

Havas South Africa appoints Human Resources and Transformation Director

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Havas is proud to announce the appointment of Sameeha Muthen as its new Human Resources and Transformation Director. Muthen will be based in Johannesburg, working across the Havas Village, leading with people management, talent development and transformation.



Muthen has been in the advertising space for over nineteen years, with fourteen years' experience in Human Resources and Recruitment. She has a unique perspective in designing and implementing systems and processes that align transformation with business growth and has done so for various marketing and communications practices she has worked with.

Among other functions, Muthen will work closely with Lynn Madeley, CEO of Havas Southern Africa, and newly appointed Chief Creative Officer, John Davenport, in running the Havas Academy, a professional development institution within Havas whose mandate is to empower black women keen on entering the marketing and communications sector.

Madeley said on the appointment, "I've always maintained that businesses, especially marketing and communications agencies, ought to be microcosms of the societies within which they exist, that way they are better poised to understand their clients' audiences. Not only is this good for business but it is also the right thing to do as corporate citizens in South Africa. Now, getting there requires active effort at transformation and Sameeha's role will be to guide Havas through continuous impactful, and sincere change. Her track record speaks for itself and we are excited to have her on board."

Muthen will be part of the leadership team, and her unique perspective on talent management and transformation in South Africa will influence the decisions made within the Havas Village and therefore at the highest level in the business.

Speaking on her appointment, Muthen said, "It is really great to be joining an organization that is sincere in its approach to people management, and transformation. For me it is testament to the values that are espoused by everyone who works here, and that is the fit that drew me to join Havas. I absolutely love that the South African reality of transformation, not just diversity is a leadership-level concern. And that this concern is a priority in a business that is part of a global group is heartening and inspiring."

Upon starting off at the Johannesburg office in January 2019, Muthen stated that real transformation is sincere, and is about continuous quality improvement at every level within the agency. And that quality improvement includes a deliberate move towards diversity that mirrors society. In her experience, she echoed having seen agencies make changes by only recruiting diverse teams at a junior level, and not at senior level, which according to her, does not make business sense.

She describes herself as a mosquito that will be buzzing in the ear of management, should they stray from the objectives-led targets. In her spare time, Muthen dabbles in the kitchen and according to her, gives Gordon Ramsey a run for his money.

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