

Women: innate industry disruptors suited to any business

Innovative, dynamic, diversified, focused, an industry disruptor – this is Liberty Two Degrees

Liberty Two Degrees (L2D) is headed by Amelia Beattie, a SAPOA Past President with a proven 20-year track record in property. Complementing this, L2D has a diverse board of which 40% are women (50% of them black). The women employed by L2D make up 71% of the people complement (as at 31 December 2017) – a clear indication that diversity is fully embraced and is an aspect of the business that's vital to its current vision, strategy and purpose.

Our assets are in good hands

With one of the largest exposures in the retail property sector in South Africa, L2D has a quality portfolio anchored by iconic, trend-setting and industry-leading super-regional centres that dominate in their respective economic nodes. Executive Asset Manager Nikiwe Mkhabela manages Sandton City, which is an unparalleled asset known as a sector benchmark – and a definite disruptor in the retail property space. Eastgate Shopping Centre, the retail fashion powerhouse of the east of Johannesburg, has Carmen Collison as an Executive Asset Manager.

Bharathi Kawal, who was previously a Senior Portfolio Analyst, has been given an opportunity to grow into an asset management role, and currently oversees the office portfolio as well as Botshabelo Mall. Farhana Morar heads up the legal department and is also the Vice Chair of the SAPOA Legal Committee. Sumenthree Moodley heads up our analyst team.

Many other roles in the company – valuation, human resources, communications and marketing – are looked after by women. The contribution by the men in the company is not to be discounted at all; but it is important to celebrate the influence women have in the property industry, considering that much can be achieved with their inclusion.

L2D's purpose statement of "making a difference for all our customers through creating great places by investing where it matters" is instilled in the culture

of the business. It is entrenched in the day-to-day office environment and filters through to the portfolio operations. L2D invests in its people (whom it sees as a very important resource) and aims to create a working atmosphere that encourages everyone to give their best. The women at L2D are part of the success of achieving this business ethos.

Business and wellness

Although L2D's focused and disciplined work culture is strongly instilled in its people, the wellness and fun element is engrained just as strongly. #DressTuesday is a concept that sees the women wear a dress on Tuesdays – an industry initiative that was started by a group of property industry women a few years back. Its purpose is to encourage women to embrace their womanhood, and to remind them that being a woman does not put them in a lesser position when climbing the corporate ladder. It is meant to remind everyone that the corporate environment is as much for women as it is for men, and that women's participation in all aspects of society is more vital than ever. #DressTuesday is not just a once-a-month occurrence – it is entrenched in the culture of L2D and is set to inspire growth, innovation, high performance and a sense of belonging. Various other initiatives at L2D inspire the same notion of collaboration and inclusivity, and are ingrained in the company's human-resources policy and internal communications.

To further celebrate #DressTuesday, inspirational women from the property and wellness industries are invited to share their thoughts on how to maintain a work-life balance, exposing women to new ways of thinking, working and living. These women include those behind Lula Fox, Sinead Brook and Fiona Buchner: their company is an industry disruptor in the beauty space, passionate about educating women about physical and mental wellness to ensure they are optimally creative, productive and confident at work and at home.

Tough conversations about strategic objectives

Everyone is expected to pull their weight in their respective roles. L2D people are constantly reminded of the value each of them brings to achieving the company's goals of sustainable growth and delivering consistent returns to investors, regardless of the extent of their contribution.

"People are definitely a company's greatest asset. It doesn't make any difference whether the product is cars or cosmetics. A company is only as good as the people it keeps."

Mary Kay Ash



Although L2D's portfolio of assets has a long history stemming from the Liberty Property heritage that saw the opening of Sandton City in 1973, L2D is a relatively young company, and was formed and listed in 2016. Its people are experienced, but they are also young and agile – perfect for the innovative nature of the business – and its women form part of the company's backbone. Their ability to develop and sustain relationships, encourage others and allow people to thrive as members of the team is what sets L2D apart.

Women are generally great at inspiring others, which is why women leaders are excellent long-term strategic thinkers. They are less inclined to rally behind a short-term strategy if a more sustainable approach can be executed. Ultimately, this is what investing in property is about.

Successful investment is about good timing. To earn a return on investment, patience needs to be exercised. Anyone that has lived through the fluctuating cycle knows that investment time frames can determine the potential of an investment. This is why L2D's investment strategy is centred around understanding the needs of its stakeholders – including its people. L2D is committed to investing in the diversity, growth and general wellbeing of its people, and constantly reminds them that everything is within their power – and that their power is within them. All this drives the returns the company delivers on its portfolio every day.

The following quote by Roman Payne should inspire all women to greatness: "You must give everything to make your life as beautiful as the dreams that dance in your imagination." It's time to be proud, and to continue to deliver excellence. 🌸

Back row, from left Melinda Isaacs, Linda Macfie, Carmen Collison, Steph Goodwin, Katija Jaime, Tandeka Williams, Bharathi Kawal, Nokuthula Msimi, Tirya Moodley, Buhle Makavelo
Middle row, from left Lerato Masango, Catherine Evans
Front row, from left: Farhana Morar, Sumenthree Moodley, Saadiyah Kahn, Amelia Beattie, Noluthando Mlalose



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