

Profiling SA's Top CEO's



Special Projects

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Venter serves shareholders with powerful returns

A second generation leader of the multi-billion rand listed company that dominates the South African telecommunications, multi-media and informa-

with zeal to succeed" who is MD of Altech Netstar, the largest stolen vehicle recovery business in the country. Another veteran lieutenant is Peter Balchin, who heads up Altech

Zambonini: there is value to be found in all people

LIZ ZAMBONINI, CEO of The Hope Factory launched the organisation nine years ago with the express aim of helping previously disadvantaged South Africans to set up their own business and become entrepreneurs.

It is based on the premise that every person is valuable.

"The Oxford Dictionary," she elaborates, "defines 'value' as 'the amount of money ... considered to be equivalent to something else or for which a thing can be exchanged.' "But who decides how 'valuable' something or someone is?"

"We've all seen how much financial value can fluctuate during the recent financial crisis, but the monetary definition in any event does not cover 'value' in the broad sense of the word. A simple example is the value of a

home, which could mean a lot more to someone who built it and reared their family in it than it would be to a new buyer who is merely taking advantage of a drop in house prices.

"So when it comes to people," she continues, "does it follow that some of us are more valuable than others? If we apply the same economic principles to people as we do to things, then we would say that a person is worth what someone else is willing to 'pay for' or 'invest' in them.

"That may come from the kind of parents who put all their efforts into providing for our needs: love, a home, education and the like. But then one could argue that some children are more 'valuable' than others because their parents have more money, which is patently not the case."

Zambonini says The Hope Factory approach is to foster and develop the talents that lie within people.

A recent example being 'The Vision Workshop', a two-and-a-half day exercise which involved both the job creation staff and the trainees. Participants were asked to create their own 'Hope Boxes' with their dreams for South Africa on the top of the boxes and their own dreams on the sides.

"It was a way of sharing their highest hopes and aspirations," she explains, "thereby kick starting the personal achievement process which is fundamental to nurturing all potential entrepreneurs. Not only did we learn more about our trainees, but judging by their staying power, we knew our goal of promoting their financial sustainability was achievable."

So more than just providing business, life and technical skills training,

The Hope Factory focuses on rebuilding self-esteem and developing confidence, keeping the learners motivated, and mentoring, advising and encouraging them to become the authors of their own success stories.

"Each person's dreams are precious and developing them to their full potential will also have a multiplying effect on others to do the same," concludes Zambonini.

Graduate Nezisa Bambani, says, "I brought my brokenness to the Factory and they made me whole." Her business includes taking in laundry, helping to decorate homes and also doing housework.

The Hope Factory is an initia-

tive of The South African Institute of Chartered Accounts, which is improving the lives of previously unemployed South Africans by providing them with a holistic entrepreneurial development programme.

This includes training in business, technical and life skills together with a comprehensive job creation and incubator programme to further promote these skills.

Assisted by donor funding, The Hope Factory works to develop and place entrepreneurs in their own businesses, or to continue in the formal sector.

A mentoring and support structure is in place throughout all phases of the programme, and this continues afterwards to ensure continued financial sustainability.