

Omni HR Consulting partners with The Woman and Youth Empowerment Trust

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June 2020 saw [Omni HR](#) formalise its partnership with the [WYE Trust](#), after working in partnership with the organisation since its inception in 2018.

The WYE Trust was constituted with the main directive to help solve the ‘societal problems’ of education and employability of women and youth that have been historically left out of the equation. The trust aims to work in partnership with funders, donors, and Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Schemes to the benefit of the beneficiaries of the trust (Women and Youth) to ensure access to quality education post-school and education for employability.

Solving societal problems and addressing performance gaps

The mandate of the WYE Trust aligns closely to the ethos of Omni. At the heart of the DNA of Omni is the incredible drive to engage on and help solve two key societal problems:

1. quality post-school education, and
2. education for employability.

This informs Omni’s engagement and decision-making philosophy around choosing partnerships that aid its drive to make a significant difference.

At a grassroots level, the company wants to be part of the solution.

“We want to be innovators, disruptive in education in such a way that it leads to a sustainable difference for individuals, organisations, communities and our country and the only way to achieve this is to be part of the value chain solution through collaborative partnerships that have the same drive and ethos – to move towards true empowerment and transformation – the equipping of people,” explains Lize Moldenhauer, managing director of Omni HR Consulting and trustee of The Women and Youth Empowerment Trust.

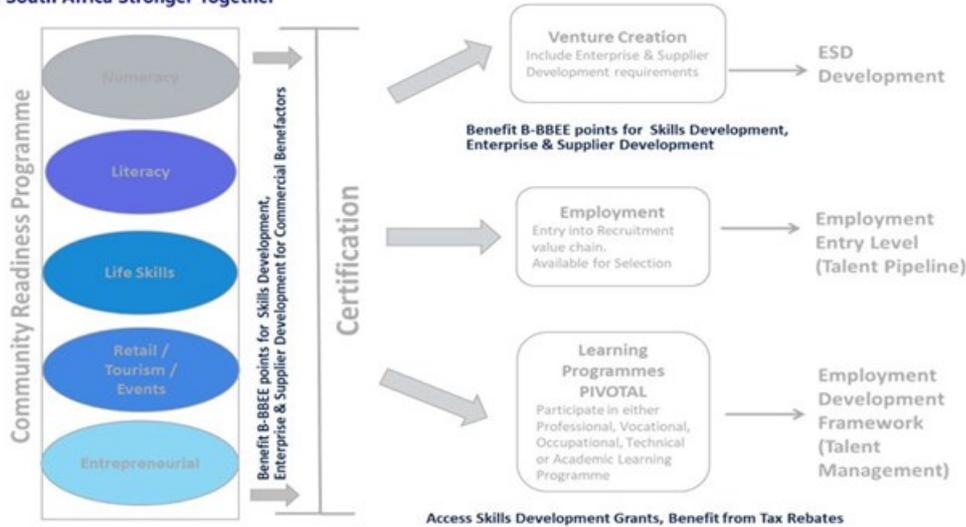
Omni works in consultation with its customers to create solutions to address performance gaps based on their unique value proposition. Everything the company tackles is done through a consultative approach with all objectives, outcomes and tasks underpinned by project management models and protocols with the belief that if each engagement is managed in a consultative manner, you co-create solutions with your clients that will not only address their immediate need but should move the client to receive long term benefit, quantitatively and qualitatively.

“We are here to solve problems, and we need to become masters at co-ordinating the solution-focussed approach to client engagement and taking the pressure off our clients so that they can focus on the strategic mandate of their organisation/business unit,” says Moldenhauer.

The relationship with the WYE Trust is no different. Omni has partnered with the trust in order to provide clients, funders, donors, and Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Schemes with the best solutions. It is not about funding alone; it is about sustainable-funding solutions that lead to real empowerment and transformation for the beneficiaries. An example of a solution grafted specifically to address employability would be the framework specifically crafted for the Work Readiness & Entrepreneurship Programme. Omni welcomes engagement to discuss the workings of the framework in more detail.

WORK READINESS & ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAMME - THE FRAMEWORK

Making South Africa Stronger Together



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Solutions offered by the WYE Trust offers

These solutions are best captured by the engagement philosophy of engagement and collaboration. The WYE Trust works on solution-crafting for the specific needs of the stakeholders, but some of the key solutions that they do work on are:

- Recruitment & Selection of Beneficiaries
- Socio-economic development
- Enterprise and Supplier Development
- Education, Training and Development
- Hospitality Development
- Tourism Development, and
- Research

The WYE Trust's main directive is to help solve the "societal problems" of education and employability of women and youth. The trust's partnership with Omni assists in achieving this goal specifically by working in collaboration with each other. Solutions are engineered from scratch and crafted to address the actual need, and not the needs required to fit into a predefined solution.

At Omni, the role that skills development plays in restoring human dignity, empowering individuals, and developing communities is understood, and the company is committed to offering young South Africans opportunities to become self-sufficient by developing their skills set, advancing their education, and making a difference in their communities. The company's track record speaks for itself and in one such a collaboration, engineered from scratch, Omni delivered an end-to-end, accredited skills-development solution focused on developing relevant, practical work-readiness and entrepreneurial skills through formal training and workplace experiential learning with a workplace host. The Learners who successfully exited the programme could choose to: be employed by the workplace host, or start and run their own business.

The statistical results over the four years were:

 National learner base of 21 698 learners registered on the W&R SETA-accredited work readiness & entrepreneurship skills programme

 17 533 learners successfully completed the work readiness & entrepreneurship skills programme with a "Competent" outcome

 11 673 learners became economically empowered, through absorption into the formal job market by the workplace host at the end of their work readiness journey



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Creating equal opportunity and stakeholder value

Charting a future that allows for equal opportunity and ensuring access to quality education post-school and education for employability are key objectives of the WYE Trust, and Omni is perfectly positioned to support these objectives.

The days where business can only operate with the intent of bottom-line growth and shareholder value are gone. It is about stakeholder value. Everyone has an ethical responsibility to contribute to solutions that solve fundamental societal problems. This might seem like a strong and sweeping statement, but if the inherent DNA of most successful organisations is analysed, it unlocks the foundational construct that most organisations are birthed to solve 'societal problems.' However, what was left out historically of the equation, is the ethical responsibility business have to give back; just focusing on profit leads to scarcity, instead of sustainability.

The WYE Trust has thus chosen to purposefully engage with these two key problems: the access to post-school quality education and education for employability. These societal problems cannot be solved in isolation –collaboration with the entire value chain is needed. A willingness to work with government, other organisations, and society at large is necessary in order to come up with ongoing sustainable solutions and make a significant difference.

The value chain needs to be affected in such a way that the skills transferred are sought after by business, and the skills lead to unlocking entrepreneurial skills that will in turn lead to the growth of emerging small enterprises.

The WYE Trust has done this by ensuring strong alliances are fostered with the value chain through collaborative partnerships, as the objective cannot be met in isolation. Furthermore, Omni has enhanced the trust's digital integration in education. Work is being done to enhance e-learning and technology-initiated learning experiences for stakeholders, while ensuring this is mapped to the legislative context of South Africa, so that customers gain maximum benefit from the engagement.

One of the trust's foundational pillars is, 'Creating standards others are drawn to', and its focus is thus to further enhance excellence in education. This is done by ensuring a contribution to research that will impact, not only decision making, but also help steer and navigate beneficial client engagements. Furthermore, learners are given cutting-edge tools for applied competence within the learning frameworks they engage with.

Moldenhauer further explains, "We will be working on ensuring we have an integrated view of problems and realities. Training provision, education and consulting services to business, must have a deep understanding of the realities clients are facing. We cannot work in isolation and we need to help navigate the treacherous minefield of various legislation, risks and business challenges and limitations. Omni aims to work with clients to form long-term collaborative partnerships, so that

meaningful sustainable results are achieved, and not mere tick-box short-term goals.”

Disruptive education - Applying research to assist with skills development

The core focus areas of the WYE Trust are research and skills development, this is why Omni is such a great fit in terms of applying the research and assisting with skills development.

Having worked exceptionally hard on building a brand that is synonymous with quality, in the context of skills development this can only be achieved if one has an extreme appetite for excellence and a drive to be part of the innovation forerunners through effective research and development. Omni has had the privilege of its research being presented internationally and published - Just to reference one: [North American Business Press Volume 16\(1\) 2019 Leadership, Accountability and Ethics Leadership, Artificial Intelligence and the Need to Redefine Future Skills Development](#) that in turn underpins our skills development framework [2030 Workforce Skills – future proofing your competencies](#).

Omni does nothing in isolation. Research is a critical cornerstone of effective skills development and the company needs to be internationally comparable. That is why one of its key drivers is being disruptive in education locally with a global reach. We need to drive skills development that is of an international standard but with a local awareness and impact. The WYE Trust recognised this as a fundamental game changer for its directives.

Addressing the skills shortage in SA – Why companies need to re-skill

There is a huge skills and skills development shortage in South Africa at the moment, and Omni and the WYE Trust are addressing some of the key areas facing the worst shortages.

According to the World Economic Forum: “Access to skilled workers is already a key factor that sets successful organisations apart from failing ones. In an increasingly data-driven and complex future, this difference will become even more acute. Skills gaps across all industries are poised to grow in the Fourth Industrial Revolution. Rapid advances in artificial intelligence (AI), robotics and other emerging technologies are happening in ever shorter cycles, changing the very nature of the jobs that need to be done - and the skills needed to do them - faster than ever before.”

A short-term solution to the current skills challenge, which is growing at an alarming rate, is acquisition. A premium can be paid for talent, but this strategy inflates scarcity and price of skill. This does not serve the long-term sustainability of the skill nor the workplace. We should also not forget that the skills required today will be obsolete within a much shorter timeframe, as we are in a continuous change cycle that is further compounded by volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity (VUCA).

Considering global and local factors, skills development should be framed within the context of present and future requirements. We cannot operate with a shortsighted survivalist mentality and only develop skills that meet our demands now. We must make space for the more strategic, future-focused skills development strategy.

“Organisations’ have to realise that investing in their workforce to re-skill is non-negotiable. We cannot continue a skills acquisition pathway – we need to develop the skills we need. We need to participate in the value chain of skills development to enable industry sustainability, not only ensuring organisational sustainability. Tapping into collaboration across the value chain is important. We need to work with each other. Organisations and skills development partners and policymakers need to engage to ensure skills development strategies align to the increasing demand of future skills. One could say we need to all work toward a culture of lifelong learning!” Moldenhauer declares.

The current Skills Development Era requires two unique skills-development pathways:

- One focused on the skills required for the current context, and
- the other totally future-focused.

The Skills Development Strategy is therefore no longer a one-dimensional or reactive one, it requires a broad contextual understanding of global challenges, local implication, and individual application. Organisations need to be visionary, aspirational and contextual, and then align this thinking to the individuals' (employee/learner) unique circumstances.

[The Technical Report for the 2020 Critical Skills List](#) is one of the research documents together with the [National Development Plan](#) Omni uses to help formulate strategies to serve the broader South African market linked to skills shortages. The company works in partnership with its clients to formulate skills-development strategies that speak to their unique skills-shortage needs. National skill needs directly impact skills development, and only through business development and talent management within the necessary sectors of the economy is it possible to achieve effective skills planning with stakeholders to address the needs.

Advice for women and youth aspiring to be great business leaders

"It is amazing that when we frame 'great business leaders' our natural first response would be a Silicon Valley success, but I can tell you from personal experience that business success is more real and relatable when we look at the great role models we have in society. Individuals that have risen above their circumstances and have worked towards a living to survive and be better than they were the day before," Moldenhauer explains.

Greatness is not achieved by 'overnight success'. There is no such thing. It requires hard work, tenacity, perseverance, and grit – to name a few. It is the self-discipline you have daily when everyone else is sleeping, partying, or just doing what they 'feel' like doing. Who wants to work 16-hour days? Only people that have a determination to achieve their dreams. So, find people who inspire you, who challenge you. Find a mentor! And if you fail – which you will – fail forward. Learn and move on, that is how we get to our goals, aspirations, and dreams. And don't let anyone tell you: "You can't!" Because the saying is true: if you believe you can't, or if you believe you can - either way, you are correct.

For more details contact: lize@thewyetrust.org

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