

From the desk of the CEO – AM Mahomed

Our mentorship programme

Printing SA is pleased to announce the successful completion of our first-ever dedicated mentorship programme for the print value chain. It was conceptualised some three years ago, and 57 mentees have emerged after a one year long programme.

The National Mentorship Movement (NMM) is a renowned NPO having worked successfully in changing the lives of over 1500 mentees across industries that have benefitted through their various initiatives. They facilitate the growth of others, allowing for prosperity to thrive once a mentor is connected to a mentee, allowing for both parties to reciprocate their knowledge, experience and wisdom. Their tag line is “**the Power of 2**”, and we have witnessed the effect of this phenomenal power of 2 when we hear the life changing impact this project has had on our mentees.

When we heard about the amazing programmes NMM have conducted, we saw a perfect fit for the efforts we as Printing SA were making in nurturing the broader skill sets of unemployed youth who have the drive and ambition to make print a career for themselves, and SMMEs in our sector wanting to move a gear higher, learning from senior and experienced stalwarts from our industry.

This programme had a mix of mentors both from our industry and from the NMMs database. From our side we acknowledge the role played by senior executives **like Patrick Lacy, Barry Lynch, Geoff Warren and Richard Downes**. A total of 8 individual mentors and 8 group mentors facilitated the various sessions.

From the total of 57 mentees on this programme, 28 were directly from the Printing sector, comprising of 20 from the unemployed youth category, and 8 from the SMME sector

A further 29 were from the youth development organization called Activate Change Drivers. These youth were recruited directly from a cohort trained in entrepreneurship, with an interest or investment in the Printing industry, as per the mentorship programme requirements.

Due to the programme starting during the Covid-19 pandemic, the entire programme was conducted online. Mentors and mentees would meet in their groups on Teams or Zoom once a month for about an hour and a half. Many of the mentees and mentors had a WhatsApp group where they would engage between their monthly meetings. The programme ran for 12 months, from August 2021 to August 2022.

Our gratitude for the successful culmination of this unique project goes to the following:

- The **FP&M seta** who saw the value in this project, as it aligned to their key priorities of youth and entrepreneurship development and sponsored this project in totality.
- The **NMM** who hosted the programme on their platform and provided the necessary logistical and other support.
- The **mentors** for their valuable time spent in voluntarily giving off of their skill and expertise and sharing their valuable life lessons learnt.
- The **mentees** who travelled the journey, participating actively, engaging with their mentors, and learning valuable lessons. They are now empowered to implement the knowledge and skills learnt and grow their businesses to the next level.