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Commitment and passion key to success.

Matshepo Makube followed her childhood dream of becoming a successful businesswoman, and at 24 is MD of her own management recruitment company.

After matriculating from Edenvale High School, Makube completed a BA in human resources management at RAU. She then joined human resources consultancy Leonie Fischer & Associates as a receptionist and soon worked her way up to a position of recruitment consultant.

Her determination motivated the company founder, Leonie Fischer, to mentor and coach Makube and equip her with skills to operate her own business.

“I had to learn business skills, people skills and all sorts of things that would help me along the way,” Makube says.

In 2006, Fischer partnered Makube to establish Kgatelopele Recruitment, which focuses on executive search and management recruitment.

Today Makube’s company employees seven staff, three of whom are black youths.

“It hasn’t always been easy being a young black woman in a leadership position. I’ve had to win the trust and respect of my employees. Fortunately, I’ve managed to do this in a way that still allows me to assert myself when necessary.”

Earlier this Makube completed her honours in industrial psychology. “Despite being driven by a hunger for success I have to remind myself what my grandmother taught me: to remain humble. I’m still on learning curve – in this industry, there’s so much to know.

“My message to young South Africans is: follow your dreams. SA is in an exciting phase with government initiatives such as Umsobomvu Youth Fund, Khula Trust and all financial initiatives that help start-up businesses.

Kgatelopele Recruitment is considering offering career guidance to schools. “Working in a career-orientated industry we know what skills are in demand. We should share that kind of information with the youth.”

Her advice to employers is to identify young talent within their companies.

“Develop them into empowerment partners, not only in terms of equity transfer but also in terms of transferring business skills,” Makube says.