

# Women in IT

Issued by [Rosebank College](#)

16 Sep 2020

Diversity is vital in the workplace. It has various benefits for both the individual and the organisation. If you are looking to go into the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) sector, here are some tips to help you do so successfully. It is essential to do your research and choose a qualification that suits your plans and abilities. Information Technology (IT) has long been a career that is popular among males, we have, however, seen a slight change - with more and more females studying towards a qualification in this sector.



A study by Women in Tech ZA found that only 23% of tech jobs are held by women in South Africa – out of the 236,000 ICT roles. We at IIE Rosebank College believe more and more women should enter this dynamic sector. We have also found that IIE graduates with an IIE IT qualification find employment quickly.

We spoke to Lunga Nkambule, a Senior ICT Support Technician employed at IIE Rosebank College in Port Elizabeth to provide some words of wisdom to young women wanting to pursue a career in IT.

## Why did you choose to go into IT?

IT is a diverse field that engages the mind, offers opportunities to learn continuously, and I love the way technology enhances and improves the lives of individuals and businesses alike - that's what intrigued me. I love technology and the many opportunities and benefits it brings with it. I believe that following your passion ultimately leads to loving what you do – so I followed my passion.

## What does a day in the life of an IT professional look like?

My day involves daily server checks, reporting, and attending to student and staff IT queries. It is essential to provide feedback to the business' stakeholders on how the technology is running and suggest any improvements. My role is exciting as I engage with different people, and I get to make a difference and improve their day - this makes each day worthwhile.

## What challenges do you face in your job?

Each day is different; there are always unexpected situations. Technology can throw curve balls at times, as an IT professional, you need to think on your feet and act accordingly. I deal with challenges calmly as I understand the dynamic nature of the industry, and I can adapt quickly – adapting and agility are some of my strengths. I embrace each day and grow from every situation.

## How do you keep yourself relevant as IT is forever changing?

I love learning, and I am inquisitive, so I believe I am in the right industry. To keep relevant and improve my troubleshooting skills, I use YouTube, StackOverflow and SpiceWorks. No woman is an island, to stay motivated, I consult colleagues and other IT professionals. I believe in learning and growing together.

## Do you have women who work in IT that you look up to?

I look up to both men and women, as I believe we each bring something unique to the table. I look up to most of my colleagues, Zakes Matshiakgotshi and Bekezela Mhlanga because of their humility, their willingness to assist and the path they have walked to hold their senior positions in their respective brands.

## What advice would you give a young lady wanting to study IT?

Develop a thick skin and find something in the IT field that you enjoy and focus on mastering your craft and staying relevant. Be comfortable with the idea of not knowing everything and have a desire and curiosity to find solutions outside of the box. Never break yourself down for situations you cannot control, instead remain calm, positive and open-minded.

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