

Have you hit the glass ceiling?

Some businesses manage to break even and make a bit of a profit, but nowhere near the potential growth that they could be capitalising on. This happens for a number of reasons:

- business management ability
- access to markets
- access to finance, amongst others

Below a few initiatives are listed which aim to remove some of the obstacles to realising the full potential of your business if you have hit the glass ceiling.

Advanced Training Programme

These training sessions have been designed to present you with sophisticated business management concepts and best practices that you should be considering in order to take your business to that next level. You know the basics, such as financial statements and marketing plans, as well as about diversifying your business, motivating your staff and a workplace skills plan. You need to think about investment in new product development, how to grow your business and whether to take on a partner, for example. How can you use the profits from your cash cows (products that are earning you easy profits today, but that may not be in demand forever) to develop future star products?

The Department of Economic Development has customised the Advanced Tourism Business Training Programme to discuss these issues and help your business break through the glass ceiling into the mainstream. These scenario-based sessions are limited to the off-peak times when you are doing your preparations for the peak season. Valuable concepts and discussion topics have been packed into 8 powerful targeted sessions so that you can get the most out of this training time and maximise the time spent in your business.

Tourism Mentorship Programme

A number of useful concepts can be learned through the advanced business training programme, but sometimes you need to discuss your problems and frustrations with another businessperson, a mentor, who has walked down that same road before and may be able to offer some solutions. There may be a specific person at SA Tourism who has *just* the information you need or someone at DTI who is particularly helpful. Or maybe there is another way of coordinating your back office that will limit your frustrations.

This very valuable service is offered as part of the Tourism Mentorship Programme, an initiative of the Tourism Business Forum. This programme is funded and driven by the Western Cape Department of Economic Development. SATSA administers the fund and provides mentors from their membership. CTRU considers preferential market exposure to the carefully selected mentees and TEP also contributes by way of the cost sharing of further business development required by the mentees to transform them into globally competitive enterprises.

This is a six month programme, taking place during the quieter season, running from March to September.

As part of the Mentorship Programme, a **Personal Development Programme** and a **Business Presentation Skills Course** is also offered to ensure that any impediments to communication, confidence or the clinching of deals are removed for the optimal success of your business.

Exhibitor at Indaba

Once you are at this level of being an established business, you are in all probability reliable in terms of meeting international demand, and levels of service. At this point, you may apply to attend Indaba as an exhibitor with a stand. Your application will be successful if:

- Your business stands to gain from exposure at Indaba rather than at another tradeshow,
- If your business is ready to meet the demand,
- If the space and budget available permits.

International Shows and Tourism Workshops

Opportunities to attend international tourism shows and trade workshops together with CTRU on a subsidised basis are extended to SMME's who have participated in the mentorship programme and have successfully participated in the Cape Tourism Showcase and Indaba. SMME's must be able to demonstrate that their products/services target the market relevant to the trade shows or workshop in order to be considered for participation in the specified International Trade Show or Workshop.

Through ETEYA (Entrepreneur of the Year Award), an initiative of SA Tourism, the finalists in each of the provinces are sent to the WTM (World Travel Market) in London. The Tourism Business Forum forms the panel who decides which businesses to nominate from the Western Cape.

Integrated Tourism Entrepreneurship Support Programme (ITESP)

ITESP represents a partnership between CTRU, Department of Economic Development and Tourism (DEDT) and the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA) and is intrinsically linked to the outcomes of the iKapa Elihlumayo lead strategy as it will contribute to economic growth, reduce unemployment, increase the demographic spread of ownership in the tourism industry and promote participation in the broader economy.

The main aim of the ITESP is to provide integrated support to tourism Small Medium Enterprise (SMEs) including access to capital, skills and markets. The programme will link SMEs with mainstream tourism business and financial institutions.

The programme can be accessed through:

- Accredited agents who will submit applications on a case by case basis
- The Department's mentorship programme
- Referrals from the Real Enterprise Development (RED) Door advisors.

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SATSA Membership

At this level you could apply for SATSA Membership. SATSA is internationally recognised as a credible organisation that accredits only those tourism businesses who are reliable and can meet international demands of service excellence. Membership to SATSA opens a whole market of opportunities, not only with international operators and buyers, but also amongst SATSA members themselves.

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