

On Target

We chat to four inspiring businesswomen under 35 who're blazing a trail in their fields

MATAPA MAILA (24), former beauty queen and founder of Menku Consultancy, a company specialising in model management, coaching and events organising

How did you raise your start-up capital? I saved money and cut down on personal expenditure. Keeping my day job as a Lead Logistics Advisor at Sasol Oil also helped.

What does your job entail? On a strategic level, I maintain relationships for repeat business and constantly source new clients who're beneficial for the growth of the company.

What's been your biggest work-related challenge? Being your own boss isn't glamorous. I invested profusely into Menku Consultancy and worked unlimited hours to get it off the ground. I compromised and gave up much leisure time to make it work. The successes and failures of the business are all on my watch!

What personal qualities have been key to your business success? Stubbornness and ignorance helped me overcome most of the negative judgements people had. Buoyancy and diligence were in my toolbox, while a humble spirit has kept me eager to learn.



SHEREE O'BRIEN (27), founder and Managing Director of Splakavellis Management

What does your job entail? I handle artists' careers and manage their individual brands, from their images to their styles. I'm also responsible for PR, securing endorsements and organising bookings for performances.

What's been your costliest mistake so far? We got involved in a national tour with other artists, which was unsuccessful. It was well planned, but the execution was fatal. I ended up losing my entire investment, my house and car.

What business successes are you most proud of? We managed to pick ourselves up again after losing everything and continued to pursue our long-time dream. This industry is shady, but we never sold out to the evils of this game and maintained our honesty, integrity and a good business ethic.

Why do you feel so passionately about your business?

I'm very passionate about music and the artists themselves. I've put so much sacrifice and love into making it work that giving up just isn't an option. We've built Splakavellis Management into a brand most people know about – through word-of-mouth marketing and referrals; which I believe is the best way to build credibility.

