

Liesl Williams appointed managing partner of Razor's new Cape Town office

 By [Danette Breitenbach](#)

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Liesl Williams has been appointed managing partner for M&C Saatchi Group's Razor Public Relations new Cape Town office. She joins Razor from Engage BCW in Nairobi where she was strategy partner. She previously led the team at Atmosphere Johannesburg and was deputy managing director of Ogilvy PR.



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■ ***What excites you most about taking on this role? What do you want to achieve in this role?***

Razor is more than an agency, it's a whole amazing culture! I feel privileged to be a part of this incredible team and I am so excited to work with them and with the great clients that they service. My plan is to grow the Cape Town office with the same culture and to be part of the team that builds and grows Razor to even greater heights.

■ ***You have said that the Razor story is very much one of 'the future of PR'. How do you view your role in this?***

Our public relations model is about strategic depth, it's about building narratives that have the power to effect change, it's about being equal partners with our clients and peers and bringing best of breed ideas and even better thinking to the table. Strategy and creativity are my happy place, so I'm hoping to use these strengths in my role at Razor.

■ ***You have worked in Kenya previously. How do you see this assisting to take Razor PR into Africa?***

I will forever be grateful for the opportunity of working and living in Kenya. It was a great learning curve for me, I had to adapt to different ways of working and thinking and even on occasion, different value sets. This has made me a stronger leader, stronger communicator and better at managing changing environments and different cultures – experience that I will definitely use at Razor.

■ ***Having been in the PR industry for many years, with lots of great experience, how have you seen PR change? What is the biggest change in your opinion that is driving the industry?***

My favourite change is that PR is becoming a far more respected discipline with the industry and there is a far greater appreciation for the depth that a strong agency can bring to an organisation. Razor epitomises this change, we aren't the

agency that 'faffs around with press releases", we're the agency that makes positive change happen in a strategic, measured, and measurable way.

🔴 ***Did you always want to be in PR? What did you want to be when you were "little"?***

I sort of 'fell' into PR, which I consider a very fortunate fall indeed! I was one of those people who never felt very sure of what I wanted to do, so I flip-flopped between thinking about being a teacher, a homoeopath, an author, or a vet nurse!



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🔴 ***What do you love most about your career, the industry, and what you do? What drives you to get out of bed in the morning?***

I love people! And the best part of PR is that people are everything. Teams, clients, partners, suppliers – I get to be a part of great people doing great work every day.

🔴 ***What has been your most challenging moment/time in your career?***

I think because I love people so much, the times when there has been a disconnect with my teams, with management or with a client have been challenging for me. The upside of these experiences is that I've learned to make corrections in my approach where necessary and to take challenges as a learning, but I've also had to learn that sometimes you simply need to walk away.

🔴 ***What has been a highlight in your career?***

I think joining Razor is the highlight! However, I'm fortunate that I have had incredible opportunities in my career such as building an agency from scratch in Kenya, working in other regions such as Australia and Asia and most significantly, making connections that have become friends around the world.



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🔴 ***Who or what has had a significant impact on your life?***

I have had the privilege of working with a range of interesting people that have shaped my thinking and mentored me in many ways. However, my child has had the most significant impact on my life. For all the obvious reasons, but primarily because he has taught me the value of work/life balance and making sure that I never get my priorities out of order.

🔴 ***What is something no-one knows about you?***

My first job was milking cows!

🔴 ***If you could quit your job and study something today, what would that be and why?***

I don't want to quit my job! However, I would like to expand my knowledge in the ESG space and study for a qualification in this field.

ABOUT DANETTE BREITENBACH

Danette Breitenbach is a marketing & media editor at Bizcommunity.com. Previously she freelanced in the marketing and media sector, including for Bizcommunity. She was editor and publisher of AdVantage, the publication that served the marketing, media and advertising industry in southern Africa. She has worked extensively in print media, mainly B2B. She has a Masters in Financial Journalism from Wits.

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