

“Update yourself constantly” - Mickal

Think if they had the phrase “ball of energy” in the dictionary they would have to put a picture of this lady in along with it. Energetic does not describe her, but for the line of work she’s in, that’s not a bad thing at all.

Mickal Tjituka is the executive publisher of Kashona Publishing, a company which is quite young but has been doing a brilliant job during it’s short existence.

While working for the Joint Consultative Council which is a network of service providers to micro, small and medium enterprises (SME) in Namibia, Mickal says, she realised something was missing in the SME sector. She saw noticed a lot of SME owners would constantly call JCC and enquire about all types of things to do with their business, and she decided to give them a publication that can answer all their questions.

“Working at JCC gave me a lot of knowledge, we did a lot of publications for our members which included SME, SME service providers like banks and consultancy companies and donors,” she says. After JCC she worked for Team Namibia, where she picked up even more knowledge and know-how. “As an entrepreneur you first observe,” she adds. A few freelancing jobs followed, but Mickal could not decide on what direction to go into. “I knew I loved working with SME but didn’t know what I could do.”

“I just woke up one night and the idea hit me,” she says. Since then it’s been all systems go, and the first edition of the SME bulletin saw the light in April 2007.

Even though we are focusing on her job as publisher in this article, Mickal is actually a bit more than that: “I do everything myself, except the graphic design.” Yes, you read right – Mickal plans the publication, does the marketing, writes her own stories and takes

her own pictures, because “I want quality,” she says. And what better way to get quality than doing it yourself? The publication touches on a topic at a time, like starting your own business, business banking and more.

What a publisher would normally do is two things – prepare and issue books, journals or music for sale, or they do graphics, which could mean designing and providing a corporate image for

businesses through business cards, a logo, brochures, letterheads and more.

In order to do this, Mickal spends a lot of time with clients to find out what exactly they want. “You have to be a people’s person if you’re in this career,” Mickal recommends. Other personality traits that are required are good communication and interpersonal skills, and it is also a good thing if you are patient. “You have to realise that your clients are the backbone of your business, so treat them well! You must also have passion for what you are doing, clients must be able to see it in you.”

And if you are not somebody who has multiple interests, forget about going into publishing. “If a client comes to you and says he would like to give out a publication about agriculture you can’t say “Sorry, I don’t know anything about that”,” says Mickal, “you have to update yourself constantly and know what’s going on in a variety of industries.” Go through other publications constantly to see what they are up to to add value to your publications, she adds. Perseverance and ambition are also plus points in this industry.

Mickal did not study publishing but says that good directions to study in are public relations, sales and marketing and of course media and publishing, courses that can all be done at the University of Namibia and the Polytechnic of Namibia.

What she finds most interesting about the job is the creativity. “You have to be able to come up with a lot of ideas. If somebody comes to you and they want a logo for instance you have to be able to give them a few examples they can choose from.”

The more difficult and challenging side of the job is when a client is not happy with what you have produced and tells you “Do it again!”. Sitting with the clients beforehand is a good idea therefore, talking to them about what they like and so on.

So is going into publishing a good career choice? “Definitely,” Mickal says, “because every company needs an image.”



DIAL UP... Keeping in touch with clients is vital

The facts

Mickal Tjituka

Hobbies: Reading, writing and socialising

Favourite colour: Blue

Favourite type of music: Old school

Describe yourself in 3 words: Hardworking, ambitious and passionate



DIY... Mickal does everything, except the graphic design of the publication herself because she says she wants quality



HARD WORKING... Mickal Tjituka is the managing publisher of Kashona Publishing