

David Ashdown, CEO of Vuka Group

 By [Karabo Ledwaba](#)

6 Apr 2023

This week we speak to David Ashdown, the chief executive officer at Vuka Group. His company is currently working on the Ecom Africa 2023 and Enlit Africa events.



David Ashdown, CEO Vuka Group. Source: Supplied.

What do you enjoy most about your industry?

So much! I am very fortunate to own an organisation operating in the events and media space. The energy from our teams,

the relationships with clients and stakeholders from the industries we serve, engagement with incredible people from across sectors and diverse backgrounds, the learning, the chaos, the sense of fulfilment in delivering a world-class project, making a difference, and creating connections between people and organisations. I take a lot from the industry we operate in.

▣ ***What is a typical workday for you?***

A sunrise dog walk around Woodstock every day, that's my time and is so important to me. Breakfast with my young family and then school runs. My day can then be in the office or remotely, maybe travelling into Africa. I exercise a few times each week, mostly trail running on our fabulous mountain. I am trialling something new this year, meeting-free Tuesdays, and I am finding it a productive time to complete items on my personal to-do list and to focus on deeper-dive projects in Vuka Group, it's also a window of opportunity for a quick surf against the backdrop of my busy life.

▣ ***Describe your career so far.***

During 2021 during the Covid-19 pandemic I completed my management buyout of the events and media agency I ran for a UK owner, we had not run an event since 2019 and no guarantees to run events in the near future. With the commitment of the leadership team we took the risk and Vuka Group was launched.

We connect people and organisations to information and each other through professionally created in-person conferences and exhibitions, supported by digital and print media. We create influence for organisations in the energy, mining, mobility, retail and green economy sectors across Africa.

▣ ***What are you currently streaming/reading/listening to?***

Streaming: *The Last of Us*

Reading: *A Life on the Planet* by David Attenborough

Listening: The Lumineers – Brightside album

▣ ***What's your favourite gif?***

Funny, it's a family joke. I hate them all.

▣ ***Who inspires you?***

I take inspiration from the stories of many more amazing people than me, but I am inspired by my parents and family.

▣ ***What did you want to be when you were a child?***

If I was not leading Vuka Group I would be a professional yacht skipper which was always a childhood dream, along with

F1 driver, astronaut, and pro football player, all the usual roles.

■ ***Give three pieces of advice for young people waiting to enter this industry***

- Keep learning every day and challenge yourself
- Understand that the work you do today will be rewarded in the future not today
- Dream big and believe – the universe has a way to provide

ABOUT KARABO LEDWABA

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