

# Accenture recognised as overall top employer in South Africa for 2023!

Issued by [Stone](#)

20 Jan 2023

Accenture has been named the overall Top Employer in South Africa for 2023. This number 1 Top Employer ranking recognises the professional services firm as the employer of choice overall in South Africa and again the top professional services firm in Africa for the thirteenth consecutive year since its certification.



Keshnie Martin, Human Resources director at Accenture Africa

"This is certainly an achievement worth celebrating with our biggest brand ambassadors – our people," states Keshnie Martin, Human Resources director at Accenture Africa. "Being ranked first is evidence of the significant effort we put daily into growing our company and careers while delivering 360o value for our clients," she adds.

The Top Employers Institute researches the working conditions employers from over 30 African countries create for their people and the extent to which they provide a great work environment, develop and nurture talent, and continuously optimise employment practices. The highest-scoring organisations are certified every January based on the Institute's global ranking policy. The policy stipulates that the number of certified Top Employers in a specific country and continental certification programme determines the nature of the overall ranking component.

"The Institute has recognised that at Accenture, investing in people is a continuous and genuine exercise. Top Employers strive to achieve their annual certification because they put their people first, with the best HR practices in place to support their people as their primary asset. With people at the heart of everything we do, Accenture has consistently ranked in the top 10 of the Top Employer list for the past 13 years," states Martin.

## **We adapted to a changing work paradigm**

The hybrid home-and-office-work paradigm has presented new challenges and opportunities. Employees are rethinking their attitude toward work by focusing more on their personal and professional aspirations. "We must harness this newfound focus by encouraging continuous learning because well-informed employees inevitably add greater value to the strategic development and problem-solving capabilities of a business," Martin states.

"Employee skills development is a priority for Accenture, and at every turn, we provide development opportunities to our people, including unlimited access to leading mobile-friendly online training curated by Accenture subject matter experts," she says. Accenture allows its people to explore award-winning Learning Boards and other world-class online resources. Staff are encouraged to take advantage of programmes using their neuroscience-based learning principles and vast educational opportunities.

"In the past year, we have made further strides towards improving the Accenture employee experience. We continued to actively promote work/life integration, race equality in the workplace, gender mainstreaming, and a focus on self-care via healthy living and mental well-being. Business people might view work/life integration, a focus on self-care, and mental well-being as less important than profitability. Still, conventional wisdom suggests that a happier and healthier staff will inevitably be more focused and efficient," she states.

Many employees are struggling with mental health issues, and a key priority is ensuring that staff do not feel alone and are aware of available help and support. Having various avenues where employees can access these resources is also essential. We must train our leaders to identify behaviours associated with mental health problems. They can add value by listening, referring the employee to get the necessary support, and checking in with the employee.

Unless leaders swiftly acknowledge these changes, there is a real danger that dissatisfaction will grow and negatively impact productivity and profit. "An environment that is flexible and sustainability-focused, community-centric, and transparent ensures that we attract, develop, and retain the best talent, and provide the best employee experience," she says.

### **Sustainability starts with HR effectiveness**

Responsible leadership is crucial to creating value for all stakeholders. Accenture's report [Seeking New Leadership](#) identified the five key elements of responsible leadership that help leaders deliver value on three fronts: organisational performance, continuous innovation, sustainability, and trust. It showed that companies that combine top-tier innovation with top-tier sustainability and trust outperform their industry peers, with 3.1% higher operating profits and greater shareholder returns.

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Accenture's initiatives, including diversity programmes, enterprise development and employability skills, uplift many communities. The firm has maintained a B-BBEE Level 1 recognition for four consecutive years. "Aside from checking any BEE boxes, Accenture's responsible business programmes are a good investment for Accenture as the more diversified our supply chain and adopt greater innovation in the workplace," states Martin.

According to Accenture, corporates are responsible for tackling our nation's skills deficit through skills development programmes. "The ultimate goal is the employment of these upskilled candidates to contribute to the South African economy," she says. Accenture equips SME business owners with executive training and mentoring, creates opportunities for qualified enterprises to grow and actively participate in the economy, and helps prepare vulnerable youth for the future of work.

"We believe the future workforce is equal and set bold goals to accelerate gender equality. Accenture is an avid advocate for equality and diversity in the workplace. Today, more than 300,000 women work at Accenture (according to the *Delivering Value by Building Trust. Accenture South Africa 2022 Responsible Business Report*). Additionally, 50% of our board of directors and 27% of our global management committee are women. We have set bold goals to achieve a gender-balanced workforce by 2025," she says.

In 2022, the global work landscape underwent more fluctuations than expected as organisations and their employees altered their working conditions after the worldwide pandemic. Top Employers and other leading organisations have had to challenge themselves throughout the year to meet the needs of the work. "We know that 2023 will be an exciting and ground-breaking time for HR departments as they continue to commit themselves to helping their organisations meet their employees' needs in the best way. At Accenture, we are ready for a highlight year," Martin concludes.

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