



# The AFREPRENUER

SHINING THE SPOTLIGHT ON AFRICAN TALENT



PAULINE L.  
MAPISA

Event Planner

# "KEEP ON PUDDLING WITH THE DUCKS"

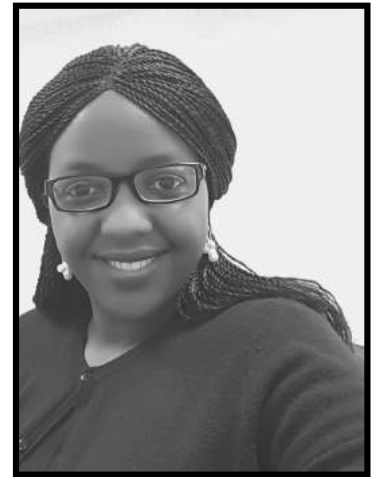
I believe that there is no uniformity when it comes to significant achievements in life. It is never a straight forward one-plus-one-equals-two scenario. Each journey is as unique as the fingerprints on every person's hand. That's why 'some are born great; some achieve greatness while others have greatness thrust upon them.'

Think of it this way: Let's say, three people, namely Ann, Ben and Cat, decide to travel from Zimbabwe to South Africa departing at the same time. Each selects the mode of transport based on the resources at their disposal. Ann decides to go by air; Ben opts to go by road, and Cat settles for rail.

Naturally, the experience of the journey will differ based on the choices made by each person. Yet each route has its advantages. Ann will enjoy a short and swift journey. Ben will have the flexibility to divert his route easily but still get to his destination, albeit much later than Ann. Cat on the hand will be the last to arrive; however, she will enjoy a close look at nature as railway lines often meander deep into the forests away from communities.

The same happens in life. When you see others running progressing ahead of you, don't be discouraged. It's not a competition. At the end of the day, what matters in the example above is that everyone made it to their destination. So stay on your path, stay positive and enjoy the ride. In my little corner, I have peers who are soaring high with eagles as we speak; meanwhile, I feel like I am still paddling the waters alongside ducks. Yet who knows what tomorrow holds? I might be puddling today, but if I continue playing in the water soon, I could be swimming the high seas alongside the majestic blue whales. After all, not all great and mighty animals fly!

## *Editor's note*



***Grace Mavunga***  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF & DESIGNER



*I love planning weddings, the high expectations of each bride are like fuel to my creativity*

PAULINE LIKONGWE MAPISA

# Pauline Likongwe Mapisa

is a self-driven goal-getter who has managed to build a successful events company in Zimbabwe. To date, her company Wedding Gallery has successfully hosted over four hundred events and counting. The reviews from some of her clients are a testament to the quality of her work. Pauline's journey started at the age of 14 when her mother's passion for baking rubbed off on her. She would often spend hours in the kitchen, helping out her mother and learning the basics.


As she grew older, she continued to develop her skills by baking cakes for her sibling and friends. Later on, while waiting to start university, her boyfriend now hubby encouraged her to turn the hobby into a business. That was the beginning of her journey as a professional baker, and the rest is history. Today, she supplies cakes for weddings, birthdays and many other occasions.


Her parents instilled in her the importance of taking advantage of any opportunity to learn new skills. That is why, at the age of 15, she decided to join the decoration department at her church. It was during this time that she developed her passion for decoration. In 2014 she decided to do her wedding decor, and it came out so perfect that she was inspired to start an event decor company. Her wedding became her marketing tool; soon, more people were soliciting for her services and business started booming. Over the years she has since expanded to a full-fledged event planning company providing catering services, renting out wedding gowns and hiring out décor equipment and accessories.


Pauline, enjoys transforming her clients' dreams to reality, this is the best part about her craft. Whether it's the cake or event decor, she believes in nothing less than absolute perfection. Every event is unique, and her goal is to tailor-make each to the client's request. Weddings bring her the most joy as she loves working with brides to help them create that fairytale wedding they all desire. Their high expectations can be intimidating to some, but for Pauline, it is the fuel that drives her to deliver perfection. She believes when it comes, event planning the success lies in the ability to pay attention to every detail no matter how small.

She plans to grow her business into a one-stop-shop for everything events related and start an academy for events planning and confectionery arts. Talk about a woman on a mission!

To make an order or book her for events, please contact her on the following;

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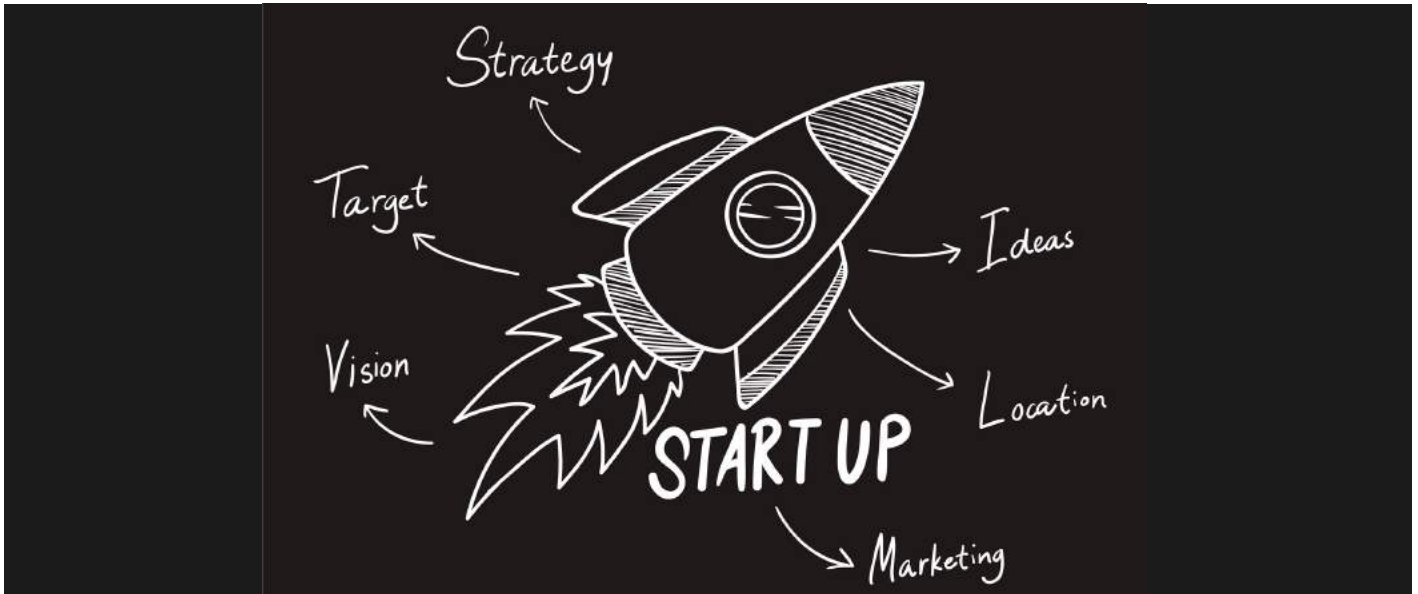
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# The Entrepreneurial Journey: *The Key of Persistence*

BY NYASHA MATURURE



*The entrepreneurial journey is a long and winding road to success. This series will highlight the lessons learned on my journey as a budding entrepreneur. I have not arrived but, I am sure you can glean some lessons which will encourage you.*

The seed of entrepreneurship was sown in my life in 1995 at the age of 9 in my then hometown of Chinhoyi. My mother, a very enterprising woman, would have us sell freezits / penny cools from a cooler box. I would watch her travel to South Africa to buy wares for resale. She would bring the latest fashions in clothes, toys and shoes. This was in addition to her jersey knitting business and her full-time job as a teacher. It is from her that I learnt that it was essential for one to work with their hands to earn an extra income. At the end of the month, I would earn a small income from my “part-time” job and what a joy it was to know that I had profited from my labours.

In today’s world, where we see the emergence of billionaires like Mark Zuckerberg, Ashish J Thakker, Dangote, there is one underlying factor, and that is hard work. To be an entrepreneur one has to have an inherent resolve to work hard and in most cases burn the midnight oil to succeed. To be an entrepreneur one has to realise that the only place success comes before work is in the dictionary.

As one takes up the entrepreneurship journey, one has to be willing to work, work long hours, rain or shine, and thanks to my mother, I learnt this early in life

The journey of an entrepreneur is not an easy one. It is a journey that is often wrought with a myriad of ups and downs. It reminds me of my experience of watching my sister learn how to ride a bike. The first bike she got was at about 3-4 years old; it had training wheels, and it was relatively simple for her to ride it. At the age of 9, she heralded the introduction of the mountain bike.

It was difficult to watch her struggle with that bike. It was quite a difficult task watching my other sister, who is a year older, teach her how to ride it. She fell repeatedly scuffed her knees and elbows but still, she continued. There were times when she would take the bike out by herself and “coach” herself and lo and behold the day came when she mastered how to ride. It was like watching Usain Bolt win a gold medal at the Olympics; the triumph on her face just said it all. A lot of hard work had been put into this, and she felt like the queen of the world, until the next challenge, of course.

When I look at my sister’s journey, it reminds me of the journey of building a business.

### **1) Building a business is not for everyone.**

Not everyone is gifted with the finesse and the grit to become an entrepreneur. The move today is to encourage entrepreneurial thinking that even as one is employed, they think and act like an owner.

### **2) Determination**

In order to achieve a certain target focus and determination is essential. In building a business, there has to be a focus on achieving the vision of the founders. If one looks at companies today, e.g. Air BnB and KFC, focus & determination of the founders despite previous failures have taken the business from just an idea in their head to a multi-million dollar business.

### **3) Agility and Adaptability**

Marketing myopia is a state that as a business person, one should be wary of. Don't be a person who fails to see the changing tides and reinvent yourself. Adapt or die is the mantra that should be tattooed on every business person's mind. Imagine if in this millennial age someone was still trying to design the best telephone handset ever the business would surely die.

### **4) Mental Toughness**

Once you have established a relevant business idea or endeavour to pursue its essential to have a crocodile skin. Mentors and other support structures play a part yes but, in the end, this is your baby. In business, there are challenges, and on your way to your destination, you may lose money, be criticized and face many such hurdles. An excellent example of such is Strive Masiyiwa who had a protracted battle to receive a licence for Econet in Zimbabwe. It took a few years to have him finally open the doors of the now telecoms giant but, because of strong self-conviction of the vision he persevered.

### **5) Organization and Planning**

It is critical that as one pursues the vision or goal, there is a roadmap to be followed, i.e. the business plan. Once the business is up and running strategic, tactical and operational plans should be put in place. A friend of mine had a good laugh about how as a nation as Zimbabweans, we are gifted in planning. The most beautiful plans are drafted but, gather dust in a credenza somewhere until the next strategy session in a cushy resort town.

### **6) Execute, Execute, Execute**

Talk is cheap; execution is real. Most people claim to be entrepreneurs but, are not willing to put in the essential hard work and exercise discipline to achieve it. No to NATO – No Action Talk Only. Each and every day have a plan, have a target, do something to get where you claim you want to go.

### **7) Accountability**

As you run your race get a mentor and trustworthy peers who you are accountable too. These people will push you to persevere and give you fresh insights on what to do next. They will be your failsafe when you feel like giving up they will egg you on and not allow you to quit.

### **8) Prayer**

I am a Christian, and I earnestly believe in the power of prayer. If you are Christian, this is a critical element in giving you the strength and the impetus to persevere. Business is not for the faint-hearted or those who easily give up. In order to succeed Perseverance is key. When the going gets tough, the tough get going. Success is only accessible to those who strive for it. It's not easy to being an entrepreneur, but once you begin to see the fruit of your labour. It's all worth it. Keep safe and keep going the light is at the end of the tunnel.



#### **About the Author**

*Nyasha is passionate about entrepreneurial development and customer experience management. A marketer by profession she assists startups in setting up their enterprises.*



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