



MEDIA STATEMENT

29 August 2022

ECOSA and Investec host a Women in Leadership Breakfast

“I am not comfortable with being comfortable”. This was the resounding message echoed at the Women in Leadership Breakfast hosted by the Engineering Council of South Africa (ECOSA) together with Investec on Friday, 26 August 2022, in Sandton, Johannesburg.

The Breakfast under the theme **“*Courage to Change*”** was held in celebration of women’s month and sought to bring together females from various industries to partake in a dialogue guided by four professional females who have made great strides in the built environment profession and shared on their journey to success including highlights on the challenges encountered.

The four-member panel including ECOSA President Refilwe Buthelezi Pr Eng, Innocentia Mahlangu Pr Eng; a Specialist Project Manager in the mining, metals and infrastructure sector, Ms. Nana Mhlongo: Chief Operations Officer for the Built Environment Council (CBE) and Ms. Prudence Mashalane Head of Client Acquisition Banking at Investec was facilitated by Ms Letisha Maharaj: Head of Commodities and Engineering at Investec.

The stories told by the panel members resembled triumph, perseverance, diligence but more importantly identifying and creating opportunities that would lead one to their desired existence within the professional space.

Addressing the females in attendance, Ms. Refilwe Buthelezi highlighted the importance of females lobbying support and understanding the power of negotiating in boardrooms as well as operating rooms. She further added, “the path to success is not linear, but that one needs to make the moves that will deter you but will get you to where you want to be”.

Echoing the same sentiments Ms. Nana Mhlongo shared on her journey to success which included challenges that have created avenues of opportunities to propel and cultivate a future of excellence, perseverance and ultimately successes.

Both Ms. Innocentia Mahlangu and Ms. Prudence Mashalane spoke on their journeys of being ordinary human beings, given extra ordinary opportunities and roles. Both ladies have held senior positions early in their careers and speaking at the breakfast they emphasised the importance of justifying your existence in the professional space and that gender and ethnicity do not guarantee you a seat at the table but rather your presence and contribution do.

The Breakfast which enabled a networking environment for like-minded individuals concluded with a Q&A session including fundamental matters such as identifying your leadership style, being deliberate about empowering fellow female professionals and embracing the intuitive power that females possess.

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Issued by the Engineering Council of South Africa

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