

Helm transitions to employee ownership, empowers staff with major stake

Helm has unveiled its Employee Ownership Plan, a significant step that transitions the company into an employee-owned entity. This transformative change in the ownership structure is a testament to Helm's commitment to its dedicated staff.



Gustav Praekelt and Dawood Patel. Source: Supplied

A major stake is held by the senior management team, referred to as HelmCo. This strategic decision empowers them to play an active role in the company's decision-making processes, thereby shaping its strategy, vision, and future growth.

Key shareholders include Helm's CEO, Dawood Patel, Awande Capital founder and former Trudon CEO, Thabo Seopa, and company founder Gustav Praekelt. The company was originally named after Praekelt before it underwent rebranding to become Helm.



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One of the reasons for the rebrand was to mark the new ownership structure, which also saw Praekelt's role shift to a non-executive capacity. Although he is no longer involved in the business on an operational level, the ownership plan brings to life his long-standing vision of a staff-owned company.

"We've always wanted to be a different type of business – one that is owned by the very people who contribute to its strategy and success every single day. Our employees have been a part of our past and present and will remain a more significant part of our future," says Praekelt.

Recognition and reward

One aspect of the Employee Ownership Plan is the recognition and reward it bestows upon those who have contributed to Helm strategically, and those who have served the business loyally for a long period. Most of the people in the programme have been with the company for over five years, with some beginning their journeys as far back as 2010.

The plan not only strengthens the bond between employees and the company, but also encourages shared responsibility for Helm's success.

Dawood Patel, CEO of Helm, says that by giving key team members a direct stake in the business, Helm fosters a culture of ownership and accountability. "This shared sense of ownership will lead to enhanced collaboration, increased innovation, and improved productivity across all levels of the company. By empowering employees with equity, we encourage long-term thinking that ultimately drives growth and stability."

By having staff participate in ownership of the company, Helm has engaged its employees in a truly meaningful way, while also contributing to the country's transformational goals through diverse shareholding. The new ownership structure ensures that Helm's workforce is not merely a group of employees, but an integral part of its vision, its journey, and its future.

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