

Justice Tootla, managing director of Averda

 By [Sindy Peters](#)

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Justice Tootla was recently named the new managing director of Averda. The Soweto-born South African now leads the company's growth plans in SA through its end-to-end waste management services. Tootla hopes to make a practical contribution to saving the environment for future generations by using technology to help organisations manage their waste responsibly.



Justice Tootla, managing director, Averda

We go behind the mask with Tootla to find out more about his love for the waste sector, his favourite trend right now, and his 'secret' to success.

■ ***Congratulations on your recent appointment as managing director of Averda. Could you briefly explain what your role entails?***

Justice Tootla: In brief, I coordinate a team of talented staff to deliver superior service and delight our customers. I'm also responsible for defining a compelling strategic vision for the company in South Africa, with a focus on building a more sustainable environment and economy.

■ ***What are you working on currently?***

Tootla: I'm still quite new in my post, so I've been busy visiting our facilities across the country, meeting the team, and understanding the advanced technology that we use. We are increasingly focusing on recovering waste wherever possible and working with clients across South Africa's biggest industrial sectors to manage their waste responsibly.



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📌 *What do you love about the waste management sector?*

Tootla: It's such an under-rated industry. Not only is the technology really cutting edge and interesting, but the need for our services is huge. I first became aware of the scale of the challenge when I visited my brother who was working as an independent waste contractor in Tshwane – the volume of waste we produce as a society is overwhelming. We can't continue disposing of it all in landfills forever, we need to find a better way. I've also had the opportunity of experiencing real-time benefits of recycling while travelling in Europe, I know it can be done.

“ Working in the waste management sector, I can make a practical contribution to saving our environment for future generations. ”

📌 *What's your favourite trend in the sector right now?*

Tootla: That there is real potential to use our waste to generate energy, which – done properly – can not only reduce waste in landfill, but also help meet the energy challenges we face in South Africa. I'm a techie at heart so I'm excited about the possibilities for finding value in all forms of waste – at Averda we are already able to turn hazardous liquid wastes into fuel that cement kilns can use in place of coal - and there's a lot of potential to go much further.



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📌 *What excites you most about your career?*

Tootla: I have always wanted to lead a team of people for a good cause, ideally using technology, all of which I am doing here now. We have such a responsibility, our generation, to save the environment for the future.

📌 *Where and when do you have your best ideas?*

Tootla: Probably while I'm driving to work. I have my flask of coffee and some peace and quiet in the car and it's a good time to think.

📌 *What is your 'secret' to success?*

Tootla: Being passionate about what you do, loving what you do. That and feeling that you have a higher cause.

📌 *What were some of the things on your 'vision board' growing up?*

Tootla: Like most South Africans of my generation, Mr Nelson Mandela was my inspiration growing up – he showed me that to become a real leader you need to make sacrifices for future generations.

“ To pay it forward, that's the most important thing. ”

■ ***When you're not busy working, what do you do for fun?***

TooTla: Apart from enjoying time with my family, I play golf and I like mountain biking. I also enjoy doing voluntary work, for example, preparing and distributing food parcels to local communities.



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■ ***What's your favourite meme/gif of all time?***

TooTla: Definitely 'one step at a time', you have to focus on the small bit you can do. As a cyclist, I know that while you first need the vision – to see the mountain ahead of you – in order to actually climb it you need to look down not up and focus on the next metre ahead of you.

■ ***You're president for a day. What's the first thing on your to-do list?***

TooTla: I'd hope to unify the nation towards a better South Africa, to build a unity of all cultures in this country. I do appreciate it might take more than one day – but as I said, we need to take a step at a time!

ABOUT SINDY PETERS

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