Before being accepted in the MBA programme did you have other achievements you would like to share?
In 2014 I completed my Government Certificate of Competency (GCC), those that are familiar with this exam will relate.

Where are you currently working?
In 2016 September, I was appointed engineering manager for the Port of Cape Town

And what was your career like before that?
I have 14 years work experience, in Maintenance (engineering), I worked at the harbours, Durban, Saldanha and Cape Town different roles. I am involved in maintenance of port container handling equipment.

What made you first notice the UCT GSB?
My ex boss carried GSB qualities, I could not miss that, I saw the light in him.

Did that affect your decision to do an MBA?
I had my best manager in my career that happened to have an MBA from GSB, I could not miss the opportunity to upskill myself to become a person of his calibre.

UCT GSB's brand motto is 'A new world needs new ideas'. Do you agree with this motto?
My background is engineering, and I am passionate about leadership. If I can not find new ideas, I will definitely be supporting those under me to showcase their ideas.

What does the future look like to you?
With my 3 weeks in MBA, I started wearing sunglasses because the future is too bright. As mentioned earlier, I never had plans to be where I am and I still do not believe that it is myself that is here. then I realised that the sky's the limit, I owe this to south africa especially the company I work for, I am part of the solution to turn around the state owned companies... that is the future I see

If you could have a dinner party with a few influential guests, who would you choose?
1. Patrick Lumumba - I would like to tap into his views on African leadership.
2. Kurt April - He changed how I see life in 2018 in my PGDIP. I will make it happen.
3. Nicolette Mashile - He helped me in financial management through her you tube videos.

What change would you want to bring about in the world and why?
I am bringing me; my uniqueness. I have got the whole village looking up to me. Some of the things I do to unleash the potential of the kids still in rural areas, to know that they can be better people too.

Thandu **Matshaya**



Nickname: TS
MBA Modular
East London, South Africa
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Have you ever gotten bad advice that you decided not to take?
I was once told by my older brother that education does not count in the real world, Johannesburg specifically. At this time it is whilst I had just graduated with a degree from Rhodes University, and was unemployed. I discarded that advice and instead pursued education more, hence the current MBA that I'm enrolled for, which is my 5th degree.

What have you been most proud of along the way?
Having my two sons and attaining my 4 degrees, as well as getting my current job at ESKOM.

What is your current job at ESKOM and what was your career journey like before this?
I'm currently a commercial manager at ESKOM, the Supplier Development Eastern Cape Regional Manager I have 16 years working experience, initially in the BBBEE Industry at EmpowerDex, in the automotive industry at Volkswagen South Africa (VWSA), in the Finance industry at South African Revenue Services (SARS) and in the Utility industry at ESKOM.

Thinking back, would you ever have guessed you'd be here now?
I initially wanted to be an engineer, I did it for 6 months and did not enjoy it, and I opted for a BCom degree instead, which I did and attained at Rhodes University.

What are you most passionate about?
I am a very patriotic South African. I am also passionate about learning about the history of homo sapiens, politics and international affairs.

Tell us about your icons or mentors? Share some advice that you have received from a mentor/leader?
My icons are Thabo Mbeki, Oliver Tambo, Robert Sobukwe and Barack Obama. My mentor is my father, he taught me hard work, the importance of education and the importance of independence.

What made you decide that the UCT GSB was the best place for you to do your MBA?
It resonated with what I yearned for, which is a developmental state focus. I was also impressed by the fact that it is rated no 1 on the continent.

Were you always going to do your MBA?
My boss talked me into it, and informed me how valuable the MBA, especially the one from UCT GSB, was as it's the best in the continent. I read up on it, did my research and was very impressed.

And has it lived up to your expectations?
It's been life-changing .

What change would you want to bring about in the world and why?
Eradicate the high level of poverty in South Africa and Africa. Contribute in making South Africa a powerhouse in the world stage.

Azraa **Meyer**

MBA Modular
Cape Town
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What has your experience in the working world been like so far?
I did a 1 year internship at Denel Dynamics in the Missiles division (Aerospace and defence industry), and I have been employed at Denel Spaceteq for the past 7 years (space industry).

What has been your greatest achievement?
Giving birth to my first child!

Are you working currently?
I am currently employed as a Mechanical engineer focusing on the structural analysis of satellite systems in the space industry.

Did you become what you wanted to be as a child?
I wanted to be a medical doctor and no, I did not end up being a doctor, but I know I have always had a side of me that wanted to spend my life being involved with helping the less fortunate.

Why did you select UCT Graduate School of Business? What was it about us that attracted you to us?
The UCT credentials! ….and also the fact that they are a "values-based'' business school.

How are you bringing new ideas to a new world?
I would love to be a part of making SA a better place for those who need it the most … any extra benefits that come from that are just extras, the real reward is knowing that I can be involved in changing someone's life.

What are your favourite books of all time?
Educating Children by Riyadatul Sibyan, and Disciplining the Soul by Al-Ghazali.

What change would you want to bring about in the world, and why?
I would love to see other children enjoy the same things my child is able to enjoy. I'd love to see all children just be able to have the simple needs in life like shelter, safety, food and most of all love from a family who cares. Everything starts at the childhood phase and the adults we create in this world will largely depend on their experiences as children. I would love to be involved in breaking a cycle of poverty, struggle and crime, etc. that some unfortunately are just born into. I want to be part of addressing issues at the core where it all starts, so that we can mould humans that will be gifts to this world! I have hope in humanity even now that times seem really dark worldwide.

Lastly, tell us about your MBA experience thus far?
It's everything I much wanted and needed! I love that UCT emphasises values and I'm just so grateful to be part of an institution like this.

Lerusha **Moodley**



Nickname: Leru
MBA Modular
Cape Town, South Africa
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What is the worst advice you've ever received and why? How would you improve the advice?
You don't need to further your education. I received this comment a lot, and now being in the MBA I definitely see the value, beyond just education, we are learning life skills! I would improve it by being motivational and tactful in suggesting that formal tertiary education is not the only way of achieving your goals.

How many years have you been in the workforce and how has it been?
I've spent 7 years in manufacturing. My work experience has been a unique one. I work for the family business - Peninsula Drums - and as such I have had the fortune of working in every aspect of the business. It has been both a stressful and successful 7 years at the company. I have been involved in many projects, which have allowed me to learn and grow.

What is your current or most recent position there?
Financial Officer - PENINSULA DRUMS

Why did you choose to come and do your MBA at the UCT GSB?
I am a UCT alumnus, as such UCT GSB was on the top of my list when I decided to pursue my MBA. The accreditation and diverse curriculum also attracted me to the GSB.

Our motto is 'A new world needs new ideas'. How are you bringing new ideas to a new world?
I am bringing a unique perspective. Coming from the manufacturing industry, from a company located in a troubled area, I feel that my contribution comes in the form of this perspective - an inherently South African perspective.

What are your top 3 best books of all time - provide a one liner explanation?
1. "The Subtle Art of Not Giving a F*ck" - Taught me how to be realistic.
2. "A Thousand Splendid Suns" - Taught me to appreciate my life.
3. "Harry Potter" (all) - Taught me how to let go and let my imagination soar.

What does the future look like to you?
The future looks both exciting and terrifying. With so many changes and great things happening around me and in the world, the future seems bright and full of many new creations and inventions. That said, there is so much sadness and struggle in the world, the future seems like it might be difficult for some.

If you could have a last dinner with any famous person (leader or celeb etc), who would it be and why?
Mother Teresa - to discuss what drove her, what inspired her and what might have deterred her.

Lastly, tell us about your MBA experience thus far?
It has been an eye-opening, thought provoking experience so far, mixed a little stress and tiredness.

Chantell **Moses**

MBA Modular

Cape Town, South Africa

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What has been your greatest achievement?
Starting my MBA journey.

Thinking back to being a kid and the profession you wanted to be, what was it and did it happen?
Gynaecologist and no.

How long have you been building your career for?
I have 24 years of experience.

What led you to making the decision to do an MBA? Tell us why and how you got here?
I did some executive coaching and my coach inspired me to do the MBA. I was reluctant at first, but he motivated me so much that I eventually signed up.

Why did you select UCT Graduate School of Business? What was it about us that attracted you to us?
They come highly recommended.

What are your top 3 best books of all time - provide a one-liner explanation?
1. "The Leader who had no Title" by Robin Sharma
2. "Good to great" by Jim Collins
2. "Lean in" by Sheryl Sanberg

What advice would you give to your younger self?
Do not be distracted by the noise. Set goals and stay positive no matter what storms and trials may cross your path. Learn to love math.

What is the worst advice you've ever received and why? How would you improve the advice?
Do what others do! You can learn from them. I would improve it by slightly changing the wording into "learn from others mistakes", empower yourself with knowledge as that is the one thing no one can take away from you.

If you could have a last dinner with any famous person (leader or celeb etc), who would it be and why?
Jennifer Lopez. No matter how rich she became she stayed humble.

What change would you want to bring about in the world and why?
I would want to empower the younger generation. I have a daughter, and like many other young people, she is struggling with direction in her life and I want to become someone she and others can aspire to be like.

Lastly, tell us about your MBA experience thus far?
It has been tough but awesome at the same time. Learning things about business in a broader perspective has been very insightful. Certain classes such as Leadership uncover your personal and psychological space and it reveals some hidden talents etc.

Katleho **Moshesha**



Nickname: Mosh
MBA Modular
Lesotho
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The world needs change, what kind of change would you like to see?
The world where people could see beyond race and age. Most people in organizations are held back because “they are too young to know it”.

Are you finding the MBA programme challenging?
The MBA is quite a challenging programme, both mentally and physically. It helps one to really find out about who they are and how they can best fit into this world. I must say, I am enjoying this life-changing journey this far and I am looking forward to more and more.

What led you to making the decision to do an MBA? How did you get here?
As I worked in the auditing and accounting fields, I realized that companies needed more than just technical expertise on how to maintain their accounts, how to run depreciation; companies needed, more than anything, leaders. I realized I need to develop beyond chartered accountant level, I needed to develop as a business/ management consultant who can provide a number of services from strategy across to managing diverse teams and leadership. I saw the MBA programme fitting to close the gap I felt I had in my career.

Why the UCT GSB?
The GSB is rated amongst the best business schools in Africa listed in the Financial Times Global Top 100 MBAs. The GSB MBA programme is highly reputed and offers a good chance for its candidates to graduate as knowledgeable MBA holders who have had opportunities to do field research, develop necessary leadership skills and also gain the business acumen needed in today’s leaders.

What are your favourite books?
I am not into reading but I had recently started reading The Power of Your Sub-Conscience Mind by Joseph Murphy until I started the MBA programme. Then I could hardly find time to read this interesting book. I will definitely complete this masterpiece, once I complete the programme .

If you could have supper with a famous person, who would you choose?
I would love to meet Lupita Nyong’o. As one of the successful African actresses, I would definitely like to know how she came to her success. I would learn a thing or two from her.

What has your work experience been like so far?
I have experience, in the audit and accounting fields, of over 4 years, and I recently got promoted to the position of General Manager for Econo Foods in the Lesotho region.

What has been your greatest achievement?
Being seen as worthy of promotion to such a demanding role at my workplace. And recently, getting admission into Africa’s best business school.

Henko **Mouton**

MBA Modular

Cape Town, South Africa/Amsterdam, Netherlands

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How many years of working experience do you have and which industries have you worked in? Tell us about your work experience?
7 years. Retail and consumer goods. My roles varied between Project Manager within Retail Operations and Supply Planner within Sales & Operations.

Lastly, tell us about your MBA experience thus far?
Great experience thus far. Great, diverse class that is not scared to question the norm.

What made you decide that you wanted to do an MBA?
I always knew that I was going to do an MBA at some time in my life. I came at a point where I could not answer the question: “where do you see yourself in 5 years”. This indicated to me that the time to do an MBA is now. I am doing the MBA to grow mentally, broaden my skill set, and give me direction in my career path.

Have you achieved anything you’d like to share so far?
Being awarded the Managing Director Award at my previous company for a project that mapped out a structured approach to expand our company footprint across various African countries.

UCT GSB’s brand motto is ‘A new world needs new ideas’ | How are you bringing new ideas to a new world?
I believe the GSB will inspire me to come up with the new ideas the “new world” needs.

What are your top 3 best books of all time - provide a one liner explanation?
Shoe Dog (by Phil Knight) - Really well written and an inspirational story of how a brand has been built from the ground up with passion, hard work, and dedication.
How to manage your money like a f*cking grownup (by Sam Beckbessinger) - Learned me the basics I need to know about managing my finances and keeping me responsible with regards to saving my money (ETFs all the way).
Good to Great (by Jom Collins) - well researched and insightful book with findings that I can relate to within my companies I have worked in.

What made you come to the UCT GSB?
I was not interested in doing my MBA full time, and thus the modular program at the GSB was ideal for my preferences. The international reputable lecturers, outstanding facilities, and the world wide recognition made the choice of the GSB easy for me.

If you could have a last dinner with any famous person (leader or celeb etc), who would it be and why?
David Attenborough - I want to hear his most memorable adventures and the top destinations that I should have on my bucket list.

What change would you want to bring about in the world and why?
A world that is less dependent on non-renewable resources .

Princesse Kabala **Muke**



Nickname: Royalty
MBA Modular
Democratic Republic of Conge/Cape Town, South Africa
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What is your current or most recent position and where? Please indicate if you prefer to have the company/organisation remain anonymous.
I am currently assuming a project manager role within CPPPM (Corporate Project, Programme and Portfolio Management) within the City of Cape Town.

If you could have dinner with anyone, who would it be?
Michelle Obama and I am sure I will meet her in the next five years. I admire what she stands for and would like to be mentored by her.

What inspires you?
Building civil infrastructure. For as long as I can remember, I have always wanted to build what is broken, specially infrastructure. I remember telling my mom that I will build a bridge between Goma and Bukavu (Eastern DRC). I still remember her response: “You are a princess, you can do anything you set your mind to. Never forget who you are, my Princess”. I guess that is where the President of the United States of Africa fantasy started - but that is a story for another day.

How are you finding the MBA program?
It has been a roller coaster. I am very intrigued by the value-based approach to business.

How many years of working experience do you have and which industries have you worked in? Tell us about your work experience?
I am a Project Manager and Project Engineer with 8 years combined experience in construction, consulting engineering and local government. With the focus on the design and upgrade of Civil Engineering services (water, sewerage, roads and stormwater), housing projects and construction management .

What attracted you to the UCT GSB?
I quote from the brochure “the MBA programme at the GSB focuses on business in emerging markets, which are confronted with a high degree of uncertainty, complexity, and often excessive inequality. Such a world needs innovative solutions”. It goes on and says that the programme is looking for new ways to use the tremendous power of business to solve real issues from “housing and health to economic growth” and that is exactly what I am looking for.

If you could foster any change, what would it be?
I want to change the perception that the rest of the world has of Africa. I know it is very ambitious. I became a mom and freaked out about the impact that these perceptions might have on my son. The realisation that the world we are building today is the one he will inherit, changed my priorities completely. I have made it a priority to participate in making this world a better place. I believe one day our children will hold us accountable and it is very important we pass them a baton they will be proud to carry, and an Africa we will all be proud of.

John **Mumba**

MBA Modular
Namibia
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What are your top 3 best books of all time - provide a one liner explanation?

1. The Bible; This book has been a guide in all aspects of my life.
2. “Seven Habits of Highly Effective People” by Steve Covey; A practical book that has helped me achieve personal growth and as a leader.
3. “Atomic Habits” by James clear; The book has made me more self aware of my habits and has provided practical ways to be in control of these habits.

What is your current or most recent position and where? Please indicate if you prefer to have the company/organisation remain anonymous.
My current position is Senior Manager, in the Transmission Capital Projects BU, at Namibia Power Corporation (Pty) Ltd.

How many years of working experience do you have and which industries have you worked in? Tell us about your work experience?
I’m an electrical engineer by trade and have worked in the electricity supply industry for 15 years.

What did you want to be when you grew up?
When growing up I always wanted to be a physical scientist, this was highly influenced by my childhood interests and the environment I grew up in. I would say that I have attained my childhood profession to some extent.

Tell us about your icons or mentors? Share some advice that you have received from a mentor/leader?
My icon is my father. The most outstanding advice he has offered to me is to be true to myself and doing the right thing no matter the situation or environment.

What new ideas are you bringing into the new world?
My passion is in affordable energy for all. I am currently contributing new ideas in investigating affordable grid/off-grid renewables to low income communities.

Why did you select UCT Graduate School of Business? What was it about us that attracted you to us?
Being a UCT alumni, the values, the quality of education, and reputation of the university were guiding factors to choosing GSB. All these boxes were ticked for me.

If you could have a last dinner with any famous leader, who would you pick?
Nelson Mandela. I would like insight into what guided him in making certain decisions at particular stages of his life.

How do you feel so far about your decision to join the MBA programme?
My experience thus far has been enlightening and has far exceeded what I had expected. I am 100% sure that I made the right choice.

Tapuwa **Mwashita**



Nickname: Taps
MBA Modular
Zimbabwe
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What are you most passionate about?
Languages and music.

Do you have any mentors? Could you tell us about them?
My biggest mentor is my boss, Will Keevy. The best advice that he gave me was to do your best, even when no-one is watching or when no-one appreciates it. All of the small things will add up to a bigger picture in the end.

What led you to making the decision to do an MBA? Tell us why and how you got here?
I wanted to "step out from out of the shadows" and realize my full potential to lead and to be influential in my business and in my life.

How is your MBA going?
The experience has been hectic - it was a huge jolt to the system, in terms of going from work to study mode but also going from a day with lots of free (wasted) time to one scheduled to keep you busy into the early hours of the morning. I am now getting used to it, and the shock is turning into excitement and a sense of comfort.

Why the UCT GSB?
I was attracted to its worldwide ranking - I believe that the level of education I would receive is world class and would prepare me for a global leadership role.

Are you actively bringing new ideas to a new world?
I come from the insurance industry, which traditionally has not changed in a long time. I want to bring out new innovative ideas into that industry, and I believe that the "thinktank" setting of UCT GSB is perfect to foster technological and social advancement.

Ever received any bad advice re work? What was it?
"Don't ruffle any feathers; the higher-ups' mistakes will come out in the wash in time". I was given this advice by a colleague who I worked with, and at the time, I took it. It later led to me having to solve issues in a deadline crunch, where I could have prevented the issue completely if I had just spoken up. I could only improve this advice by never saying it to anyone ever.

Let's say you could meet anyone tomorrow, who would you choose?
Barack Obama. I would want to know what motivated him throughout his life, what challenges he went through and how he overcame them. I would want to know how I can take his lessons and apply them to my own life path.

What has been your greatest achievement?
My greatest achievement was single-handedly creating and perfecting a calculating and data transfer system for our company's tailor-made life insurance product. I designed, tested and deployed the system that is now in use at the company today.

Francois **Mynhardt**

MBA Modular
Pretoria
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Why did you choose the UCT GSB to do your MBA at?
I liked the fact that GSB is ranked as a Top South African school, I also liked the curriculum offered. Then, there is the slight matter that the school is in the heart of Cape Town of course.

What kind of work experience led you here?
I have 20 Years of work experience, mainly in Consulting Engineering & Construction. The past 9 years, I have founded & managed my own construction firm, specialising in the supply, fabrication & erection of all piping disciplines in the Mining & Water industries .

And what is your current title?
Founder, Member & Managing Director of GEOFRAM Piping Services (t/a GPS Global), Pretoria.

Have you ever had a mentor?
I have never had a mentor. I have always respected Richard Branson as a Leader though.

Is that what made you decide to do an MBA?
Doing an MBA has always been an ambition. I have a passion for business and having studied Engineering at Technikon, I have never felt that I am able to act out this passion. Running my own business for the past 9 years has taught me to do many things. However, I recently became more and more conscious of the fact that I do not want to simply accept feedback and information offered by others, but I want to develop the skills to test these. I have a need to KNOW that things are as they seem. I have also set my business up for growth and the final decision to apply to the MBA program, was born out of the desire to equip myself with better skills & knowledge so I can successfully navigate the future scaling of the business.

On that note, what does the future look like to you?
Exciting. I believe that my business is set up to grow and that we are in a position to benefit from a turnaround in the economy.

What has been your greatest achievement up until this point?
Having navigated through 9 very difficult years in a mostly recession type market, to have grown into a successful construction company, poised for future growth. Being accepted into the UCT GSB MBA programme, has also been a notable achievement. On a personal note, my children are going into a very enjoyable phase of their lives, as a family, I believe there are many good times to be had.

What are you most passionate about?
1. My family, 2. My business, 3. Dirt biking

Lastly, tell us about your MBA experience thus far?
Amazing. It has been a tough start! But it has been enriching!

Kaylin **Naidoo**

MBA Modular
East London
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How many years of working experience do you have and which industries have you worked in?
I have over 7 years experience as a rocket and missile design engineer for a large South African defense company. My day job is to design, build and test medium to large calibre tactical rocket motors for surface-to-air and air-to-air applications.

What has been your greatest achievement?
Registration as a Professional Engineer with the Engineering Council of South Africa.

What is your current or most recent position and where?
My current position is Senior Design & Analysis Engineer.

What are you most passionate about?
Technology, electronics, and anything to do with computers. I am a geek, down to the core.

What brought you to our MBA programme?
Engineering is extremely technical, and whilst there is often a large focus on industrial ecology, there is often less of a focus on sustainability and impacts on societies and the people. There is more to leadership than mere technical prowess, and therefore, I decided to do the MBA to build a foundation to transition towards being a strong leader in my future, and to be able to give back to society in some way.

Why did you select UCT Graduate School of Business? What was it about us that attracted you to us?
As a UCT alumnus, naturally my first choice was UCT's GSB. But furthermore, the MBA program is also about the connections made among peers. The GSB is known for the diversity of the cohorts, and was one of the main decision drivers for me.

If you could choose 3 books to recommend, what would they be and why?
1. "A Long Walk to Freedom" - inspirational.
2. "Lord of the Flies" - touches on intrinsic primal nature of us all (one which we cannot avoid).
3. "Harry Potter" - the creativity of JK Rowling is awe-inspiring.

What advice would you give to your younger self?
Follow your dreams, and do what you want to do, not what is expected of you.

If you could have a last dinner with any famous person (leader or celeb etc), who would it be and why?
Elon Musk.

Lastly, tell us about your MBA experience thus far?
It has been eye-opening, insightful and genuine.

Kirshen **Naidoo**



Nickname: Kirsh
MBA Modular
Durban/Johannesburg
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Why did you choose to study at the UCT GSB?
It is highly ranked as one of the best business schools in Africa and has a global track record and world-renowned academic staff.

Has your MBA been what you've expected?
It's been very enlightening, stressful and different from what I expected so far.

What are your top 3 books of all time?
1. "The 4-Hour Workweek" by Tim Ferriss, interesting dimension to how and why we work - what's the purpose of working your whole life just to have enough to enjoy your last few years after retirement?
2. "Outliers" by Malcolm Gladwell, very insightful about why some people have been more successful than others.
3. Any book by Jack Higgins or Lee Child, their writing allows you to escape into a new world.

How are you bringing new ideas to the world?
My background in engineering, combined with my international experience and innovative way of thinking will bring a new dimension to the GSB.

What does the future look like to you?
IoT, AI, machine learning, the block chain - these are just a few things that will have a significant impact on the way we live in the future. Everyone and everything will be connected in some way. I think we are at a cusp - our way of living, working and thinking will change fundamentally. What happens next is up to us. I'm positive about the future, however if things go wrong I guess the flip side is there is no future!

If you could have a last dinner with any famous person (leader or celeb etc), who would it be and why?
Keanu Reeves, have you seen John Wick? He also rides the subway station.

What change would you want to bring about in the world and why?
A higher level of self awareness of ourselves and each other. We cannot move forward as a species without a greater sense of purpose for ourselves and each other.

What has your career journey been like so far?
I have 12 years work experience. I have worked on a wide range of industrial projects primarily in the consulting environment ranging from oil & gas, petrochemical, fluoro-chemical, light and heavy industrial sectors while being based in the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Indonesia, Hong Kong and around Southern Africa.

Mpumelelo **Ndlovu**



Nickname: Hlosukwakha
MBA Modular
Zimbabwe
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What has been your greatest achievement?
When I arrived in South Africa in 2006, I was armed only with a Diploma in Education. Since I've been here, I have managed to do a BCom (Informatics) Degree; a BSc (Cons) in Computing Degree and an MSc in Computer Science Degree. I have worked for the top bank in South Africa and I am currently working for a company which is ranked third in the world in terms of growth.

Thinking back to being a kid and the profession you wanted to be, what was it and did it happen?
When I grew up I wanted to be a lawyer. However, when my mother was diagnosed with cancer just after I completed my O'Level, I had to drop out of my A' Levels after she passed on. I enrolled at a teachers' college because those days we were paid a stipend during training and this helped me to assist my siblings. When the last born in my family completed his Masters, I enrolled with UNISA for my first degree in 2009 and changed careers to IT in 2012 after I completed my first degree.

Why did you select UCT Graduate School of Business? What was it about us that attracted you to us?
The location of the business school away from the hustle and high pressures of Gauteng allows one to take a gap and have a synoptic view of all the available opportunities in South Africa, Africa and beyond. The business School has made a name for itself both locally and globally making it a school of choice for any business administrator with high aspirations.

Tell us about your MBA experience thus far?
Amazing. Every time I sit down for a lecture I feel like hugging the other students sitting in my flank.

Do you have any books you really enjoyed reading?
1. "The Ravenscar Dynasty" by Barbara Taylor Bradford
2. "A Stone for Danny Fischer" by Harold Robbins
3. "Dark of the Sun" by Wilbur Smith

What are you most passionate about?
Data. I like working with data. Data mining, data warehousing, data architecture, machine learning and data analysis. I also enjoy driving long distances whenever my bank balance permits it; watching cricket, Formula 1 and soccer. I also enjoy watching movies and series.

Ever received any bad advice that you'd improve on?
When I left teaching my supervisor thought I was making a mistake because no-one he knew had ever made it in the private sector after leaving the public sector. My advice would be, as long as you breathe, you can be anything in life.

If you could have a last dinner with any famous person (leader or celeb etc), who would it be and why?
Raymond Ackerman. I would like to chat to him about himself. What drives him; what makes him who he is.

Xolani **Ngatane**



Nickname: X-man
MBA Modular
Johannesburg, South Africa
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What are your top 3 best books of all time - provide a one liner explanation?
The Bible, no contest. The rest are impossible to rank; there are just way, way too many.

What advice would you give to your younger self?
Sleep is really important.

What does the future look like to you?
Complex. Exciting.

What change would you want to bring about in the world and why?
Stop food waste and food dumping because every day millions of human beings go to bed hungry.

Lastly, tell us about your MBA experience thus far?
It stimulates fresh thinking and widens the perspective.

How many years of working experience do you have and which industries have you worked in? Tell us about your work experience?
I have over 20 years of working experience. I've worked in education program management, the customer service industry, the legal field, and the regulatory/ compliance field.

What has been your greatest achievement?
My family.

When you were younger what did you want to be when you grew up?
I wanted to be a lawyer and a writer- I've previously worked as a lawyer and I do a lot of writing in my current job.

Tell us about your icons or mentors? Or share with us a piece of advice you've been given that's changed the way you approach the world.
Never give up, ever.

What led you to making the decision to do an MBA? Tell us why and how you got here?
I wanted to widen my knowledge base and equip myself with new skills and fresh thinking and thought the MBA was the best way for me to do so. It is.

Why did you select UCT GSB to study at?
It's the best MBA program on the continent.

Necessity **Ngorima**

Nickname: Nessy
MBA Modular
Zimbabwe
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Tell us about your career journey.
I moved to Cape Town in 2018 and joined the buy-side as a senior equity analyst at an asset management firm, following 10 years as a sell-side equity analyst at J.P. Morgan. I was ranked a top 6 analyst in the Financial Mail Rankings every year between 2012 and 2018. My current coverage spans the industrial and real estate sectors. I love stock analysis and I really enjoy working in financial markets.

What has been your greatest achievement?
Being rated in the Financial Mail Rankings as a top 3 analyst in Investment Companies in 2018, a year after I had my twins.

What do you do at the moment?
I'm a Senior Equity Analyst at Afena Capital.

What did you want to be when you grew up?
As a child I wanted to be a doctor when I grew up. After high school I studied medicine in Zimbabwe for six months. I did not enjoy it and fortunately I got the opportunity to study finance at UCT instead, and I loved it from the day I started.

What are you most passionate about?
I am passionate about creating a safe space in the world for my children and giving them better opportunities than I had. My parents used their limited means to provide a good foundation for all their children. I want to do the same for mine. I also want to instill in them an appreciation of the enormity of their privilege to get those opportunities and hopefully that will help them treat people with respect, regardless of their background. I want to make the world a better place for my children and the generations to come.

Why did you select UCT Graduate School of Business? What was it about us that attracted you to us?
I selected UCT because I like its values-based approach to leadership. I also like the diversity of the candidates and lecturers because it gives me an opportunity to learn from a wide and rich network.

What advice would you give to your younger self?
Don't be afraid to venture beyond your comfort zone and try new things.

Lastly, tell us about your MBA experience thus far?
The MBA has been completely different from what I expected; an extremely pleasant surprise. It has given me a lot of new ideas and skills and demanded a lot of effort from me, beyond the routine answers I usually give.

Zandile **Ntuli**

Nickname: Ndile
MBA Modular
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What is your current role at work?
My current role is Refinery Shift Lead for the next two months, I then go back to Technical Operations Advisor, which is my permanent role.

Thinking back to being a kid and the profession you wanted to be, what was it and did it happen?
I wanted to be an astronaut because I wanted to go to space. It never happened but the plan is still in motion.

Tell us about your icons or mentors? Share some advice that you have received from a mentor/leader?
My biggest mentor is my grandmother because she loves all her grandchildren the same. She raised me and many other kids in the family, that was the first leader we were exposed to who could summon the whole family to her house and all would abide. The one advice I received from her is that I should always welcome visitors.
Icons:
- Zulaikha Patel - for her ability to stand up for what is right.
- Madiba - For his leadership style and demonstration of what forgiveness is.
- Oprah for her ability to tell stories that matter and grow the listener
- Robert Sobukwe for what he stood for.

What led you to making the decision to do an MBA? Tell us why and how you got here?
I reached a ceiling in my current role and I was looking for something that will open up my mind and environment. The MBA became a natural choice as I knew I would learn new ways to approach opportunity and business. I got here due to my relentless need to achieve and do more.

Why did you select UCT Graduate School of Business? What was it about us that attracted you to us?
I chose the UCT GSB because it is number one in the country. I also attended a leadership course at the GSB previously, I liked the environment.

Who are your favourite celebrities, and why?
1. Mark Shuttleworth - I would like to ask him how it was to be in space?
2. Barack Obama - I want to know what and who contributed to the person that he is today.
3. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf - How did she come to lead one of the countries worst affected by conflict in Africa.

What change would you want to bring about in the world and why?
I would like to see more innovation coming from Africa so this is the space where I will bring change to. Be it running an innovation competition or business this will still be mapped out.

Lastly, tell us about your MBA experience thus far?
It has been a rollercoaster ride but I'm enjoying the opportunity.

Charmelle **Petersen**



Nickname: Melo, Charms, Mels
MBA Modular
Cape Town, South Africa
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What made you want to do an MBA?
I am a firm believer in life-long learning, and I feel that doing the MBA will add to my skill-set. At the same time I also feel like it's the right time to be doing my MBA. Personal development is something that I need to continuously work on. I also wanted an opportunity to meet people from different backgrounds and to build networks, whilst building my personal portfolio/brand.

Where do you work?
I am a manager in the Group Finance team at Allan Gray.

What kind of future do you envision?
My future looks happy with lots of fun!

What are you most proud of achieving so far?
My biggest achievements are usually those tasks which I think are impossible to complete at the start, but then I end up successfully completing them and learning valuable lessons.

Thinking back on the professions you've wanted to go into: Did you end up following those childhood dreams?
At the start of high school I wanted to be in the IT industry. This has not happened, I followed the accounting career path.

Why did you select UCT Graduate School of Business? What was it about us that attracted you to us?
I completed my undergrad and postgrad studies at UCT, so I felt the GSB would be a natural fit. The GSB is a world-class institution and I want to be associated with the best.

What change would you want to bring about in the world and why?
There are so many changes that need to happen in the world. I would say that we need to make sure that as many people as possible have access to education. This will allow access to job opportunities and hopefully this will help smaller communities.

What has this MBA been like for you so far?
The experience thus far has been rich with learnings, meeting and working with lots of people from diverse backgrounds. At the same time, it has been emotionally and intellectually demanding. I look forward to seeing what the next 2 years have to offer and learning from my classmates and lecturers.

Elvis **Phala**



Nickname: Presley
MBA Modular
Lebowakgomo, Limpopo
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How many years of working experience do you have and which industries have you worked in? Tell us about your work experience?
I have five years of work experience. I worked in the steel and metals industry. I started working as a candidate engineer at ArcelorMittal SA where I was quickly promoted to engineer and then senior engineer.

What has been your greatest achievement?
Seeing the pride on my parents faces during my graduation ceremony.
What is your current or most recent position and where? Please indicate if you prefer to have the company/organisation remain anonymous.
I am currently working as a Systems engineer for Hulamin Operations.

What are you most passionate about?
I love traveling. The experiences I have gained by going out there in the world and living my life to the fullest will forever be with me. From Asia to North America, I have been blessed to visit some of the most amazing places in the world.

Tell us about your icons or mentors? Share some advice that you have received from a mentor/leader?
I was fortunate enough to be mentored by a senior manager during my time at ArcelorMittal. He was always willing to make time for me and he really guided me during a time when it was easy for me to go down the wrong path as I was just out of school.

What made you decide to do your programme here at the UCT GSB?
It was always clear to me that UCT GSB offers a unique experience than what most other business schools offer. The caliber of the schools graduates cannot be matched anywhere on the African continent and I just knew I had to be a part of it.

How are you bringing new ideas into a new world, in line with the UCT GSB's motto?
The best way that I bring new ideas to the world is by engaging with young people, especially students at university level. I mentor them, show them different possibilities and help them think creatively.

What does the future look like to you?
The future is bright. The future is full of opportunities. The future is waiting for me.

If you could have a last dinner with any famous person (leader or celeb etc), who would it be and why?
Barack Obama. I believe he embodies everything a good leader ought to be.

Lastly, tell us about your MBA experience thus far?
The experience has been incredible so far. The energy from the students, the level of professionalism from the facilitators and the high quality facilities make this the best graduate school to be at.

Shane **Seddon**

MBA Modular

Cape Town, South Africa

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Where were you or are you working at the moment?
I am an International Territory Manager for Africa and the Middle East at A-dec Inc.

Have you always wanted to be in this profession?
I wanted to be a professional sportsman when I was younger.

Is sports what you're most passionate about?
I am most passionate about my family.

Tell us about your icons or mentors? Share some advice that you have received from a mentor/leader?
I have been fortunate enough to work with many great mentors and leaders, one specific quote has always stuck with me, "I never said it would be easy, I said it would be worth it!"

Has doing your MBA seemed worth it so far?
It has consisted of long hours and a huge workload, but we have passionate lecturers and inspirational colleagues.

What made you decide to do it in the first place?
Inspirational conversations with colleagues who had completed their MBA.; These conversations were the tipping point for me to commit to the course and fulfil my development ambitions

And did that lead you to the UCT GSB?
The GSB has a great reputation locally and internationally. It's highly spoken of by past students.

Could you tell us a bit about your work experience so far?
I have 20+ years work experience in hospitality, FMCG, Pharmaceuticals and Capital Medical Equipment.

What do you consider to be your greatest achievement?
My two daughters.

At the UCT GSB we often say that a new world needs new ideas. How are you bringing new ideas into the world?
One step at a time.

What advice would you give to your younger self?
Stay strong, be calm, develop a plan and trust yourself.

Eugene **September**



Nickname: Gino
MBA Modular
Cape Town, South Africa
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What kind of future do you see for yourself?
Love, health, success and happiness.

If you could have dinner with someone you admire, who would it be?
Alex Ferguson - to understand what sacrifices he made and how did he determine if it was worth it or not.

The world needs change. What kind of change would you like to see?
I would regulate prices across industries so that wealth can be spread more evenly and greed can be eradicated. Fight for equality.

How are you finding the MBA programme?
It has been intense, challenging

How much work experience do you have and in which industry?
16 years work experience in Commercial Banking. I spent most of those years specializing in credit and recently moved into a Head of Sales role.

What do you consider your biggest achievement?
I successfully applied for my Head of Credit role within FNB Business.

Could you tell us a bit about your current job?
My current position is Head of Sales within FNB Business.

Thinking back to when you were younger, did you always want to be where you are now?
I wanted to be a professional soccer player. I did play club soccer but did not continue down this path.

What led you to making the decision to do an MBA? Tell us why and how you got here?
My career aspirations is to become part of senior management at FNB. I am of the opinion that investing in the MBA programme can accelerate with development to achieve the objective.

What made the UCT the best option for you?
The diversity. The brand is strong in the market.

What are your top 3 best books of all time - provide a one liner explanation?
1. “Rich Dad Poor Dad” by Robert Kiyosaki - simple financial literacy.
2. “Switch on your Brain” by Dr Caroline Leaf - brings science and scripture closer together.
3. “7 Habits of Highly Effective People” by Stephen Covey - focus on your strengths and positive thinking.

Nalisha **Sewnarain**



MBA Modular

Durban, South Africa

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Is there anyone you've ever dreamed of meeting? Why?
The writer, John Irving, to be inspired to write more.

What has been your greatest achievement?
Dog-sledding in the Arctic Circle, in Sweden.

What is your current or most recent position and where? Please indicate if you prefer to have the company/organisation remain anonymous.
Operations Manager at Old Mutual Unit Trusts.

How have you found the MBA experience so far?
The experience has been exciting and stimulating. I've enjoyed joining the GSB community, especially meeting people from a number of interesting industries and countries.

What attracted you to the UCT GSB?
I have always admired UCT and would like to have studied my undergrad there. Now that I live in Cape Town, I am able to be a part of this amazing school.

UCT GSB's brand motto is 'A new world needs new ideas'. How are you living this motto?
By embracing technology and suggesting ways in which we can use it to manage our client databases (my organisation still relies on manual excel spreadsheets).

What are the top 3 books of all time, in your opinion?
1. "Harry Potter" series - for pure escapism
2. "Wild Swans" - for perspective
3. Anything by Malcolm Gladwell - for stimulation.

What advice would you give to your younger self?
Care less about the end goal. Enjoy the present, and focus on what's in front of you.

What change would you want to bring about in the world and why?
Ingrain accountability as a value into society, so that everybody feels empowered to own their own realities and to improve them to the benefit of everybody.

What kind of work experience do you have, and in what industry?
I have seven years of experience in Financial Services; mostly IT and operations - in South Africa and eight other African countries.

Lastly, what does the future look like to you?
It will be full of new experiences in life and work - a challenge and an adventure.

Mike **Siachitema**



Nickname: Fatal Malik
MBA Modular
Lusaka, Zambia
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Is there someone you look up to who you would like to meet?
Barack Obama. He has a very good sense of humour.

What is your current or most recent position and where? Please indicate if you prefer to have the company/organisation remain anonymous.
Head Marketing - Liquid Telecom Zambia

What are you most passionate about?
Developing Africa.

Which books do you love and why?
1. "The Audacity of Hope" by Barack Obama, - "We think of faith as a source of comfort and understanding but find our expressions of faith sowing division; we believe ourselves to be a tolerant people even as racial, religious, and cultural tensions roil the landscape. And instead of resolving these tensions or mediating these conflicts, our politics fans them, exploits them,and drives us further apart."
2. "The Subtle Art of Not Giving a F*ck: A Counterintuitive Approach to Living a Good Life" by Mark Manson - "Who you are is defined by what you're willing to struggle for."

How did you come to do your MBA?
Needed a new challenge after 8 years of work. Also, needed to develop further as a leader

Why did you decide to do it at the UCT GSB?
It's the best MBA in Africa and among one of the best in the world. It was a no-brainer!

UCT GSB's brand motto is 'A new world needs new ideas' | How are you bringing new ideas to a new world?
I am an original thinker and Africa will need home-grown solutions to take its rightful place on the global scene; I am ready to contribute towards that journey.

Tell us about your MBA experience thus far?
Awesome experience! I can't imagine not having done this.

What have you always dreamed of being and did you become that?
Movie Director, sadly it didn't happen. But you never know what the future may hold

Thokozani **Sihlangu**



Nickname: TK
MBA Modular
Kwazulu Natal, Mpumalanga, Johannesburg South Africa
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What led you to making the decision to do an MBA? Tell us why and how you got here?
As I occupied more Senior roles in corporations I realised that there are certain key soft skills that I need to develop and nurture, coupled with an understanding of how business operates at a strategic level. It was clear that I needed to enrol for an MBA.

UCT GSB's brand motto is 'A new world needs new ideas' | How are you bringing new ideas to a new world?
I am a firm believer that "You cannot solve problems, with the same thinking that created the problem", therefore I aim to use my intellectual curiosity to challenge the status quo in all areas where I am involved and introduce innovative ways of looking at the world.

What is your favourite book of all time?
"I write what I like, by Steve Biko" - Biko was uncompromising in his thoughts and saw his role as being a liberator of the mind for the oppressed people because true freedom begins with how we think and view the world.

Tell us about your icons or mentors? Share some advice that you have received from a mentor/leader?
I do not have any specific mentors. I extract the positive out of everyone I interact with especially those that I admire. However, my Late Mother has played a central role in my upbringing and shaping the person I am today.

What advice would you give to your younger self?
Follow your passion irrespective where it might take you. Learn from mistakes along the way but never regret.

If you could have a last dinner with anyone, who would you choose?
Colonel Muammar Gaddafi: I would like to learn of his vision for a united Africa with one currency and one economy backed by gold and all other mineral resources of the continent. He was making steady progress in that regard and thus I would like to learn more of his vision and why it is taking long for Africa to stand on its own.

Lastly, tell us about your MBA experience thus far?
It's been hectic. Rollercoaster. Challenging. But amidst all, it's been fun and exciting. I've learnt so much from the course content and class discussions. Looking forward to applying the lessons practically in business.

Did you do some research before joining us?
What made you decide on the UCT GSB?
UCT GSB was rated top business school in Africa by the Financial Times and in 2019, the rankings went up significantly. GSB is also the holder of the three MBA accreditations. Those were the first things I looked at but the final decision was influenced by the course content, specifically the focus on the development of the African continent.

Cebo **Silinga**



Nickname: Nessy
MBA Modular
South Africa
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What industry are you most experienced in?
I have 14 years experience in the automotive and renewable energy industry.

What has been your greatest achievement?
Being part of the Global Engineering Teams (GET). GET is an organization that originates and is administered in Berlin (Germany). As part of the GET, my project was based on the BHP Billiton Mine in Chile (South America).

What is your current or most recent position and where?
Cebo is a Portfolio Manager at the Technology Innovation Agency. In this role, he manages the agency's relationships with investees, focusing on meeting the clients' challenges and objectives in project development, financing and risk management.

Why did you select UCT Graduate School of Business? What was it about us that attracted you to us?
From what I gathered, the GSB has some of the best researchers and lectures, which directly links to the quality of education being offered. For me, I regard UCT GSB as the target and a measure – quality and level of education I wish to acquire.

UCT GSB's brand motto is 'A new world needs new ideas' | How are you bringing new ideas to a new world?
I have come up with various innovative renewable energy ideas that I believe can add value in the energy sector, and subsequently to the broader society.

What are your top 3 best books of all time - provide a one liner explanation?
1. "Thinking Fast and Slow" by Daniel Kahneman - great book about the human mind, explains the two systems that drive how we think.
2. "The Winner Effect" by Ian Robertson - In this book, he explains the mental and physical changes that take place in the brain of a 'winner', how they happen, and why they affect some people more than others.
3. "Blink" by Malcolm Gladwel - the author talks about our ability to use limited information from a very narrow period of experience to come to a conclusion.

What does the future look like to you?
The future looks green to me. I believe that the green technology and green economy has a bright future and will play a vital role in various economies, and that will make my future bright too.

What change would you want to bring about in the world and why?
Localisation and industrialization of renewable energy technology, to stimulate economic growth in South Africa.

Lastly, tell us about your MBA experience thus far?
It has been sensitizing, and a huge, because it is not what I had in mind. It is a bit overwhelming though, I just need to put in the hours and prioritize my time better. I am looking forward to the MBA journey.

Ridhaa **Soeker**

MBA Modular
Cape Town
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What led you to making the decision to do an MBA? Tell us why and how you got here?
My role as project manager in an organisation does not allow me to gain sufficient insight into possibly one day successfully running my own business or being an operations officer in a large organisation. My initial reason for wanting an MBA was to advance my career in my current organisation, over time that expanded to playing a bigger role in coaching and developing the soft skills required to succeed in a leadership role.

Why did you select UCT Graduate School of Business? What was it about us that attracted you to us?
The program at UCT GSB seemed to have a big focus on developing the individual to help them thrive in today's working world by developing their confidence, team work, soft skills and doing so by simulating this in the classroom environment. This way, you can be better prepared when confronted with challenges in the real world.

What are your top 3 best books of all time - provide a one liner explanation?
1. "Treasure island"
2. "Robinson Crusoe"
3. "White Fang"

What is the worst advice you've ever received and why? How would you improve the advice?
If you work hard you will be rewarded for it. I feel that if you work hard you are more likely to be taken advantage of instead of being rewarded. I would improve the advice by adding, work hard on the things you like doing.

If you could have a last dinner with any famous person (leader or celeb etc), who would it be and why?
Nelson Mandela - I'd want to understand how it's possible to forgive and move on so that everyone can benefit from your forgiveness.

What change would you want to bring about in the world and why?
To eradicate poverty - In that way crime would be drastically minimized. Living conditions improved which will result in a harmonious living environment.

Lastly, tell us about your MBA experience thus far?
It has delivered beyond my expectations. It has given me the biggest learning experience so far. In a short space of time it's developed my team work and confidence and given me the opportunity to better understand myself.

What has been your greatest achievement?
To see my 3 lovely children grow into obedient, respectful, loving and caring little girls.

How many years of working experience do you have and which industries have you worked in? Tell us about your work experience?
I have 16 years of work experience in a manufacturing environment, specialising in the manufacturing of commercial refrigeration products. As an electrical engineer, my focus areas were mainly to design, implement through the manufacturing team and perform the final testing on the manufactured products. My more recent work experience is working as a project manager combining the manufacturing, installation and final commissioning of the full refrigeration plant.

Nicholas **Sokolsky**



Nickname: Nick/Soks
MBA Modular
Johannesburg, South Africa
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What has been your greatest achievement?
Convincing the love of my life to marry me.

Have you always wanted to be doing what you're doing now?
I always wanted to be in a helping profession and to make a positive difference in the lives of those I serve. I believe that being a doctor has enabled me to do just that.

What led you to making the decision to do an MBA? How did you get here?
I have always been interested in the business aspect of the healthcare industry. Most healthcare professionals do not know a great deal about business, and I believed that doing an MBA would enable me to merge my medical degree with core business knowledge and strategies.

What has your career been like so far?
I have three years of working experience as a medical doctor. As it is for any young professional, I have had to work hard to gain as much knowledge and experience as I can in my field. It is a privilege to study and practice medicine in South Africa and, as tough as it is, it is one of the most rewarding professions out there.

Why did you choose the UCT Graduate School of Business? What was it about us that attracted you to us?
UCT Graduate School of Business appeared to place a lot of emphasis on innovation and the need for a change in education, in an ever-changing world. Now that I have been enrolled in the MBA, I have been able to experience, first-hand, this method of education.

What are your top 3 best books of all time - provide a one liner explanation?
1. "The Alchemist" by Paulo Coelho - The book takes you on a transformative journey of peace, fortitude and self-discovery.
2. "Eat That Frog" by Brian Tracy - A fantastic philosophy to live by. The book teaches strategies for working efficiently and effectively in order to achieve success.
3. "Being Mortal" by Atul Gawande - Written by a practicing surgeon and his experience with patients at the end of their lives, this book gives us insight into those who have come to terms with their own mortality while still maintaining joy and dignity.

If you could have a last dinner with any famous person (leader or celeb etc), who would it be and why?
I would have dinner with Arnold Schwarzenegger. He is a man who has fought against all odds to become one of the most successful and well respected people in the world. He is an advocate for social justice and has used his power to provide positive change in the communities within his reach. I believe I could learn a lot from the philosophies by which he chooses to live.

Lastly, tell us about your MBA experience thus far?
The MBA has been one of the most stimulating, engaging and invigorating experiences I have ever had. The content is challenging yet thought provoking and I believe it has set me on a path for greater personal enlightenment and professional mastery.

Stewart **Soutar**



Nickname: Stu
MBA Modular
Durban/Cape Town, South Africa
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How do you see the future panning out?
There is a lot to look forward to in the future, but the current focus is making the most out of the MBA program.

Are you working while you study?
Yes. My current position is as a Project Manager for the National Foods Buying department at Shoprite.

Who has mentored or inspired you in your life?
One of my most prolific mentors was my first manager when I entered the working world. He made the effort to include me in almost every meeting he attended, as well as introduce me to other leaders at the company. He was very patient with my growth, and he is the building blocks that lead me to my current position and the MBA program.

What led you to making the decision to do an MBA? Tell us why and how you got here?
I have many reasons for studying an MBA, but the one that stands out most is the desire to become a better leader. A better leader to the team I lead in my current role, as well as a better leader in my interactions with other people within and outside of the company.

Why did you choose the UCT GSB?
The GSB is very well known for the status of its MBA program.

What motivates you and what are you passionate about?
I am very passionate about football and am part of many football teams in Cape Town. I play as often as I can, and if asked about football I could talk for hours on end.

What are you proud of achieving in your life?
Being accepted into the MBA program is top of the list at the moment.
What change would you want to bring about in the world and why?
I would like to bring about a more positive view for South Africa and its future from both its citizens and the outside world.

Is your MBA experience challenging you?
The MBA has been both challenging and exciting. I feel like there is so much for me to learn, and I don't want to miss anything.

Could you tell us a bit about your career so far?
I have worked in retail for the last four years for The Shoprite Group. Retail is very fast-paced and competitive, which makes the environment very exciting as well as challenging

Alastair **Sproul**

Nickname: Al
MBA Modular
Cape Town
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What has been your greatest achievement?
Running the 160km Washie Ultra with an amazing support team of loved ones and friends who gave their all to see me cover the gruelling distance and make it to the end in one piece.

What is your current occupation?
Sole Owner and Director of Tenacity Computer Services (PTY) LTD

What did you want to be when you grew up?
I thought I would be a lawyer or a MotoGP rider... neither happened!

Tell us about your icons or mentors? Share some advice that you have received from a mentor/leader?
They are people that I deeply admire for their integrity and family values. They are people that are not afraid to put their family first. They have reminded me throughout my years of running my business that life's lessons are like school fees. I had never had the opportunity to study before so making the mistakes I have, they said "it's ok, it's school fees".

Why are you doing an MBA?
I have a fantastic team of staff that are brilliant at what they do, and I want to lead them into the future by taking us into new markets, securing new deals and seeing us grow so that they too have the opportunity to grow.

Why did you choose the UCT GSB?
I have always believed that UCT is the best University and I have always believed that the GSB MBA would be the absolute best MBA to have. I feel so honoured and privileged to be here today.

UCT GSB's brand motto is 'A new world needs new ideas' | How are you bringing new ideas to a new world?
I believe that I have a fairly unique view and approach to my fellow human beings and I would love the opportunity to turn this into a business that I believe could greatly benefit others.

What are your top 3 best books of all time - provide a one liner explanation?
1. "The Boys in the Boat" - guts, pain, hard work.
2. "Chickenhawk" - normal everyday people thrown into extraordinary situations... powerful.
3. "Four Hours in My Lai" - a sad but necessary read.

What is the worst advice you've ever received and why? How would you improve the advice?
Liquidate and sequestrate. I didn't and I have never regretted my choice to face the music and fight tooth and nail to survive.

What change would you want to bring about in the world and why?
Respect for all human beings, regardless of gender, race, religion, sexual preference.

Lastly, tell us about your MBA experience thus far?
Wow! Terrifying and so exhilarating.

Stephanie **Thomas**

MBA Modular

Cape Town, South Africa

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Are you working and studying? What is your current position and at which company?
Deputy Director: Strategic Planning

Why are you doing your MBA now?
After 10 years in the working world it was time to develop new abilities and skills.

Why did you select UCT Graduate School of Business? What was it about us that attracted you to us?
It's the best in Africa and I'm a UCT alumnus.

What is the worst advice you've ever received and why? How would you improve the advice?
Work smart, not hard. Sometimes it's actually best to do both.

What advice would you give to your younger self?
I would not give her any advice - she needs to figure it out on her own. Even the missteps are an important part of the journey.

What is it like doing an MBA?
It's been a fantastic experience so far. I've already learnt and grown so much.

Can you tell us a bit about your experience? How long have you been working for and in what sector?
I have 10 years of experience in the public sector.

Mohohlo Samuel **Tsoeu**



Nickname: Sammy
MBA Modular
Lesotho
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What are you most passionate about?
I am passionate about my family's well being first and foremost, then my career and community development.

Why did you select UCT Graduate School of Business?
The school's focus on Values based leadership and Emerging markets appealed to me as they resonated with my target core competencies and growth paths.

How are you bringing new ideas to a new world?
I am highly skilled in the Engineering and Technology field and I hope to marry my expertise with a sound business acumen in order to innovate new multidisciplinary ideas that change how we currently do things towards a more inclusive, more equal, and more sustainable ecosystem.

What has your career entailed so far?
I've spent 11 years in Higher Education.

What is your current or most recent position, and where?
I am a Senior Lecturer at University of Cape Town

What are your top 3 best books of all time? Please tell us why?
1. The Bible - it is the core of my value set.
2. "Playing to Win" by A.G. Lafley and R.L Martin - it talks about making strategic choices to control situations as opposed to being on a reactive mode.
3. "Capitalist N*****" by Chika Onyeani - it talks about the debilitated, post-colonial state of a black people and awakens introspection going forward.

If you could have a last dinner with any famous person (leader or celeb etc), who would it be and why?
Former president of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki - he stands out for me as a selfless, intelligent, strategic, and proudly African leader.

Lastly, tell us about your MBA experience thus far?
The first module of the MBA has got me started in defining my self-concept in relation to my immediate and global environment. It has challenged my value set, preconceptions of the world opened me up to the prospect of unlearning or suspending my existing tunnel view of the world in order to experience and learn and interact with my environment in new ways.

Do you have a particular achievement that you are proud of?
In 2016, I completed my PhD in Electrical Engineering focusing on the design of an Electrical Impedance Tomography imaging system, aimed at being a portable, low cost biomedical imaging device especially for neurological ailment diagnosis.

Gerrit **van der Merwe**



Nickname: G
MBA Modular
Middelburg, Mpumalanga
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What advice would you give to your younger self?
The quicker you take responsibility, the better things go for you.

What is your current or most recent position and where? Please indicate if you prefer to have the company/organisation remain anonymous.
I currently serve as the general manager as 'Nungu Property Group', the managing director of Lionspear (Group of Companies) as well as an executive member of 'The Middelburg Chamber of Commerce and Industry' and 'Nkangala Empowerment and Mentorship Development Fund'.

What are your top 3 best books of all time - provide a one liner explanation?
1. The Bible - It forms the backbone of everything I do.
2. "The Seven habits of highly effective people" - This book shows and helps you understand that you cannot find fulfillment if you are not grounded.
3. "The Lord of the Rings" trilogy - Very entertaining while conveying truths in life.

What led you to making the decision to do an MBA? Tell us why and how you got here?
I've been considering it for the past two years. The final decision came when I decided that I need to up my game to be able to achieve goals that I have set for myself.

Why did you select UCT Graduate School of Business? What was it about us that attracted you to us?
The modern entrepreneurial focus with emphasis on emerging markets.

How many years of working experience do you have and which industries have you worked in? Tell us about your work experience?
I have 8 years' working experience. I have worked in construction manufacturing, vehicle manufacturing, health and wellness, direct selling, property, skills & training, vehicle sales and telecommunications industries.

What is the worst advice you've ever received and why? How would you improve the advice?
"Chase money". Money is an inanimate, abstract concept with no value but in a closed system. I would amend this to "money is merely a way to a mean - use it wisely as such"

If you could have a last dinner with any famous person (leader or celeb etc), who would it be and why?
Paul of Tarsus - I would like to experience his drive and zeal for God and love as well as leach of his wisdom...

What change would you want to bring about in the world and why?
I would like to inspire fathers to take responsibility for their children.

Ryno **van Wyk**

MBA Modular
Johannesburg, South Africa
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Let's start on a high note: Tell us about one of your greatest achievements.
Qualifying and racing at the Ironman World Championships, 2019.

Where are you currently working?
Compliance Officer at The Compliance ToolBox.

Could you tell us about the circumstances leading up to you doing your MBA?
I reached a plateau in my work-life, I wanted to fill the gaps in my professional knowledge and experience. I want to do things correctly. I had questions and the MBA seemed to hold the answers.

What kind of future do you see for yourself?
The next two years are a violent struggle to juggle the demands of the MBA, professional and personal commitments. I see valuable friendships being forged and unforgettable experiences at the GSB. Beyond that I can only hope to capitalise on what I've learnt.

Do you have a mentor? Could you tell us about them?
My mentor is a successful business person, family man and a pretty decent athlete. He is successful in every facet of his life. His advice was that I could do anything I wanted but needed to commit to one pursuit by the time I turned 27.

What made you decide on the UCT GSB?
Reputation and location. I would not consider any other South African business school. I'd heard a lot of good things about the GSB.

Do you have any books you'd recommend your classmates read?
1. "Shoe dog"
2. "Ka-boom"
3. "Start with Why". A true legend, an epic story-teller and the bottomline of just about everything.

What can new MBA students expect in their first few weeks? How are you finding it?
It's been a rollercoaster. I interviewed with Segran mid-January, (the week of orientation) and was offered a spot the next day. It is likely that I was the last person to register on the programme. I feel I was on the back foot as a result.
Orientation week was a blur and we hit the ground running once the module properly got underway. We submitted one individual assignment, one group assignment and did four presentations in the first two weeks. It was quite a whirlwind really. I'm back at work now and it's never felt so restful. Looking forward to the many coming challenges of the MBA.

What did you want to be when you were younger?
I wanted to be a professional sportsman. No it didn't.

Heinrich **Venter**



Nickname: Hein
MBA Modular
Johannesburg/Philippines
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Why did you select UCT Graduate School of Business? What was it about us that attracted you to us?
It is the best Uni in Africa, and supplies the greatest diversity of people.

What has been your greatest achievement?
Qualifying to Ironman 70.3 world champs

What is your current or most recent position and where? Please indicate if you prefer to have the company/organisation remain anonymous.
Commercialization Manager, Kerry, Philippines

How are you living the UCT GSB motto and bringing new ideas to a new world?
I currently work in Asia and things are done a little differently there, so I will be able to bring in a different flavour compared to the rest.

What change would you want to bring about in the world and why?
Sustainability - To ensure we can actually reach our full potential as a human race.

Are you an avid reader? What are your favourite books?
1. "1984" - Oh Big Brother
2. "Eragon" - Good Fantasy
3. "Captain Underpants" - a childhood favourite

How do you see the future of the world?
A bit doom and gloomy, but that's why we are here to come up with solutions to ensure there is a future for all of us.

If you could have dinner with anyone, alive or dead, who would you choose?
Dinners are supposed to be fun so I would choose Robin Williams. I think he has had a crazy life and the stories he would have told would be jaw dropping.

Is your MBA experience what you thought it would be? How are you finding it?
So far it has been tough, but meeting amazing people who see things a bit differently than what I see and sparking so change in myself.

Geneve Rosslyn **Worship**

MBA Modular

Cape Town, South Africa

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How many years of working experience do you have and which industries have you worked in? Tell us about your work experience?

I've worked since 2004 when I graduated from the US Naval Academy. I was commissioned as an Ensign in the US Navy, and served in several locations as a Civil Engineer Corps officer until 2013. The Civil Engineer Corps is responsible for maintaining and improving US Navy and Marine Corps bases worldwide. Within the Civil Engineer Corps I had several roles, as Assistant Operations Officer, Detachment Officer-In-Charge, Production Officer, Assistant Public Works Officer, and Construction Manager. After 2013 I left the Navy and went to work for AMEC, which eventually became Wood PLC. There, I was a Construction Project Manager, which was similar to my previous work. I worked with US Government , municipal, and commercial clients to construct and renovate buildings and roads.

What has been your greatest achievement?

Professionally, it was serving as Detachment Officer-In-Charge of 87 enlisted sailors in Afghanistan. We constructed small Forward Operating Bases for US Army Special Forces in multiple locations at once. We successfully deployed, constructed over 10,000 man days of effort, and returned home in 6 months without injury.

What led you to making the decision to do an MBA? Tell us why and how you got here?

I wanted to improve my overall management skills. In annual performance reviews, I recognized that I did not want to be a project manager for life, but I wanted to move up in the corporate world - I think the MBA is the best means to enter that role.

Why did you select UCT Graduate School of Business? What was it about us that attracted you to us?

UCT has the geographic benefit of being located in beautiful Cape Town! This is pretty far from my comfort zone within the US, helping me stretch and grow. The student body is more diverse in ethnicity and thought than I could have found at home, which in turn is opening my views in new directions.

What advice would you give to your younger self?

Do nothing with half-effort, whether big or small.

What does the future look like to you?

Globally the future is worrisome with climate change and poor governance - but personally, my immediate future is of growth which is exciting!

Sahil **Affriya**

MBA Full Time
India
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What does the future look like to you?
Bright, fun and among the people.

Which celebrity would you have dinner with if you could?
Bill Gates wants to understand how he does things and especially how he can read so fast.

Tell us about your icons or mentors? Share some advice that you have received from a mentor/leader?
Mr Daisaku Ikeda is my mentor. He is the ex-president of Sokka Gakkai International and he has dedicated his life in promotion of peace, culture and education. One advice is very dear to me:

Youth should not seek an easy comfortable path. No one develops in a pampered environment. Youth should instead actively seek out challenges and hardships, transforming them all into valuable assets as they strive to become individuals of outstanding character and ability..

Lastly, tell us about your MBA experience thus far?
It is amazing, I am so grateful that I am part of GSB and living my journey with most awesome people around me.

Could you tell us a bit about how you got to doing your MBA?
I came to South Africa in 2018 on a road trip with my wife from Johannesburg to Cape Town. It was a 3000 km road trip, which made us fall in love with South Africa. Hence, we decided to move to South Africa from India. I needed to do the MBA to upscale my skills, develop a network, and also to become jack of all trades. I met Sagran in Delhi and decided on GSB for MBA and applied for it.

What drew you to the UCT GSB?
Excellent professors, way of imparting education, focus on value based leadership, alumni network, last but not the least Location; its in Cape Town.

What are you most proud of in terms of achievement?
I worked with one of the largest electric vehicle manufacturers in India. I reduced the electric vehicle assembly cost without having prior work experience in it.

Do you have any book recommendations for aspiring leaders?
1. “Shackleton’s Way”: Best leadership lessons from a real story.
2. “Leaders Eat Last”: explains servant leadership.
3. “New Human Revolution” series: my mentor’s journey and guidances.

How many years of working experience do you have and which industries have you worked in?
I have around 5 years of work experience. I have worked in Automotive (Electric vehicle and spare parts), Healthcare and logistics sector. I have started working with logistics and moved on to become an entrepreneur by starting my own firm, which deals in spare parts of car and motorbike in the automotive industry. I have also worked in the electric vehicle field.

Lara **Braun**



Nickname: Loo, La
MBA Full Time
Johannesburg, South Africa
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Are you bringing new ideas to the world, and if so, how?
By challenging norms and approaching things with a curious mind.

How are you finding the MBA programme?
Exciting, anxious, different and expanding.

What does the future look like to you?
The future me resembles someone who has a self-belief and purpose that is driving them forward to achieve greatness and creating a positive impact along the way.

Have you ever gotten any bad advice?
Pursue a sensible career such as an accountant as this will hold you in good stead.

But you decided to do an MBA instead?
Having an undergrad in genetics and a postgrad in management I have always felt that I have been missing the business acumen and knowledge to take my career to the next step. An MBA will teach me these skills, as well as help, open up opportunities to potentially changing industries, expanding my network and getting a better understanding of who I am and what I want and building self-confidence.

Why did you choose to do the programme at the UCT GSB?
Being a UCT alumni, the UCT GSB was automatically on top of my list. Some of the other key reasons were the course structure and ability to specialise, the triple accreditation, being part of the GNAM network and the opportunities for exchange.

What are your 3 favourite books?
1. “The Alchemist” by Paulo Coelho - never losing hope.
2. “Outliers” by Malcolm Gladwell - how to achieve success through practice and the help of others.
3. “The Choice” by Edith Eger - Hope can develop from the most unlikely situation.

What advice has an icon or mentor given you that you will never forget?
To never give up and always try - because if you don’t try you will never know.

How many years of work experience do you have and which industries have you worked in?
I have 5 years of work experience with the majority in the telecommunications space. I have spent the bulk of my career working in analytics and business improvement within the procurement division of Telkom.

Ricardo **de Matos Camarinha**



Nickname: Ricky
MBA Full Time
Vereeniging, Portugal, Cape Town
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What industry are you in and how long have you been in this industry?
Education, Construction, Engineering and Technology - 14 years in totality.

Tell us about your MBA experience thus far?
Overall impressed but really excited with the modern approach to education that both the program and teachers have been showing through these initial weeks.

What has been your greatest achievement?
Leading a multinational company, growing the operations department from 10 to 120 people in 2 years, operating from 3 locations to the Middle-East and later to South America.

What is your current or most recent position?
Operations Manager at BIMTEC Consultancy W.L.L. - Doha, Qatar (Resigned in September 2019)

Tell us about your icons or mentors? Share some advice that you have received from a mentor/leader?
My biggest mentor was my grandfather who led my education since my childhood but also who was an example of dedication and commitment at work with exemplary attention to detail.

What led you to making the decision to do an MBA? Tell us why and how you got here?
A shift in life, a family project and individually the opportunity to optimize my knowledge and to correct bad habits accumulated through the years. Also the desire of living in South Africa and in particular in Cape Town.

Why did you select UCT Graduate School of Business? What was it about us that attracted you to us?
Their focus on emerging markets, location and price quality.

UCT GSB's brand motto is 'A new world needs new ideas' | How are you bringing new ideas to a new world?
I would like to get ready to take a position to lead change in my industry. Construction is one of the most outdated industries in the world and needs a 180-degree shift. Industrialization 4.0 is a great opportunity for construction to get closer to automotive, aircraft and naval industries.

What are your top 3 best books of all time?
1. "The Art of War" by Sun Tzu - for Strategy
2. "A Short History of Nearly Everything" by Bill Bryson - for Knowledge
3. "The Last Lecture" by Randy Pausch - for Purpose.

If you could have a last dinner with any famous person (leader or celeb etc), who would it be and why?
Tim Ferriss to get introduced to all the other "Titans" (refer to the book "Tools of Titans")

What change would you want to bring about in the world and why?
I would abolish construction bricks, because it symbolizes the inefficiency of an entire industry - Construction.

Janine **Downes**

MBA Full Time
Cape Town, South Africa
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If you could meet anyone, who would you meet and why?
Siya Kolisi - Just so I can tell him he is an incredible human. He overcame all the odds and he has not forgotten his roots.

What do you look back on and feel really proud of?
I am most proud that I did not allow my circumstances to hold me back from what I wanted to achieve.

Who is your icon or mentor? What have they taught you?
Dr. Shadrick Mazaza - Self-awareness leads to self-mastery

What led you to making the decision to do an MBA? Tell us why and how you got here?
I did the PGDip at the GSB two years ago and it changed my life. It was during this time that I decided that I had to do my MBA so I can build on the process that started in my life.

What have your first few weeks of the MBA programme been like?
The first 3 weeks have been absolutely incredible. It has challenged me and stretched me but with each passing day I can feel myself building capacity. I have met incredible people and I am so happy with the diversity of our class and this school. I am learning not only from the amazing lecturers here but also so much from the rest of my class.

What attracted you to the UCT GSB?
When I came here to do the PGDip I did not expect it to affect me the way it did. The massive focus on developing leaders and not just more managers made me realise that there was nowhere I would rather be.

Could you tell us a bit about your work so far?
I worked in a Distribution and Manufacturing company for just over 12 years managing the Supply Chain.

What do you do now?
I'm a General Manager - Supply Chain at The Stingray Group

What is the worst advice you've ever received and why? How would you improve on that advice?
Advice: Do not do your MBA. You don't need an MBA to do your job. Improvement: Do not do your MBA if your only goal is to earn more money but if you want to change your life and expand your mind, abilities and yes earning potential, 100% the MBA is for you.

What change would you want to bring about in the world, and why?
I wish that the education system could develop all children who pass through it to their strengths. We are made to believe that we are not good enough when we do not have the top grades but what about the artists, the sportsman, etc.
The worst part is most children in government schools never have the opportunity to see what they are good at.

Linda **Futwa**



Nickname: LG
MBA Full Time
Cala, Eastern Cape
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What achievement are you most proud of?
Helping business owners set up and establish their companies.

What kind of experience have you had so far with regards to work?
11 years in the business services sector.

What did you want to be when you were younger?
As a kid, I wanted to be a lawyer. Then I changed as I grew older.

How is your MBA going so far?
It's been both challenging and life-changing, 'literally'.

How and why did you end up doing an MBA?
The main drive for me was personal development. I needed something that would challenge my world view and give me new perspectives.

What are your top 3 best books of all time - provide a one liner explanation?

1. "As a man thinketh" by James Allen. The book is centered on the idea that we become what we think about and that by working patiently and intelligently upon our thoughts, we may remake our life and transform our circumstances.
2. "The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People" by Stehen R. Covey. In this book, Covey presents an approach to being effective in attaining goals by aligning oneself to what he calls the "True North".
3. "Developing the Leader within You" by John C. Maxwell. According to Maxwell, "leadership is influential. That's it. Nothing more; nothing less". Therefore anyone and everyone is a leader somehow, somewhere and can develop his/her leadership capabilities.

What drives you?
Leadership and entrepreneurship.

Why did you select UCT Graduate School of Business? What was it about us that attracted you to us?
I selected the UCT GSB because of its focus on Africa and emerging markets, which is a notion I would love to align myself with.

If you could have a last dinner with any famous person who would you choose and why?
Trevor Noah - for one last laugh.

Arthur **Gajewski**

MBA Full Time
Cape Town, South Africa
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Tell us a bit about your work history.
5 Years in the oil & gas industry fulfilling various roles including project management and process engineering.

What are you most proud of in terms of your work achievements?
Debottlenecking 6 catalyst reactor plants at no capital cost solely through challenging previously accepted norms through reactor optimization. This resulted in minimal plant downtime, continual coal based energy saving, and more cost-effective operations.

What was your most recent position?
Process Engineer at Sasol Synfuels Operations.

As a child, what did you want to be one day?
When I was a child, I always said I wanted to be a lion. This symbolically represented being confident, calm, and in control. I feel that this is something I have reached to some extent, but also an area of continuous improvement.

What qualities should a mentor have?
Seek to develop connections and relationships by being impressionable, open-minded, asking questions, and listening. This comes naturally when you're confident and happy.

What made you decide on the UCT GSB?
UCT GSB is the top business school in Africa.

How do you embody the UCT GSB's motto of bringing new ideas to a new world?
South Africa is a breeding ground for small businesses to be innovative and fill gaps within the market. Apart from applying the MBA knowledge to my start-up, which focuses on growing small businesses, I plan to be at the forefront of sustainable energy in South Africa.

Which books would you recommend to others?
1. "How to Win Friends and Influence People"
2. "The Monk who sold his Ferrari"
3. "Born a Crime"

Who would you choose to have dinner with if it could be anybody?
Probably Andy Samberg from Brooklyn 99, because of his silly entertaining demeanour.

What has your MBA experience been like so far? Have you enjoyed it?
It has been fast-paced and collaborative. I'm loving the emphasis on open communication and making use of the networks around you.

Lulu Khaliphile **Gumedze**

MBA Full Time
Durban, South Africa
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What has been your greatest achievement?
My recent and greatest achievement was to obtain a distinction in Business Acumen in the Post Graduate Diploma in Management Practice, which I did at Graduate School of Business at the University of Cape Town last year.

Why have you chosen the UCT GSB twice?
UCT Graduate School of Business is one of the top business schools in Africa and in the world. I wanted to study at one of the best institutions and here I am.

How would you describe the start of your MBA experience?
My experience so far has been that of adjusting from being unemployed and to a full time student. It's a lot of sacrifice that I have made and it pushes me to work hard everyday, but I'm enjoying the experience.

What are you contributing to this changing world?
I have a vast amount of experience from as young as a kid. I have my unique experiences that make me who I am. I am keen to develop younger people to be better people in the society. I also want to apply my analytical skills to contribute to the economy of South Africa.

What are your top 3 best books of all time?
1. "Lean In" by Sheryl Sandberg
2. "Hlomu the wife" by Dudu Busani Dube
3. "Rich Dad Poor Dad" by Robert Kiyosaki

Could you tell us a bit about your work experience?
I have 17 years working experience and have worked in various companies however I spent about 10 years in an FMCG company.

Which famous or well-known person would you like to have dinner with - alive or dead?
The famous person I could have a last dinner with is Michelle Obama. I want to know how she managed to be a black first lady in the United States and yet so level headed.

Who do you consider an icon and/or mentor?
My icon and mentor is my mother, she always tells me "it doesn't matter how I start the race but what matters is how I finish it".

What change are you working towards in the world?
I would like to reduce the rate of poverty stricken families, the level of income inequalities. I believe there are so many people who don't make it in life because of poverty and limited finances. It would be great if the world can be a happy place with everyone getting the opportunities they deserve.

Thomas **Klapsia**

MBA Full Time
Stuttgart, Germany
-



What has been your greatest achievement?
Being brave enough to leave my comfort zone, quit my job and move with my family to Cape Town to do my MBA.

What are you most passionate about?
My family, Africa, German national team and SV Werder Bremen.

What led you to making the decision to do an MBA? Tell us why and how you got here?
I always wanted to do an MBA to broaden my horizon and get challenged. After 9 years of working in both the consulting and the corporate world it was time to follow my dreams. Fortunately my wife supported me in this entire decision process.

Why did you select UCT GSB?
First, GSB was in the top 100 MBA programmes on the FT rankings and as I have previously lived two years in South Africa, one thing led to another.

Are you working to bring new ideas to a new world?
I have lived and volunteered for one year in a township along the N2 in 2005/2006 but I was also born in Poland, raised in Slovakia and moved to Germany at the age of 4. So I can draw from a broad range of various and unique experiences (including various industries I worked in) to bring new ideas.

What are your top 3 best books of all time? For what reason?
1. The Bible - It's a foundation for values.
2. "Constitution of Liberty" by Hayek, F.A.v. - It's a foundation for an economic worldview.
3. "Embers" by Marai, S. - great storytelling.

What is the worst advice you've ever received and why? How would you improve on it?
"You need to be more the asshole type of person" - learn to say no and to fight for your ideas instead of giving in too early but be yourself.

Which businessperson or intellectual would you choose to have dinner with?
Bill Gates, because he successfully went from an Entrepreneur to a Philanthropist.

What advice would you give to your younger self?
Study harder in school but also enjoy time with family as often as possible

What is your MBA feedback so far?
Two weeks in and I still enjoy the MBA.

What does the future look like to you?
Mostly unknown with a vague idea of what could come next.

Lastly, what did you want to be when you grew up and did you become it?
Among other things, I wanted to be an architect and used to draw houses for various people on various occasions.

Sethu **Komani**



Nickname: Sethu
MBA Full Time
Johannesburg, South Africa
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What has your career been like so far?
I worked in the B2B inbound tourism space for nearly seven years. I started working at Tourvest Destination Management straight out of undergrad and worked my way up the ranks over the six years and seven months spent there.

Why did you select UCT Graduate School of Business? What was it about us that attracted you to us?
UCT GSB struck me as a people focused organisation right off the bat, which I loved. The disarming atmosphere made me feel like I could be "GSB MBA material" after all.

What are your top 3 best books of all time - provide a one liner explanation?
1. "Boundaries" by Dr. Henry Cloud and Dr. John Townsend
2. "Lift as You Rise" by Bonang Mohale

These specifically played roles in my journey to being a full time MBA student. Both books spoke to the kind of personal transformation I am constantly looking to cultivate in my life.

If you could have a last dinner with any famous person (leader or celeb etc), who would it be and why?
At the moment, it would probably be Dr Brene Brown so I could discuss how her philosophy of vulnerability has served her personally and professionally.

Are you feeling equipped to tackle your MBA so far?
So far the experience has been immersive. We've had to jump in with both feet and learn to swim along the way but we have a ton of support from the GSB staff which makes taking the journey worthwhile. Our full time MBA class is relatively small and I think the advantage with that is that we all get to know each other a bit better and become closer as a class which I think will enhance our overall experience this year.

What has been your greatest achievement?
My greatest career achievement to date is leading the rebranding process of the company from a marketing perspective after several of our internal brands amalgamated. During this time in 2017 a huge transition took place internally and I was entrusted with the coordination and creation of the new brand. I'm really proud of this specifically because it was difficult but through the difficulty I was able to rise up and really see what I was capable of achieving.

What made you decide to do your MBA? How did you get here?
I was doing my honours in Strategic Brand Communication part-time in 2018 - 2019 and over the course of that I realised a few passions of mine resurface in a lot of the work I presented. This made me really think about what it is I really wanted to be doing and how I could shift myself into a position where I am better equipped to make a meaningful impact. Long story short, toward the end of my studies last year my dad asked me what I was going to do next and suggested that I look at the UCT GSB MBA. Although at the time I had vision of going to study overseas I also knew that I was ready for a pivot in my life and doing my MBA full time in Cape Town would offer this so I did my research and through attending numerous info sessions I realised that I liked the GSB more for it's people focused values than it's amazing academic record.

Kumvenji **Lamba**



Nickname: Mvenji
MBA Full Time
Malawi
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What has been your greatest achievement?
This is so hard, there are so many achievements, such as MCing a wedding on the spot, small things like that. I don't really keep track.

Are you passionate about anything in particular?
I'm going to go with life on this one. Raising myself up and people around me. I love to immerse myself in life and how people live it (I should probably have become a sociologist).

Do you have any mentorship advice that's stood out for you?
My icons/mentors include my parents (the velvet glove over the iron hand), my grandfather, and my philosophy lecturer in college. They all tell me, in their own way, to not reinvent the wheel and that to every problem there is a solution. And of course work HARD! but put God first!

What made you decide to do an MBA?
Well I was already thinking about upgrading for work purposes in 2014. Then I had a paradigm shift in my thinking and wanted to just do more. And while on holiday here in Cape Town a friend of mine told me about the GSB and I just knew that for the next steps in my life to succeed I need the GSB to give me that major leg up. GSB is like the rocket booster that's going to take me up to the stratosphere and keep me up there.

Which 3 books really made you think?
1. "The Hobbit"
2. "The Subtle Art of Not Giving a F**k"
3. The Narnia Series (I know it's 7 books but they are one long and lovely story!)

What has starting your MBA been like?
It has been life changing! Mind blowing! So many new ideas and relationships forming, I look forward to seeing the final result!

What kind of work experience do you have at this point?
I have about 13 years work experience under my belt in the marketing and education industries and I dabbled in some consulting and elections monitoring, nothing serious really.

Where do you work?
I am currently an (one of 5) Assistant Registrar with the University of Malawi, in, well you guessed it, Malawi.

What made you decide on coming to the UCT GSB in the end?
To succeed at my next ventures I needed an edge, a rewiring of the brain. All my research pointed to UCT. My gut pointed to UCT. And then I talked to Segran during my interview and that kind of sealed the deal. My bosses also had nothing but praise for UCT GSB.

Duke Phumulani **Madisakwana**

MBA Full Time
Botswana
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What are you most passionate about?
I am most passionate about problem solving, learning new things, playing football and going out to meet new people who have different life experiences than mine. I believe in learning something about everything such that when you meet a total stranger at a bus stop you can have a conversation or at least ask leading questions into a stranger's life story. That is why I am passionate about learning as much as I can from different platforms.

What are your top 3 best books of all time?
1. "The Goal" by Eliyahu M. Goldratt and Jeff Cox - It's specific to my industry and delivers the message the Socratic Way.
2. "The 48 Laws of Powers" by Robert Greene - it's one of those books every person who wants to lead or be in power has to read.
3. "The Alchemist" by Paulo Coelho - Only book I have bought twice, because I loved it that much.

What has been your greatest achievement?
My greatest achievement is getting accepted at Africa's top ranked business school, GSB, to study their premier MBA.

Could you tell us a bit about your career journey?
I have 4 years experience. My background (industry) is in Engineering & Manufacturing. I worked as a Manufacturing Engineer in the automotive industry for 3 years and prior to that I was an Operations Analyst with a steel manufacturing company.

What do you do and where do you work?
I am a Manufacturing Quality Engineer with Linamar Corporation in Canada (Canada's second largest automobile parts manufacturer) .

What made you decide on the UCT GSB?
The students and the curriculum are very diverse and the GSB is the best business school in Africa. The school's focus on doing business within an emerging market and African context was another key factor in my decision.

Lastly, what has your MBA experience been like?
It's been fast paced and challenging. I enjoy being kept on my feet all the time. You have to be involved in all facets of the business school, be it social involvement, networking, sporting activity or an academic meeting Lot to learn from different people with different life experiences.

Alexa **Mehos**



Nickname: Lexy
MBA Full Time
Boulder, Colorado
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What are you most passionate about?
I am most passionate about being kind - to people, to animals, and to the earth. My favorite activities are making clothes and hunting for wild mushrooms and edible plants!

What has been your greatest achievement to date?
I spent a summer teaching English in a refugee camp on the Thai/Myanmar border in college. While I was there, I helped my students record their stories in a book called "In My Life" about their experiences and hopes for the future for themselves and their country. It was a really beautiful and powerful project for them to do together, and their stories of resilience and hope in the face of adversity continue to motivate me, years later.

Share some advice that you have received from a mentor/leader?
I've met so many uncelebrated leaders working in the fight for environmental and social justice. One that I met last year said something to me that I think about a lot, essentially that when you're doing the right thing, there's no reason to be afraid. He was facing death threats from a mining company, but continued to speak out about what was happening to his community. I gather all my confidence from knowing that what I am doing is aligned with my values.

Why did you select UCT Graduate School of Business? What was it about us that attracted you to us?
I always wanted to live in Cape Town. There is such a thriving creative community here, and it didn't hurt that the UCT GSB has the best MBA in Africa!

What is your current or most recent position?
Global Greengrants Fund.

UCT GSB's brand motto is 'A new world needs new ideas' | How are you bringing new ideas to a new world?
I dream of a future where successful business doesn't have to come at a cost to the environment or human rights. In everything I do, I try to take a creative approach to imagining solutions to modern problems that are rooted in community and sustainability.

What are your top 3 best books of all time - provide a one liner explanation?
1. "When Things Fall Apart" by Pema Chodron - I come back to this book every time I'm going through a difficult period or major transition. It reminds me to be open to and excited about adversity as an opportunity for growth and knowing myself better.
2. "The Red Tent" - A powerful reminder of the enduring feminine spirit!
3. "The Poisonwood Bible" - My favorite novel to read over and over again.

Lastly, tell us about your MBA experience thus far?
It's been an incredibly busy three weeks but one of the most exciting times of my life! I have never had an academic experience where there was so much potential and support to be creative and try new things. I can't wait to see what this year holds.

Diana **Muema**



Nickname: Dee/Dianne
MBA Full Time
Nairobi, Kenya
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Who would you consider a mentor, leader or icon?
My icon is Princess Diana - I have watched every single documentary there is out there about her and I just keep learning from her experiences.
Tell us a bit about your profession, please. I am a certified accountant by profession and a tax consultant at Andersen Tax in Kenya. I have been in the financial services sector for the past 6 years and have worked my way from an intern to an accounts and finance executive to the current position that I hold.

What's the best advice you've received?
Being selfless and being true to yourself. I got this from my number one mentor - my Mom.She is my rock and has moulded me in all aspects of life.

What is your current or most recent position and where? Please indicate if you prefer to have the company/organisation remain anonymous.
Before my MBA I was a tax consultant at Andersen Tax,Kenya.Andersen Tax, Kenya is a member firm of Andersen Global which is an international association of legally separate, independent member firms, comprised of tax and legal professionals around the world.

If you could have a last dinner with any famous person (leader or celeb etc), who would it be and why?
Beyonce - because who wouldn't?

Why did you select UCT Graduate School of Business? What was it about us that attracted you to us?
One of my colleagues is a 2005 alumnus of the school and I was so intrigued by how well thought out and skilled she is in every project at work.I thought to myself - "Must be the MBA!"(*Is this the part where I cross my fingers and hope that I didn't make a wrong assumption?*). She encouraged me to apply and take a leap and try out the MBA experience at the school and I am grateful to her for pushing me and being there in every single step,especially the application process.

What are your top 3 best books of all time - provide a one liner explanation?
1. "Nice girls don't get the corner office" by Lois P. Frankel - Don't be nice,be bold!
2. "Lean in" by Sheryl Sandberg - It's very important to balance your work and social life.
3. "The Alchemist" by Paulo Coelho - Embrace the present,take action and challenge your fears.

Lastly, tell us about your MBA experience thus far?
Coffee,coffee,coffee! Fun and also my days surprisingly seem shorter than I remember!

Ryan **Murray**

MBA Full Time

Johannesburg/Cape Town, South Africa

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Who are your icons and/or mentors? What have they taught you?
David Grant from Corruseal - Said to me I need to change my lenses. meaning that my outlook on life at the time was not where it should be. It is something that I think about often and use it to make sure I am perceiving things in a less emotional but more beneficial way. He also would say “i don’t mind if you give me a problem but give me the solution too”. This has also changed how I think and instead of dead end problem thinking I tend to move forward a lot faster than pre-David.
Mr Wilson, My latin teacher from King Edward VII affected a lot of how I think about life and he really mentored his students in more than just the latin we were being taught.

What made you decide to do an MBA?
Life hit a snag, the MBA was the best option to get out of it and develop myself at the same time. I know this MBA will challenge me mentally but I am seeking growth in character. People skills and confidence. The MBA gives me a battlefield and at the end of which I can walk off and know I deserve the self-respect of my “scars”.

Why did you specifically choose to do it at the UCT GSB?
UCT GSB was the only option for me. The world has become obsessed with the selfie-mentality. I was there to take a picture and move on. Other MBAs would have probably been the same. Get the certificate and shirt and move on. The UCT MBA is more about the challenge, the experience and for this reason has more value. Being here now I can see the extreme value that will arise from just the network the course generates.

At the UCT GSB we believe that a new world needs new ideas. How are you approaching this motto?
New ideas come from new thinking. New ways of looking at the same problems. This is where I believe my strengths are. “What is seen and how can it be used differently, what is unseen and how can we identify it”.

If you could have a last dinner with anyone we’d know, that you admire, who would it be and why?
Jim Carrey - As a child he was the humor I enjoyed. He has developed into a leader. He has gone through some hard times but he’s grown into a different person while still maintaining the positive aspects of who he was. Also I want to be at a dinner at which I laugh.

How are you finding your MBA?
Each day rolls onto the next, days themselves lose identity and there is the constant question of whether or not I am on top of things. My team is great, we work well together and we navigate each other really positively. The lectures themselves have come from the best academics I have encountered in my life. While it is difficult I can tangibly feel the value in my thought processes developing, growing and being questioned.

Lastly, what advice would you give to your younger self?
Read more books.

Stuart **Murray**



Nickname: Stu
MBA Full Time
Cape Town, South Africa
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What is your current position at work?
I'm a Senior Economist, Competition Commission of South Africa.

How long have you been in your industry?
Approx. eight years - Competition Economics, across a range of industries. My experience has been good, working for both the private and government sectors, domestically and abroad.

What are you passionate about in general?
Cricket.

Is that what you wanted to be a child and did you ever live out that dream?
I wanted to be a cricket player - clearly not.

Is there anything else you're passionate about or an achievement you're proud of?
I've cycled from Seattle to Mexico along the Pacific West Coast.

What led you to the decision of doing your MBA?
Wanting to pivot away from niche competition economics into a similar but different field.

And why at the UCT GSB?
Cape Town is obviously a draw-card, allowing me to be close to family and friends.

What do you wish you'd known when you were younger?
To invest in Apple stocks.

If you could have a last dinner with any celebrity, who would it be and why?
Andy Samberg - it would be dinner and a show.

What are your top 3 best books of all time - provide a one liner explanation?
All three chapters of The Twilight Saga - everyone loves an underdog story.

What change would you want to bring about in the world and why?
I'd like to see change in the way people treat each other. While I think Tinder has done a great job in bringing more love to the world - we could do more to behave like we all in this life thing together.

Lastly, tell us about your MBA experience thus far?
It's exceeding my expectations - interesting people, passionate lecturers.

What does the future look like to you?
Bright like a diamond.

Vivian **Ngalo**



Nickname: Viv
MBA Full Time
Cape Town, South Africa
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What has been your greatest achievement?
Embarking on my MBA journey, Full Time, acquiring the highest qualification in the lineage of my family.

What is your current or most recent position and where?
Marketing and Communications Manager in a company in the Energy Sector.

Thinking back to being a kid and the profession you wanted to be, what was it and did it happen?
I have always been passionate about communicating, always talkative, expressive and looked forward to doing presentations at school. I became an interpreter at church, interpreting from Xhosa, to English and vice versa. I was always interested in dissecting complex subjects and topics. After highschool, I did an undergrad in Business, during the final year of my studies, I got the opportunity to do my internship at the Cape Town International Convention Center (CTICC) in the Marketing and Communications department, this is when I was able to really find out what the industry was about and what it meant to be in Marketing and Communication. What I wanted as a kid, is exactly where I am.

Why did you select UCT Graduate School of Business? What was it about us that attracted you to us?
The GSB's MBA program is uniquely positioned to deliver this success to me. The GSB is a leader in the industry, the institution is known for being innovative, professional and transformational in its endeavors. The institution is rated very highly amongst its peers and other universities in South Africa, Africa and globally. Being associated with an institution of this caliber would be an absolute honor and privilege. It would be an opportunity for learning and personal growth. It would allow me to become a member of the UCT GSB community and network. I would comply with UCT GSB policies, code of conducts and conduct myself in ways that reflect the best of who I am, my values and principals and be the best for the institution. I am an independent individual who strives for excellence – I would ensure that I am dedicated to the program by keeping up with my readings, assessment pieces and be an active and fully present team player, actively participating in my learning activities. There are several institutions which offer this program or similar programs, however UCT GSB has a credible track record and has proven to produce students who are mature, acknowledged in their respective professional fields and are able to take on the work force with confidence. I would love to be counted amongst those types of learners and be part of the UCT GSB Alumni. UCT GSB is my institution of choice!

What advice would you give to your younger self?
Your dreams are valid.

Lastly, tell us about your MBA experience thus far?
It's been 3-4 weeks, and while it's been exciting meeting and networking with new people, getting to engage with the course content has been mind opening and has already stimulated a different way of evaluating situations. The experience has already started probing for self reflection, effective time management and flexibility.

Nurbalqis Muhammad **Noh**



Nickname: Balqis
MBA Full Time
Malaysia
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How many years of work experience do you have? What have you been working on in your career?
I've spent 11 years in oil and gas. I am a Senior Process Engineer working on projects and dealing with troubleshooting equipment at sites - platforms and oil/gas terminals.

What has been your greatest achievement?
Being accredited as a Professional Engineer by the Board of Engineers, Malaysia.

Thinking back to being a kid and the profession you wanted to be, what was it and did it happen?
I wanted to be a surgeon but my excellent achievements in science and technology subjects at school lead me to becoming an engineer.

Why did you select UCT Graduate School of Business? What was it about us that attracted you to us?
The prestige school. Acknowledged by numerous accreditations and friends/leaders in Cape Town.

If you could have a last dinner with any famous person (leader or celeb etc), who would it be and why?
Tun Mahathir (Prime Minister of Malaysia). I want to ask what makes him so passionate about his people and country even though he is already 93 years old. He could choose to stay with the family and play with the grandchildren but he has opted to continue to serve his country until his last breath.

UCT GSB's brand motto is 'A new world needs new ideas' | How are you bringing new ideas to a new world?
Implementing what I have learnt at the GSB and bring the new knowledge back to my country and educate others. Lead by example of what the GSB team had shown me - they are extremely efficient.

What are your favourite books?
1. "Born a Crime" by Trevor Noah - anyone can succeed if they are willing to go out of their comfort zone and change their life.
2. "My Story" by Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum - to succeed, don't do what people usually do, do what they don't do.

What is the worst advice you've ever received and why? How would you improve the advice?
As a mother of three young boys, I should not be focusing on myself (chase my own dream) but should pay more attention in raising the kids and house. I would say that by chasing my dream (pursue my masters) will benefit my entire family in terms of knowledge exchange, meeting new people, learning new ways in raising kids and set a benchmark for my kids to succeed further in their life.

Lastly, tell us about your MBA experience thus far?
Very challenging and there are short timelines for preparing materials for assignments and presentations. But I will make it. Definitely.

Vincent **Skosana**



Nickname: Davince
MBA Full Time
South Africa
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How is your MBA going?
I learn a lot about myself every day, how to engage with people who have a professional background, and being able to work in a group and trust my group members on tasks given.

What were you doing before this?
I worked for eight years as a professional Nurse in the public sector (Hospital) in Gauteng.

Have you always wanted to do what you're doing now?
I always wanted to be a medical Doctor. It did not happen but I got close to it being a nurse.

What were your greatest achievements along the way?
Contributing to the wellbeing of my patients and the academic qualifications I have obtained.

Tell us about your icons or mentors? Share some advice that you have received from a mentor/leader?
My high school teacher once said to me it doesn't matter what family background you come from, you can break through and dream.

Did that help you make the decision to study?
While I was in my previous job I realised that I was no longer growing professionally and I needed new skills that can broaden my career both in my sector and others.

Why did you choose to come and study at the UCT GSB?
Because I once attended a presentation by Segrain (Director) that was informative and motivating and explained how the UCT GSB contributes to the development of leaders in an African market.

Here at the UCT GSB our brand motto is "A new world needs new ideas". Are you going to contribute to the new world, and how?
Looking at my professional background in the public health sector, I want to bring new constructive and innovative ideas in that field to transform it.

What are your top 3 best books of all time - provide a one liner explanation?
1. "Rich Dad Poor Dad"
2. "The Capitalist N*****"
3. "How to lead when you're not in charge"

I like these books because they encourage me to work hard and think outside the book to be a better leader/person.

What is the worst advice you've ever received and why? How would you improve the advice?
Because I'm from a poor family, I won't make it far academically. It doesn't matter one's personal family background, you can be anyone you want to be in life.

Braam **Snyman**

MBA Full Time
Boxburg, Gauteng
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How many years of work experience do you have and which industries have you worked in?
I have 4 years work experience in fields mainly in the health & wellness industry. I have worked on a cruise liner as an on-board Fitness Coordinator (yes people do more than eat on some cruise liners) . More recently I have been working as a Biokineticist at a private practice in Cape Town, whilst working as a Health Specialist for a medical insurer in my spare time.

What has been your greatest achievement?
Moving to Cape Town, obviously.

Tell us about your icons or mentors and some of their advice that has stayed with you.
My mentor is Dr. Paula Armstrong, very few people reading this might know her, however she is an absolute gem. She is one of my past clients who had an ankle injury that I helped rehabilitate, however, the relationship quickly grew more towards her paying me to be my mentor (ideal). Her words - “always be the stupidest person in the room”.

What drove you to do an MBA? Tell us why and how you got here?
Well it has been in the back of my mind for quite some time, but recent changes in the health industry and the uncertainty of what the health industry might look like in a few years’ time forced my hand.

Why did you select UCT Graduate School of Business? What was it about us that attracted you to us?
Value for money and Cape Town - obviously.

What are your top 3 best books of all time - provide a one liner explanation?
1. “Let My People Go Surfing” by Yvon Chouinard - The unconventional ‘businessman’ with an obsession for the environment, showed me that if you can surround yourself with the right band of hippies, you can make major changes in this world.
2. “Extreme Ownership” by Jocko Willink - Decentralizing command and building trust with the people around you has such a positive impact in relationships and business.
3. “The Alchemist” by Paulo Coelho - I’ve read it multiple times and I take a different message from it on each occasion, pure gold.

What does the future look like to you?
Flying cars, USB drives that you can plug in your skull to download martial arts (think the Matrix), drones replacing UberEats and Olympics without doping limitations. I would really like to see someone throw a javelin into the stratosphere.

Lastly, tell us about your MBA experience thus far?
FLOW - the right amount of challenge to keep me interested but not some much that I feel overwhelmed and unmotivated.

Ricardo **Starck**

MBA Full Time

Cape Town, South Africa

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What achievement are you proud of?
An award for excellent service in retaining Corporate Customers.

Which 3 books mean the most to you?
1. Bible - gives an account of leaders from beginning of time until now.
2. "Battlefield of the Mind" - speaks to a strong, sound mind.
3. "The purpose driven life" - being focused and living a life of purpose

Thinking back to being a kid and the profession you wanted to be, what was it and did it happen?
Doctor - financial constraints.

What led you to making the decision to do an MBA? Tell us why and how you got here?
It's been a goal on top of my to-do list; and through careful consultation with my wife, felt that this is the year to do so.

How many years of working experience do you have and which industries have you worked in? Tell us about your work experience?
20 years in Telecoms - last 7 years in service management (Corporate Environment)

Why did you select UCT Graduate School of Business? What was it about us that attracted you to us?
The key fact is that UCT GSB is the best university in Africa. An MBA recognised in many continents. Since starting, I love the GSB spirit (operates like a family).

UCT GSB's brand motto is 'A new world needs new ideas' | How are you bringing new ideas to a new world?
Through unpacking current issues and offering solutions that improve business operations & customers alike. Innovation & commitment; being a good listener and responding specifically to existing /new opportunities... the desire to make a difference.

Tell us about your MBA experience thus far?
The journey is exciting - lots of material to broaden one's horizon in the world business sector. Lectures are good, and the atmosphere is great. Definitely intend to finish strong

If you could have a last dinner with any famous person (leader or celeb etc), who would it be and why?
Christiano Ronaldo - a humble guy, great soccer player, an ambassador to the younger generation and also a very successful businessman with many CR7 hotels that results in job creation and contribution towards society.

What change would you want to bring about in the world and why?
The world (people) needs to know that relationships are the most important thing. We are not meant to live life on our own or in isolation. Building good sound relationships are pivotal for the sustainability of the human race.

Lesego **Tladinyane**



Nickname: InvesTlad
MBA Full Time
Johannesburg/Cape Town
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How many years have you been in your industry?
6 years. I'm in Banking (Emerging Markets Derivatives Trading, Treasury and Balance Sheet Optimisation, Fixed Income Primary Dealer).

Where do you work, currently?
Nedbank: in Fixed Income Trading.

What did you aspire to be when you were young?
Nothing specifically. I've just always wanted to be among the best 10 people globally of what I do in an environment where I can constantly experience new things.

Why did you choose the UCT GSB?
Best in Africa! (FT Rankings) a full time program and a great network of partner schools.

How are you changing the world in your own way?
Diversity of Thought. My upbringing, background, experience in emerging markets brings me a unique lens on how the world is and could be.

Which 3 books are your favourite?
1. "The Power of Habit" - Understanding what drives behaviour for self-mastery.
2. "Shoe Dog" - A great entrepreneurial story about grit and to "just do it!"
3. "The Alchemist" - The idea that all individuals should live in the singular pursuit of their individual dreams.

Who do you consider to be your icons or great leaders?
Neo Tladinyane and Ntombi Tladinyane - They've taught me the power of education, compassion, humility and second chances.

How is your MBA experience going so far?
It's overwhelming, but rich in content.

What does the future look like to you?
Inclusive. Equal opportunity for all those who are willing and able. 2. Innovation. The barriers to technology are thinning allowing people in remote spaces to add value to their communities and bring incredible ideas to the world.

If you could have a last dinner with any famous person (leader or celeb etc), who would it be and why?
Nelson Mandela - We get many second hand accounts, but it would be interesting to see what he envisioned, how he feels about where we are, and what he would do if he were in power today.

Steven **Van Rheede**



Nickname: Stevo
MBA Full Time
Cape Town, South Africa
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Why did you decide to do an MBA?
I think for most managers the transition to a management role is tough. I figured the MBA was the best way to sharpen my business acumen and leadership skills.

Why did you choose the UCT GSB?
The GSB offers an holistic understanding of business and the developmental challenges facing Africa. They are specifically focused on values-based leadership and business within the broader socio-economic context.

What ideas are you bringing to the new world?
I hope to take my learnings on values-based leadership and implement them in industry, coaching and mentoring others along the way.

Are you enjoying your MBA experience?
The first few weeks have been really fun. A good mixture of team building activities, classes, presentations, assignments and networking events have set the tone for what should be a challenging and enjoyable year.

Are you a reader? What are your favourite books?
1. "A New Earth" by Eckhart Tolle: This book has helped me understand how my state of consciousness determines how I act in the world and interact with others.
2. "Mindset" by Carol Dweck: In helping me cultivate a growth mindset, this book has changed the way I approach learning and development.
3. "Think & Grow Rich" by Napoleon Hill: This was my first personal development book

What advice would you give to up and coming business people?
Just be yourself and trust your instincts.

On the other hand, what is the worst advice you've ever received and why?
"People are born with a certain talent so find yours and stick to it". I believe you can nurture and cultivate any skill. You just "gotta put in" your 10,000 hours.

What do you see happening in future?
I see Africa taking its place in the world, capitalizing on its people and resources. I am excited to be a part of it.

If you could have a last dinner with anyone, who would you choose?
Bill Gates. It would love to pick his brain on business, leadership and philanthropy.

What change would you want to bring about in the world and why?
I want to inspire those that I lead to become the best version of themselves. I want to contribute in transforming Africa's manufacturing sector as I feel it's a key driver of economic growth in the continent. On a personal level, I want to continuously be a better father, husband, son, brother and friend.


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