

#BehindtheSelfie with... Mathe Okaba

 By Leigh Andrews

17 Jul 2019

This week, we go behind the selfie with Mathe Okaba, CEO of the Association for Communication and Advertising (ACA), which last week held the 24th and final Apex Awards ceremony, ahead of the introduction of the Effie Awards in South Africa next year.



Okaba captions this: "Let it flow."

1. Where do you live, work and play?

I am a Gauteng Province (GP) woman. I know GP is huge, so to be specific, I run the streets of Johannesburg North. So that's where I work, play and eat.

2. What's your claim to fame?

My sense of humour and my dancing skills – good to some, and outdated to others. Oh, and my out-of-tune singing tone.

3. Describe your career so far.

I have had an enormous amount of fun in most of the career choices I have made, except one – which I will plead the Fifth on. Marketing and broadcasting run in my veins. Advertising is my soul.

4. Tell us a few of your favourite things.

Travelling to new and uncharted destinations, playing tennis when my frozen shoulder isn't bothering me, and I enjoy learning new things – I still need to learn to ride a motorbike.

5. What do you love about your industry?

The passion the people possess and display. The fluidity in their approach to problem-solving and the frankness, sometimes with respect.



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The people make this industry what it is, and their commitment to their work is immeasurable.

6. Describe your average workday, if such a thing exists.

Which average day? OK, I will give you 'Wednesday', which you can replicate to 90% of my week. Meetings, meetings and more meetings, answering endless emails and returning all the missed calls I received whilst I was in the meetings.

7. What are the tools of your trade?

The tools of my trade are; diplomacy, and dealing with fact rather than emotion.



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Kindness is paramount.

8. Who is getting it right in your industry?

I cannot pick and choose. I lead a member-based organisation and everyone is equally important.



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“ The industry is not about the one getting it right, but rather the collective. When we all pull together, this industry finds its place in the sun. ”

9. List a few pain points the industry can improve on.

Speedy transformation and retention of talent.

10. What are you working on right now?

At the time of writing: The 2019 Apex Awards, ACA Bursaries for Copywriting, setting up of the MAC Charter Council, positioning of advertising as a career.

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[View this post on Instagram](#)



ACA Copywriting Bursary applicants ready to take the copy test this morning at the @aaaschoolsa in Jozi. Good luck!! #advertising #copywriting #studentlife #agencylife #johannesburg #jobopportunity #transformation #movingforward

A post shared by [ACA South Africa](#) (@acasouthafrica) on Jul 15, 2019 at 1:26am PDT

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Gee, my to do list is extensive but these are my critical deliverables at the moment.

11. Tell us some of the buzzwords floating around in your industry at the moment, and some of the catchphrases you utter yourself.

Digital engagement, transformation, black female leadership.

12. Where and when do you have your best ideas?

When I am having breakfast in bed.

13. What's your secret talent/party trick?

Dancing like a fool. I embarrass my daughter all the time.

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Thank you Mathe for putting in an amazing event in an inspiring new venue! Wow 💎💎 [#APEXawards2019](#)
[pic.twitter.com/Ksx7SJluj](#)— Karin Du Chenne (@karinduchenne) [July 11, 2019](#)

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14. Are you a technophobe or a technophile?

TECHNOPHILE! Anything I buy, I ask for the advanced technological version of that product.



#Newsmaker: ACA CEO Mathe Okaba

Jessica Tennant 29 Nov 2018



If it doesn't exist I am highly disappointed, even if it's toilet paper.

15. What would we find if we scrolled through your phone?

A gazillion photos, word games and love letters to my daughter.

16. What advice would you give to newbies hoping to crack into the industry?

Show up, don't be afraid to be you, set goals and commit.

Simple as that. Follow Okaba on [LinkedIn](#) and [Instagram](#); and follow the ACA on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) feeds for the latest updates.

**Interviewed by [Leigh Andrews](#).*

ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

Leigh Andrews AKA the #MilkshakeQueen, is former Editor-in-Chief: Marketing & Media at Bizcommunity.com, with a passion for issues of diversity, inclusion and equality, and of course, gourmet food and drinks! She can be reached on Twitter at @Leigh_Andrews.

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