

# Nomsa Nteleko - a story of success



By [Evan-Lee Courie](#)

16 Aug 2018

Nomsa Nteleko, co-founder and managing director of OS Holdings, is a ground-breaking woman, who is not only recognised in South Africa but forms part of a global network of women recognised in their respective fields, who share their stories and aim to make a difference by inspiring tomorrow's female leaders.



Nomsa Nteleko, co-founder and managing director of OS Holdings

Nteleko has more than 11 years' experience in the industry, has worked for Sage Pastel for five years and has been running OS Holdings for several years. She was one of the people who started the Sage Public Sector department and played a key role in working with the development team at SAGE in ensuring that Sage Evolution is fit for a purpose in the public sector space.

Her success stems from an entrepreneurship programme that she participated in - Raizcorp's Acumen Entrepreneurship programme, which allows entrepreneurs access to the various forms of business support offered by Raizcorp, such as back-office support, entrepreneurial skills training, access to markets, access to business specialists and access to infrastructure.

## From the beginning...

Raizcorp enables budding entrepreneurs to develop the practical and achievable strategies that will bring to life the vision they have for their businesses and the ultimate aim is to contribute to the creation of a sturdy culture of small- and medium-sized entrepreneurs in South Africa and to develop the knowledge, skills and capabilities of these entrepreneurs.

The Acumen Entrepreneurship programme has helped Nteleko in ensuring that she has sufficient knowledge of internal processes to run OS Holdings efficiently. It took out the lonesome journey of entrepreneurship and helped her view her business from an investor point of view.

Nteleko's objective is ensuring that OS Holdings becomes one of the major and recognised players in the industry. She believes in playing an integral part in growing the South African economy through empowering young minds and entrepreneurs. She strongly believes that alleviation of poverty and removing mediocre thinking in our generation and generations after us lies in our hands.

This [Women's Month](#), she shares her story of success.

### ▣ **Could you describe a typical day in your job?**

My typical day is filled with meetings, be it with a current customer discussing growth strategies, prospective customers pitching our solutions or my team discussing the performance of various departments, and at times I would be looking at the challenges that need solutions, both internal and external.

### ▣ **What did you want to be when you grew up?**

Growing up, and when I was in school, I really wanted to pursue medicine as a career.

### ▣ **How did you get into tech?**

After I matriculated, I couldn't afford to study. I volunteered to work for a GP in my township while I tried to find funding to go to university. He introduced me to his accounts department which is where I had my first encounter with a laptop and accounting.

I knew nothing about computers but, as I learned more, I fell in love with them. At that point, I decided that medicine wasn't for me. Around two years later, I started working for a company that used Sage accounting software, then later for a Sage partner.

I decided to leave Sage in 2012 and start OS Holdings. I wanted to offer integrated, easy-to-use solutions that really provided value, and for which I could provide guidance and support. At that time I saw that women weren't big players in the industry and I felt there was a big opportunity to build a black, female-owned company that really excelled and added value in this space.

## **The journey...**

One of biggest challenges, in the beginning, was that people felt they couldn't trust me with their businesses as I didn't have the experience (we only got our first job six months after we started). I first heard about Raizcorp when a close friend sent me a link to one of their programmes. I applied and was accepted, and started an 18-month programme in 2015.

Raizcorp helped me look at our finances, how well we were doing and how we could grow. They gave me an objective. Another important thing Raizcorp taught me is to look at myself as a person. When you're so focused on your business, you can easily lose focus on yourself ... You need to realise that if you are broken, your business will suffer.

Also, being in a space with other entrepreneurs makes you realise that you're not a nutcase! Interacting and networking with people on a similar journey was awesome. It really is a motivating space. Just by walking through the gates, you feel different because you know you're in a space where you're understood. It's like therapy for entrepreneurs.

---



## #WomensMonth: An entrepreneur with a lot of heart and sole

Nicci Botha 13 Aug 2018



When I joined the programme, my turnover was about R6m. A year later it had grown to R9m and the following year to R18m. During my time at Raizcorp, we created two new departments: a training department and an X3 department (which is a tier-one solution for bigger clients). We also started an internship programme. In terms of job creation, we grew from 13 staff members to 43 last year.

“ We have also developed our own performance and budget management system for local government to assist in measuring and monitoring service delivery, and are now working towards helping municipalities improve their relationships with citizens by building exciting new service-delivery tools. ”

### ❏ **What was the best advice anyone ever gave you?**

"Take the emotion out of it" from Keith Gould, at the time he was the CFO at Sage, this was the hardest advice because I was literally in tears at the time of the advice, but what I learned was that it's hard for women to be heard as leaders in our industry, so if you get emotional about things you get easily dismissed so in all your assertions you need to motivate with facts, that's how you earn your respect.

### ❏ **What advice do you have for the future generation of women wanting to get into the tech space?**

Don't try to be a man, embrace being a woman as it comes with great wisdom and intuition.

Be a subject matter expert and trust your judgement, continue to learn so that you are always on top of your game

### ❏ **Who or what is your biggest motivation?**

My son, my father and my environment. My son because I had him at 16 so I knew that I needed not only to provide for him but be a good example. My father because he gave me wings to fly, he had great confidence and belief in me. I grew up in Sebokeng, somehow I never felt I belonged, so I needed to succeed in order to get myself out of it.

### ❏ **Are South African women getting enough of a chance to shine in the tech industry?**

I think South Africa is doing its best, but the answer lies within our women, they don't need permission from anyone to impact the industry, they must just do so by excelling in their respective industries. [InspiringFiftySA](#) is a great example of South Africa trying to showcase the talent of women in the industry, so we must be found ready for such opportunities.

“ Women are known to build, lead and inspire and we must just do exactly that. We must go for the opportunities before us, we need get our voice heard, we have it in us. ”

### ❏ **How do you feel about being named one of the 2018 #InspiringFiftySA Winners?**

Firstly, I am grateful for being nominated. Initially, I didn't know what it really meant. Standing on the same stage with such exceptional women humbled and inspired me, women who are ground-breakers changing the status quo of STEM and ICT. I am truly honoured, and I motivated to better my own space but mostly encourage and empower young women in our industry.



## #InspiringFiftySA: Cocreating a brighter female tech future

Leigh Andrews 9 Aug 2018



### ❏ **As a female business leader, what is the least and most exciting aspect of your day?**

The least exciting is when I realise I can't change a mindset of a person who doesn't realise their true potential and taking the opportunities before them for granted. The most exciting is when I get to see growth in my people, and of course, clinching that deal!

### 🔴 **Women are considered to be naturals at problem-solving. Why do you think this is perfect for the tech industry?**

“ Technology is the answer to many problems we face in our country, be it healthcare, local government, tourism, education, manufacturing etc. This needs innovators to find solutions for such problems. We have big data in all these respective industries, with technology this data can be manipulated to help with intelligent decisions. The business of today is fast-paced and information should be readily available at the fingertips of the decision makers, that is where we could come in to provide solutions, however, our opportunities are endless. ”

### 🔴 **Could you list a few, if any, specific challenges females face in this industry?**

- Many tech companies don't like to employ women because they fall pregnant and PMS.
- Subconsciously, our male counterparts refuse to see us as equals, somehow we have to continuously prove ourselves in order to be taken seriously. It doesn't help when you are beautiful.
- Even our fellow women in leadership find it difficult to do business with us - they prefer males.

### 🔴 **What is your advice for overcoming these challenges?**

“ Be so good at what you do that you end up writing the rule book. Continue kicking the doors open if that's what it takes. Stand your ground, believe in your purpose and pursue it diligently. ”

### 🔴 **What trends do you predict in tech in the coming years?**

The gig economy is the biggest trend I am looking forward to, this means the industry will have exceptional subject matter experts and tech companies that are always innovating. We are already in the era of machine learning and artificial intelligence (AI) so this means you need to position yourself as an innovator instead of the consumer of technology.

## ABOUT EVAN-LEE COURIE

Group Editor: Retail and Lifestyle

- Q&A: Mc Mann talks SingularityU SA Online Summit 2020 - 6 Oct 2020
- #HumanTraffickingAwareness: Do you know your child's exact location? - 15 Sep 2020
- #WomensMonth: 'Women can own powerful leadership roles' says Charmaine Houvet - 28 Aug 2020
- #WomensMonth: Karen Nadasen provides insights to how PayU South Africa is empowering women - 28 Aug 2020
- #WomensMonth: Petunia Ludick, "You are powerful and deserving of every opportunity" - 27 Aug 2020

[View my profile and articles...](#)

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>