



# I BELIEVE IN MYSELF



## APHIWE JOSAYI | EMPLOYEE



**Name of Company:**  
Lumotech



**Highest Qualification:**  
Bachelor of Technology  
in Mechanical  
Engineering



**Age:**  
24 years



**Position in Company:**  
Engineering Change  
Co-ordinator



**Academic institution:**  
Nelson Mandela  
University



**Years in the organisation:**  
Two Years



**Location:**  
Eastern Cape



## HOW MY JOURNEY BEGAN

I come from a small town called Flagstaff in the Eastern Cape and moved to Gqeberha in 2016 to study a diploma in Mechanical Engineering at NMU. I struggled academically in my first-year tests in 2016 but was able to improve my marks in my second year in 2017 because I joined a study group, and thanks to all of them for their support.

I also had financial challenges in the first quarter of my first year but fortunately, I received funding from the Engineering Dean where they paid for my tuition, meals and accommodation expenses. In 2017 I also received a bursary from an engineering company in Gqeberha.

Things felt much easier once I had the bursary, although I had to maintain an average of 65% and above in each semester. As part of the requirements for a National Diploma in Engineering, I had to do in-service training, and I received the opportunity to complete one year in-service training. In January 2018 I got an opportunity to be an intern at eNsta, an innovation engineering hub at Nelson Mandela University. In December 2018, I completed my national diploma.

In January 2019 I started a Bachelor of Technology (B-Tech) in Mechanical Engineering at NMU. I was supposed to complete it in January 2020 but was delayed by COVID-19 and I only finished in February 2021. While I was busy with my B-Tech, in June 2020 I was offered an opportunity here at my current company to participate in a graduate programme. While I was doing my B-Tech and the graduate programme I was attending classes from 6 to 9 at night. It was a lot to manage but it helped me to be focused and improved my planning and time management skills.

During the completion of my B-Tech, I received an opportunity with Lumotech as part of the graduate development program in June 2020 and was offered a permanent position as an Engineering Change Request Coordinator (ECR Coordinator). I really enjoy my job as I am learning through the challenging activities I am exposed to, and it's taking me closer to my desired position as a Project Engineer.

## SUPPORT SYSTEMS

I have been blessed to have people supporting me throughout my studies and my career, but the person that stands out the most was the personal assistant



**AS A FEMALE, I WAS EXPECTING TO FACE CHALLENGES IN THIS INDUSTRY BUT THAT HASN'T BEEN MY EXPERIENCE**



of the dean at the campus where I studied. She was everything I needed at the time and did so much for me. She even helped with things not related to my studies, like booking transport for me to visit home and buying the clothes I needed for graduation. She played a big role and if she was not in my life I would have dropped out. My biggest supporter is my mom. She is not educated but has always encouraged me to study and do everything in my power to achieve success.

When I started my studies and was not able to get funding for the first year, she encouraged me not to give up. Through her influence and support, I have always given my best in my studies and work.

And then the support that I received from my co-workers and from my friends has also contributed a lot to my success in getting to where I am today. I will always cherish the memories I have from university, as we were all working together as a team, I don't remember a single day feeling like I was alone on this journey.

I am so grateful for the support, laughter and care they all shared with me. I will always treasure it. This wasn't a one-person journey but a group journey, and I believe without all of these people in my life I wouldn't have made it.

## I HAVE A LIST OF GOALS I WANT TO ACHIEVE

My most important achievement so far has been getting a permanent position at Lumotech. I am from a rural area and so I have worked hard to achieve my goals and better my life and my family's life. I have a list of goals I want to achieve in life and thus far, I am halfway through that list, and it keeps me motivated. I have grown so much, and I am proud of myself. I value where I am in life and have plans to grow further and become a project engineer. In my current position we work on sections of a project, but I am keen to handle a project by myself without being assisted in the future.

### YOU NEED TO BELIEVE IN YOURSELF

As a female, I was expecting to face challenges in the engineering industry but that hasn't been my experience. It's because I believe in myself.

The only challenge I can think of is being compared to other colleagues in the work environment. I was once compared to this male colleague who was working in the same lab as me. After discussing the matter with my mentor, it was resolved and the work environment was much better.

At Lumotech and was immediately accepted as part of the Lumotech family. My self-belief has helped me a lot through the process of adapting to the engineering field. The important aspect is to know what you enjoy doing and are good at, and focus on doing it, and be happy and empowered through your job.

### SACRIFICING FUN IS WORTH IT WHEN YOU SEE WHAT YOU HAVE ACHIEVED

With all the opportunities to spend time with friends and attend events, I took a conscious decision to rather focus on my studies and work with my classmates by putting in the extra time to ensure success.

I am focused on my goals and work hard and so people tend to say I am too serious about life and should relax more and enjoy myself. I am enjoying my life. Building my dreams and planning to live it is enjoyable for me. Sacrificing fun and not going out is worth it. I don't regret being called 'boring' and 'no fun' because I can see what I have achieved this far.

Now that I am permanent, I will be able to plan my life as I won't be worried about not having a job tomorrow. The first things on my list right now is to rent my own apartment and buy myself a small car, and then build from there.

### MY FAMILY IS THE REASON FOR EVERYTHING THAT I DO.

My family is my support system. I sometimes feel like they are the reason I still breathe. We have a strong relationship and I visit them every opportunity I have. I thank God every day for them, they are such blessings from Heaven.

### 5 Lessons that I have learnt:

- 1 Keep away from naysayers and surround yourself with people who encourage you
- 2 You need to believe in yourself
- 3 Nothing worth having comes without sacrifice
- 4 Being a girl will not stop you from achieving success
- 5 Commit to your career and focus



**I AM FROM A RURAL AREA AND SO I HAVE WORKED HARD TO ACHIEVE MY GOALS AND BETTER MY LIFE AND MY FAMILY'S LIFE.**