

# Over The Rainbow to lead entrepreneurs to pots of gold

Having been recognised as an Africa's Women of Influence 2015 finalist, business rainmaker Lesley Waterkeyn has announced the launch of Over The Rainbow, a social enterprise aimed at empowering new SA entrepreneurs.



Lesley Waterkeyn

The initiative is the brainchild of Lesley Waterkeyn, founder of marketing agency, Colourworks and education specialist, Sandy van Dyk. They are currently authoring their first business book, *Over The Rainbow, 7 steps to a sustainable business*.

South Africa's high rate of start-up failure and its urgent need for job creation and economic development, all highlight the necessity for the country to develop far more robust, healthy and extensive entrepreneurship ecosystems to properly nurture and sustain emerging business talent.

Over The Rainbow identifies seven crucial stages of the entrepreneur's spectrum that must be, not only in place, but mastered, for the new entrepreneur to achieve sustainable business success. Lack of knowledge and experience in business planning, legalities, finance, branding and marketing, as well as a lack of access to networks are the most common reasons why the failure of SMEs (Small Medium Enterprises) in South Africa is higher than the global average.



Over The Rainbow aims to lead new entrepreneurs through the rainbow colour spectrum from getting to grips with business basics at the red, orange and yellow levels; becoming proficient at branding and marketing at the green and blue levels to achieving sustainable growth and being able to meaningfully contribute to the wider business community as they reach the indigo and violet levels.

"In essence," Waterkeyn adds, "The proverbial 'pot of gold' is not just the measure of their individual financial success, but the sustainable wealth that enables them to give back and participate positively in the on-going socio-economic development of South Africa."

Waterkeyn, who is on the Cape Town board of the global Entrepreneurship Organisation (EO) and currently plays a role on the regional task team charged with growing peer-to-peer networking in Africa, has had first-hand experience of how entrepreneurs can overcome shortcomings and challenges by connecting and developing alongside each other.

For the past five of the 17 years she has spent transforming Colourworks from a small print agency to a fully-fledged integrated marketing company, Waterkeyn has been a member of EO's global network, and she credits much of her

success to the learning opportunities that it opened up for her. However, with an entry level requirement of a R10 million turnover, EO's global network is out of the reach of the vast majority of new SA entrepreneurs.

"There's a significant gap in our entrepreneurship ecosystem, and I see the need for a bridge to an organisation like EO," she says. "Over The Rainbow will deliver not only a similar structured peer networking programme for new entrepreneurs, but also provide brand and marketing expertise, and enable them to access rainmakers in our network. They will be able to more easily find business mentors and coaches who can support and encourage them as they grapple with the many challenges of starting up a business so that their enterprises can grow and become sustainable."

She points out that most people with a promising business idea and the enthusiasm to do something with it, think that what they need to be successful is financing. "But they are missing something," she asserts, "What they actually need most is knowledge and connection."

The strength of peer-to-peer networking for entrepreneurs is that the process offers them a 360 degree sounding board that encircles their lives and their businesses. As they grow as individuals and as leaders, they gain more power to develop their businesses and in turn, make a positive impact on the development of the country.

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