

The brand Thuli Madonsela

 By [Jimmy Tembo](#)

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Thuli Madonsela was recently announced as 'one of the five extraordinary women who are responding to leadership challenges of the 21st century' by the Tällberg Foundation in Stockholm, Sweden. The ripple effect of this is that both international and local businesses will have confidence in the chapter nine institutions and may consequently continue to invest in the country. Other than that, she has inspired many women (and men) to execute their corporate roles with a 'yes I can too' attitude.

Despite her being a 'thorn' to some, a thread of thought makes us remember that personal branding precedes corporate or product branding. Take for instance the 'brand Donald Trump' and the negativity that it has attracted. After more than 16 months of railing against women, Latinos, African-Americans, Muslims, the disabled and other groups — and the recent emergence of a video showing him boasting about sexual assault and the subsequent harassment allegations against him — the GOP nominee's eponymously branded properties and products are receiving notably less business.

I have never personally met Madonsela and this factor qualifies the article more as I write based on the consumed perception that was created. Here are some of the things we could learn about personal branding from her, particularly because many are the youth who think that personal branding is limited to how well you dress. This is equivalent to thinking that branding your company only goes as far as your logo design. As important as this is, it is only but one facet of the brand circle.

- The road to success is always under construction. You must be on a consistent journey of acquiring as much knowledge and current industry trends as you can.
- Never suffer from an identity crisis. Let people who consume the brand know you for that particular trade. Invest in your development and master your trade in such a way that people will have no choice but to think of you first before anybody else should a need for your service arise.

- Every successful person has an element of stubbornness in them, and as much as listening and learning from others is important in terms of character, belief in what you do has to start with you before it can be extended to others. The lack thereof will only result in you doing as the winds suggest.

- Nothing is as everlasting as being virtuous — always aspire to speak the truth.

- Always strive to be a good story teller! Anyone who has listened to Madonsela will attest to her exceptional ability to effectively articulate herself when communicating. I come from a hogwash school of thought that perceived speaking loudly and fast as a measure of somewhat 'intelligence'. Always remember that you speak to be understood.

- Who would forget the elegant Gert-Johan Coetzee masterpieces that Madonsela rocks on special occasions? But more importantly is the fact that it spoke to her personality. Therefore, dress according to your industry or as the adage says, 'according to how you want to be addressed'.

Thuli Madonsela is undeniably a brand to be remembered — her contribution to the public protector's office has seen society benefit to a much greater degree. I hope that your pursuit to developing your brand will equally benefit those who are within your circumference, for the brand you is incomplete if it does not inspire others.

ABOUT JIMMY TEMBO

Jimmy Tembo is the co-founder of Birdie Media, a marketing company that focuses on campaign marketing in the Mpumalanga area. At a personal level, he consults for franchises and non-franchise businesses. "We have started to see the backside of businesses that believed in national or global demographics, businesses that will excel tomorrow are those who listen to their particular local market" Jimmy Tembo. jimmy@birdiebiz.co.za

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