

Fill the scarce skills gap - career opportunities in the engineering sector

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With South Africa moving towards a knowledge economy and its government spending billions of rands on infrastructure projects, we're seeing strong demand for people with science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) skills and qualifications. From accountants responsible for ensuring the financial health of our companies to engineers solving challenges such as power and water supply, STEM professionals are key to the country's growth.



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South Africa's skills crunch

According to the Engineering Council of South Africa, we have only one engineer for every 3,166 people compared to 227 people per engineer in Brazil and 543 people per engineer in Malaysia. That means choosing a career in engineering means your skills will be in high demand with some of South Africa's top employers—in addition to the intellectual satisfaction this field of work and study has to offer.

So if you have strong marks in physical science and maths, and you're keen on numbers, good at problem-solving, and curious about the world around you, engineering could be your dream job. Here a few potential career paths in the diverse and exciting world of engineering:

Mechanical engineer: Do you love tinkering with machines and gadgets? If so, a career in mechanical engineering might be for you. This discipline is about applying engineering, physics, and materials science to make better mechanical systems.

Electrical engineer: This is all about the science, technology and engineering behind electricity, electronics, and electromagnetism. As an electrical engineer, you might work on components and systems that range from microchips to power station generators.

Civil engineer: A civil engineer focuses on the design and maintenance of roads, bridges, dams, and other infrastructure we use every day.

Chemical engineer: This diverse field encompasses the science of turning raw materials and chemicals into a range of products, as well as the design and operation of plants and equipment used to make industrial chemical products.

Mining engineer: A mining engineer uses science and engineering skills to extract minerals from the earth as safely and efficiently as possible.

To find out more, why not do some research into the many excellent engineering degrees and qualifications on offer from South African universities and universities of technology? Employers like Sasol are eager to recruit and develop STEM professionals and offer bursary programmes for top matric achievers looking to study in these fields.

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