

TT Holdings

A taste of the boardroom life and an introspective conversation with a sibling are what Thapelo Tihapane credits for the creation of his Quantity Surveying business, TT Holdings.

At just 23 years old, with no business experience and armed with little more than his BSc Quantity Survey degree from Wits University and an abundance of ambition, Tihapane registered his company in 2015 and embarked on a journey that has scared off many before him.

Fortunately for the young man from the mining town of Rustenburg in the North West, he went into business with eyes wide open and goals firmly set, hence he zoomed in on Property Point's incubator programme.

"My first client, TSK, was my previous employer and happened to be a Property Point graduate company. My boss used to take me to meetings with him, which is where I got a taste of life in the boardroom and liked it. When I decided to resign, I knew I wanted to get into the Property Point programme. It didn't work out the first time because I didn't meet the minimum requirement. I tried the following year and got in," explains Tihapane.

The experience gained has been invaluable. As a youth with little practical work background and no business experience, the Property Point programme became the blueprint for building TT Holdings from the ground up.

"I was very young when I started. I had no experience or business acumen. I lacked business systems and had not had any mentorship," he recalls.

Overcoming these challenges meant learning to network, understanding the value of market linkage support, and practical exposure to the business environment. The mentoring he received focused Tihapane on the technicalities of running a business through business development services, gave him access to markets, and – just as importantly – pay attention to himself as the person central to the business.

“TT Holdings has grown holistically. The business used to operate from a town house. We now have two branches; one in Johannesburg and the other in Rustenburg. We do a lot of work with most of the mines in the North West, taking advantage of localisation. We have a staff compliment of nine (9) and an ad hoc staff member in Bloemfontein. Numbers don’t lie.”

Additionally, Tihapane credits the programme for helping with his own personal growth and maturity; traits that have seen him better able to grow his business by retaining repetitive quality customers and being the Principle Agent that determines the scope of work and appoints suppliers on projects.

“The solution to reducing unemployed in South Africa is through growing emerging companies. Entrepreneurship accelerators and incubators like the Property Point programme are good and I wish more companies can empower emerging enterprises. Property Point have done all that they can. The only thing left now is to implement the learnings and skills they have provided and run with it.”