

40. Zodumo Maphumulo

Who would have guessed a young girl raised by a single mother from the rural area of uMbumbulu, south-west of Durban, would one day pursue a career path in the male-dominated world of sport television broadcasting?

When I walked through the gates of the Durban University of Technology's City Campus in 2006 to pursue studies in journalism, I never imagined the possibility of one day working for one of South Africa's biggest pay television sport broadcasting companies, Supersport International, a subsidiary of the Multichoice Group. For as long as I can remember, I have always wanted to be a journalist. My interest in writing started taking shape in high school when I contributed as a writer to the weekly newsletter. Thereafter, I joined the school debating team and went on to participate and compete in the KwaZulu-Natal South Coast district level on what was known as the Rotary Daily News Team-Speaking competition. In my final year at high school, I had gained enough confidence to solidify my decision to become a news anchor.

My educational journey has been diverse. In 2005, I was awarded a 'once in a lifetime' opportunity to study towards a National Certificate in Film and Television Production obtained through a learnership with East Coast Media. It was here where I was first introduced to the dynamic world of television broadcasting, and knew I had to study towards a journalism qualification with a special interest in broadcasting.

I have always found the world of broadcast journalism fascinating, fast-paced and unpredictable. One of the requirements in the final year of study for the national diploma at DUT Journalism was to complete a six-month work-integrated learning programme which prepared students for industry. It bridged the gap between the world of academia and the workplace. Like any other student at the time, I was quite anxious about securing the ideal internship opportunity especially because I had opted for a career in television journalism which had limited job opportunities in Durban back then. Driven by anxiety and determination, I managed to secure an internship at Supersport International in Randburg a month before completion of my studies. My life has never been the same again. I credit most of my current career success to the foundations laid by having a journalism qualification. The versatile skills and tools I learnt as a student have allowed me to confidently navigate the work environment and adapt with ease within an ever-changing media platform. This academic choice introduced me to a wide variety of careers that exist within the communication and media industry.

After my 10th anniversary in pay-television, I was nominated by industry peers for the prestigious Mail & Guardian's 200 Young South Africans list. I went on to win in the Film & Media category, selected among 600 applicants across South Africa. I see myself as an all-rounder as the DUT Journalism programme exposed me to a catalogue of choices, such as print, online,

radio and television. During my studies, I explored most of them as career options and went on to pursue my passion.

With a solid 12 years of experience, my career journey has been filled with immense growth opportunities. I have managed to grow from being an intern to a production coordinator for the sport news channel *Blitz*, and then progressing to becoming football production manager for Supersport in respect of both local and international events. I never really imagined that I would make it this far. In my time at Supersport, I have had the opportunity to travel both locally and abroad, and have worked on some of the most prestigious international sporting tournaments and events, including the memorable 2010 FIFA World Cup held in South Africa, FIFA 2017 Confederations Cup, FIFA 2018 Football World Cup in Russia, and, most recently, the African Cup of Nations (Afcon) tournament held in 2019 in Egypt.



In connection with the local football scene, I am passionate about the Premier Soccer League (PSL) famously known as *Super Diski*. I look up to powerhouse female role models such as Durban-born and bred Mato Madlala, head honcho at the PSL and chairperson of the Lamontville Golden Arrows football club.

I'm serious about female representation in the workplace. Women within male-dominated industries have always had to work twice as hard when compared to their male counterparts so as to ensure a place at the boardroom table. Women such as Madlala are a constant reminder that it is possible to make it regardless of who you are and where you come from.

The live television environment can be extremely brutal, the

hours are long, and the job can be demanding and challenging. Passion is the only thing that keeps you going. I enjoy being constantly challenged by new projects, events and tournaments as well as fresh ways of doing things. I further enjoy working with people because as a production manager I'm very much the nucleus of a project so relating well to people is a good skill to possess.

“being at the nucleus of projects, relating well to people is a good skill to possess”

As a mother, wife and student, managing a tight schedule is also another challenge. Education has always been at the forefront of my career journey. I have completed a National

Diploma in Project Management obtained through the Multichoice Academy and KLM Empowered, a Further Education and Training College, and am currently completing my Post-Graduate Diploma in Management Practice with Henley Business School in preparation for my Master of Business Administration studies in Management Practice in 2021. At this point in my career, I'm all about academic growth and staying relevant within the organisation.

Working within the global space of television broadcasting has made the world even more accessible, therefore I also aspire to broaden my experience even further at international sporting federations such as FIFA, CAF or international broadcasters such as Sky Sports, ESPN and Fox Sports. The biggest advantage of working for a company such as Multichoice and Supersport International for more than a decade is that it allows you the opportunity for growth. Multichoice is a multifaceted company with so much opportunity to grow and learn. You are exposed to so many different business models within one space. I'm truly fortunate and immensely grateful to have been employed by such a giant in the world of communications.

Zodumo Maphumulo is a seasoned television production manager at Supersport International where she works in the football department. She is responsible for planning, coordinating and executing all requirements for live football television productions. In 2019, the Mail & Guardian listed her as one of the most influential 200 Young South Africans in the Film & Media category. Zodumo is a strong media and television broadcasting professional with a solid 12 years of experience in the industry. Passionate about female representation, she endeavours to push the glass ceiling even further by ensuring that women are represented well both on screen and in the boardroom.

