

# 'Why quitting my job was the best thing that happened to me'

By [Juanita Pienaar](#)

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Bogosi Motshegwa is a brand strategist/strategic planner who has worked for some of the biggest agencies and agency networks in South Africa. He is now pursuing his career as an entrepreneur.



Bogosi Motshegwa, founder of Thinkerneur and co-owner of African Strategy Kollektive. © [Disko Modirapula](#) from AmaCreativesAfrica.

Founder of Thinkerneur, Motshegwa left his permanent post to pursue his career as an entrepreneur in advertising. He explains: "I am affectionately referred to as a freelancer, but I don't like the term, because in terms of what I am doing, 'freelancer' seems to dilute what it is that I actually do."



#BehindtheSelfie with... Bogosi Motshegwa

Leigh Andrews 9 May 2018



Freelancers are meant to come in, execute on a job, and then leave, but what I do is much more intimate and involved. I like to have a deeper and more engaged partnership with agencies or clients."

Motshegwa says he is a brand consultant who help brands and clients realise their truest potential. He is passionate about strategy, ensuring that brands produce the best possible thinking for their brands, and also helps brands clarify their services and offerings to ensure the consistent competitive energy required in this era of sameness and technological advancements.



Once you've decided what business you are in, now build a brand (Part 1)

Bogosi Motshegwa 28 Jun 2018



## The ultimate attention

He explains that the purpose of his company is multi-fold. “I strive to help clients find opportunities for growth. I help clients maintain consistency in what I call 'brand harvesting'.

Brand advertising is the process through which a brand continuously interrogates itself, the marketplace and its customer or target market to find untapped opportunities. Building a brand is a full-time job, and no one brand is perfect, and that by defaults provides opportunities to improve and to do things better and differently.”

He doesn't think that brands or clients have enough opportunity to think about their brands. “They get bogged down by the need to deliver on immediate goals, which are mostly short-term, and therefore don't have the luxury to think bigger and for the future.”

“ I don't believe that advertising agencies offer brands the desired need, which is what I call, the 'ultimate attention'. Building a brand is like raising a baby, one cannot afford to blink or lose focus. It is serious business. Ad agencies offer required services, but what I do is like tutoring. Children go to school to get an education, but those who supplement their school learning with tutoring tend to perform better. ”

Motshegwa also co-own a freelance strategy agency called African Strategy Collective (ASK), together with [Lebogang Mukansi](#) who has experience in Kenya and Nigeria. “The purpose of ASK is to bring craft into strategy. We want to ensure that strategy inside ad agencies is finessed and given the credence it deserves.

If an ad agency acquires our services, no creative brainstorming will commence until we have presented our strategy. This process that we employ, of creative not doing anything until we have done the thinking, really works – we have proof,” he explains.



A conversation about strategy, ad agencies and the role of strategists inside ad agencies

Bogosi Motshegwa 22 Aug 2018



Here Motshegwa elaborates more on entrepreneurship, his view of how the industry can improve and shares some tips on how to become a successful entrepreneur.

#### ■ **What are some of the challenges you've faced in getting your business off the ground?**

My business didn't require a lot of capital or resources, just two things mainly: a laptop and Wi-Fi. So luckily, my girlfriend had a laptop, and therefore all I needed was a consistent internet connection. But since I've started, below are some of the challenges I've faced:

- Locking down a deal with a client – some clients are interested in the offering and the thinking that I bring, but because they are already locked into relationships with agencies, they cannot commit to my offerings. Which is

unfortunate, because they lose out on getting a different and refreshed perspective on how they could build their brands better

- People not willing to pay the asking price – businesses are not willing to pay the costs associated with working with me. So I end up declining, or the clients decline based on cost. Part of the problem is that people don't actually value brand strategy. But I don't decline, I decline with a discerning point of view. Sometimes when clients want to pay you less, it's not that they can't afford you, they are just taking advantage so that they can get the most for less.
- Access to the internet – I often run out data and have to find ways to get connected. This one time, I ran out of data in the middle of a project and I had to hop from one restaurant to the next, just ordering juice. And then magic happened: I found a mall that offers free Wi-Fi. I'm not sure how much of it is offered, but I've never reached a cap or limit!



### Brand building is a process of creating magic

Bogosi Motshegwa 4 Oct 2017



#### What are the best and worst things about being an entrepreneur?

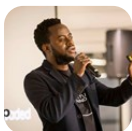
I think to say an experience is worst or best all depends on perspective. There are given occurrences that come with being an entrepreneur, these are things that are inevitable and will happen along the way.

Depending on your mindset, one could either interpret it as the worst or expected OR best or okay. What I mean is, you will get a 'no', a disappointment, like people will decline meetings last minute, and you will go a long time without hearing a yes. Those are expected, but if your mindset is not fit or ready, you may interpret these as the worst thing.

I wouldn't say the negative things that happen are the worst, but one can use them as fuel to do better and to be hungrier. The worst things can help you become a better and more efficient entrepreneur.

The best thing that has happened to me was quitting my job and starting my own business. It is the most freeing and deliberate feeling ever. It is exhilarating. The best thing is being in control of one's time and being able to play around with my diary to make sure that I have time for work, my girlfriend and my son.

Being able to plan for time with family is the best thing, and I wouldn't trade it for anything. The best thing is also being able to decide on the type of work or projects that I get involved in. I also get to work with people who I choose to work with. I'm able to explore passion projects that are close to me.



### Love what you do, believe in it and strive to serve more and more people

Juanita Pienaar 8 Nov 2018



#### What traits does an entrepreneur need in order to succeed?

- **Patience** – I say this reluctantly, but it is so true. Being patient is one of the most important traits. Without patience, one can say and do things that may be detrimental to one's credibility. I sometimes struggle with being patient because, with the amount of work I put into everything I do, it's hard to be patient, because I want things to happen almost immediately. Lack of patience can be detrimental to one's progress, because you lose clarity and focus.
- **Good hard work ethic** – make no mistake, when you are an entrepreneur, you actually work harder than when you work for someone else. I'd be worried if an entrepreneur were to say that they work less now that they are an

entrepreneur. You need to work hard because everything is on you. You win, it's you, you fail, it's you.

- **Being a good person** – This is one of the most underrated traits. Being a good person opens doors and opportunities for you. It makes people recommend you and creates a desire to work with you. Being nice is actually a competitive advantage. In this world of greed and egos, I think being nice is more important than being taken seriously, for example.
- **Consistency in quality** – This is one of the key traits that help build your personal and business brand. Being consistent builds a favourable reputation that you can use to acquire new business. Delivering quality work consistently is what people expect, without mentioning it.
- **Being proactive** – Sometimes, clients or customers cannot articulate what they really need, but if you can deliver or offer that thing they need or seek before they even ask for it, you will be remembered and sought after. Being proactive means taking time and effort to learn about your clients' needs and wants. Have candid conversations with your clients and offer them added value – do more than what is agreed upon or expected.

#### ▣ *List a few pain points you think the industry can improve on.*

- **Lack of collaboration** – The advertising industry is built on collaboration, but ironically, I believe the collaboration that takes place does so reluctantly. Partners don't actually want to collaborate
- **Egos and entitlement** – The reason for the lack of collaboration is the combination of egos and entitlement. People and agencies feel that they are better than the next agency, and that feeds the ego and the need to come out on top as individuals.
- **Agility and flexibility** – The industry is not agile and flexible enough. It is still governed by archaic rules and processes that do not allow for work that is right for brands. Processes are great, but if they stifle greatness, we should do away with them, if not, we need to amend the rules and processes.
- **Time** – The industry's primary asset is time, and therefore that's what it sells. I have a different opinion on that. I think the industry needs to do away with time-based value and focus on output value. Creative processes are ruled by how much time is required or is bought versus actually doing the work and costing out based on what has been produced.



#### The future of advertising

Bogosi Motshewaga 11 Jan 2017



#### ▣ *What is the importance of entrepreneurship, especially in a country such as South Africa?*

Entrepreneurship is important in that it can help unlock a country's economy. It can speed up GDP growth. Entrepreneurship, beyond the economy, I think allows people to live their best lives. Yes, if there are more entrepreneurs, the government becomes less burdened as fewer people will rely on it for financial assistance.

Apart from job creation, I think entrepreneurs are more likely to solve problems related to our social ills such as poverty, environmental concerns and progress for the human race through technology.

Entrepreneurs are by nature problem solvers, so given the necessary tools and resources, entrepreneurs can help alleviate some of the pressure and make life a lot lighter.

Follow Motshewaga's thought leadership on his [MyBiz profile](#) and watch for updates on his social media channels for more: [Twitter](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Instagram](#)

## 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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