

Duke's Loops Madikane on the importance of utilising young talent in the marketing industry

By  [Juanita Pienaar](#)

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Born and raised in the Langa township in Cape Town, Lupumlo "Loops" Madikane studied marketing at Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT) and joined Woolworths on an internship in 2013.



Lupumlo "Loops" Madikane, head of traffic at Duke. Image supplied.

Madikane was retained by Woolworths where he honed his skills in traffic (whilst continuing his studies part-time) before being snapped up by Duke in 2018. At Duke, he is not only in charge of traffic, but he's also an extremely talented sportsman and heads up the Duke soccer team – which won the Division 1 league for the third consecutive season this year.

Dominique Krause, strategic communications consultant at Duke, says: “Obviously, traffic is not typically the most popular area of focus for young talent, but Loops’s passion and exceptional talent landed him this key role at Duke.”

We caught up with Madikane who tells us more about the challenges young people face working in the marketing industry, how they can overcome it and what inspires/motivates him most.

■ ***Please tell us more about your role at Duke and what it entails.***

I handle traffic at Duke – each and every job in the agency is my responsibility. I, basically, plan resources and manage the creative team’s time and workflow. I allocate work based on the availability and best suitable creative, depending on the nature of the job. I also need to make sure we have enough creatives to do the work and that we consistently meet our deadlines.

■ ***What do you think you bring to this role and to Duke?***

Traffic managers are often considered to be rigid and process-driven. I’m always willing to try new and efficient ways of doing things, whilst still sticking to processes and, in this way, bring about some flexibility in how we do things. I aim to bring peace of mind to everyone so they can focus on what they do best – knowing that everything else is taken care of.

There is something we refer to as a “stress transfer”, which basically means if one person stresses, they rub it off onto the other. I’m very relaxed and composed so even if I’m panicking, I always try to not make it apparent so that my team doesn’t panic too and start making unnecessary errors.

■ ***What motivates/inspires you?***

Having grown up in a township and having experienced what happens if you don't succeed, one of the things that motivate me the most is my poor background and upbringing. It is a constant reminder of why I have to make it, who I'm doing it for and why I have to keep moving.

My friends inspire me too, mostly creatives who come from similar backgrounds. They make me realise that I'm not doing it alone as we always share our daily struggles and accomplishments. Straight out of varsity, I was also fortunate enough to be mentored by two of the best traffic execs in the industry, who moulded me into who I am today – I've always looked up to them.

■ ***What are some of the major challenges you think young people face, specifically working in the marketing industry?***

Young people in our industry can often be undervalued or underestimated. Whilst I do believe experience in any field is fundamentally important, we now live in a world where information is easily accessible and, therefore, it takes a little less time to master skills.



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Young people are quick to learn, and with the right mentors and support, the number of years we have behind us is no longer a massive factor in whether or not we can do the job – it's more the knowledge, skill and willingness to learn.

Young professionals in marketing are mostly undervalued on the basis of the number of years they have been working in the industry. Knowing this, I'm extremely grateful to Duke for giving me this massive responsibility at such a young age and for trusting me to do the job.

■ ***Any solutions you can offer?***

As a young person in marketing, you need to seek an environment in which you feel happy, valued and appreciated. That's precisely the place where you'll be able to grow and become better at your chosen career.

■ ***What do you love most about your job?***

I love the creative work I get to see from my very talented creative team on a daily basis and knowing that I contributed towards bringing it to life. I would say I'm a people's person, so engaging with different individuals and learning their traits and how to best work with them gives me great satisfaction. Knowing that I'm given the full support and trust to get things done gives me the confidence I need to keep on improving.

■ ***Where do you see yourself in five years?***

With Duke growing as far as it is, in the next five years I see myself as head of traffic, running my own department or team and, hopefully, inspiring others.

Connect with Madikane on LinkedIn by clicking [here](#) and visit the Duke website [here](#) for news and updates.

ABOUT JUANITA PIENAAR

Juanita is the editor of the marketing & media portal on the Bizcommunity website. She is also a contributing writer.

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