

{EFFICIENCY}

Systems make perfect

Systems streamline and optimise workflow, laying the foundation for future growth. By Juliet Pitman

WHEN VASH SINGH LAUNCHED BEE verification agency, Izikhulu BEE Ratings, she knew she'd need to put robust systems in place if she was to gain accreditation from the South African National Accreditation System (SANAS).

"But that's not the only reason this business is so systematised. I'm a highly systems-driven person. I like things to be done in a systematic way that has been tested and proven to be reliable. I believe that good systems lay the foundation for future growth and ensure consistent, optimal delivery to clients," she says. It's unsurprising to learn that Singh is an engineer. "My training in that field informs the way I think and how I operate as an entrepreneur."

At Izikhulu there is a documented system for doing just about everything – from managing HR and driving sales to interacting with clients. "Because these systems have been tested and are continually improved upon, they help to streamline and optimise our workflow," explains Singh, adding that any changes to systems are made in consultation with staff who use them on a daily basis.

She's also a big believer in check lists. "No matter how good your system is, there is always the potential for human error. Having a check list helps us manage this risk and increases productivity. Staff have a very clear idea of what they need to do, how they need to do it and how they need to make sure that they have done it correctly," she explains.

Systems benefit Izikhulu's clients too. "Because clients get verified annually, repeat business is very important to us. Having systems in place means that clients get a consistent experience when working with us. They know what to expect and can rely on a consistent level of service delivery and quality," says Singh.

From a personal perspective, having systems in place has allowed Singh to be a better delegator. "It's hard for me to let go, but I've found I can do it if I know our people are following a tried and tested way of doing things," she says.

VITAL STATS

Player:

Vash Singh

Company:

Izikhulu BEE Ratings

Est:

2007

X-Factor:

Excellent systems that result in repeat clients.

PUTTING GOOD SYSTEMS IN PLACE TAKES TIME AND EFFORT – BUT THE REWARDS ARE GREAT. HERE ARE VASH SINGH'S HALLMARKS OF A GREAT SYSTEM:

- » A good system is a documented system. Write it down!
- » A good system should cover everything to a sufficient level of detail. Ask yourself, "If I open up an office in a different city tomorrow, will the staff there be able to run things in the same way as we currently run things, just by reading this document?"
- » A good system needs to be tested.
- » Training is fundamental to making sure a good system is properly implemented. We train our staff in systems using case studies. Make sure you monitor the effectiveness of your training.