

Encouraging women in safety to "dream it and achieve it"

Dekra Industrial, a leading provider of non-destructive testing (NDT), inspections and advanced NDT technologies, aims to be the global partner for a safe world with the support of a dedicated team of people striving to ensure long-term safety, quality and environmental protection. Dekra Industrial RSA has an encouraging approach to gender equality and respect. The company offers a positive working environment which lays the foundations for female employees to execute their duties and responsibilities confidently and happily, while pursuing their passion for safety, according to experienced Dekra Industrial team members Corporate Health and Safety Manager, Carina Brink-Kleinhans, and Administration Clerk Rolene van Niekerk.

"Women at Dekra Industrial are respected, valued, and recognised for their contributions. This acknowledgement of women's efforts, dedication and abilities not only differentiates Dekra Industrial as a progressive and gender-equal company – but encourages women to thrive in their roles at the company. In turn, we are empowered and encouraged to motivate our female colleagues - and women in the industry in general - to strive for their goals and achieve the highest levels of performance," Brink-Kleinhans enthuses.

While focused on the Dekra Industrial Vision 2025 goals, and in driving the reputation of the company as being synonymous with safety internally and externally, Brink-Kleinhans's passion encompasses a warm enthusiasm for people and their safety. "I enjoy advising people and changing their mind sets about safety," Brink-Kleinhans says, mirroring Dekra Industrial's ethos of the need for safety 'on the road, at work and at home'.

Rolene van Niekerk, with a similar passion for people, enjoys building relationships and learning more about Dekra Industrial as a business every day. With various job-related qualifications under her belt – including a radiographic interpretation course from the Southern African Institute of Welding (SAIW) – van Niekerk continuously learns about new and different NDT techniques, testing methods and equipment during her daily interactions with her Dekra Industrial colleagues.

Drawing on her experiences with Dekra Industrial's nationwide footprint of branches and with clients during site visits, Brink-Kleinhans underscores the distinct



Carina Brink-Kleinhans



Rolene van Niekerk

respect afforded to her and her female colleagues:

"This high regard and appreciation for women is demonstrated throughout Dekra Industrial internally and externally, throughout our broad client base."

"Dekra Industrial and our clients share high standards and strive to be progressive regarding gender equality. This approach stacks up to an unbiased and supportive approach to women in safety," she points out. "Fortunately, this means we have not experienced negativity or discrimination due to our gender – and our input and recommendations are always respected and valued."

Nevertheless, both acknowledge the challenges women still encounter across broader industry – including gender bias and discrimination; the pressure of having to prove themselves more than their male counterparts; and the notion that women may be less likely to ask for a promotion or a raise.

"Yet, despite these challenges and as the broader industry landscape changes, there is nonetheless a growing platform for women to make a positive impact. Women prefer to do every job with fairness. Notably, women's emotional intelligence, passion and helpful nature further help to create a healthy workplace relationship and well-rounded workforce," Brink-Kleinhans says.

Echoing this observation, van Niekerk adds that women's patience, paired with "super versatility, multi-tasking abilities and fearlessness" are invaluable in tackling challenges, assisting all team members, and serving clients.

Brink-Kleinhans agrees: "In sharing a clear and dedicated safety vision and passion, we each fulfil an essential part of the greater safety 'jigsaw puzzle' – all working and fitting together, through mutual support to deliver great service to our clients!"

On this point, both women believe that businesses in South Africa need to do more to foster and prioritise equal treatment, respect, and fair career opportunities within all sectors.

"Women can be encouraged to pursue new opportunities through the definition of concrete and detailed goals. By creating a plan to achieve these goals and pairing it with the gathering and assignment of resources, progress evaluations and consistent, constructive feedback, staff can be motivated to achieve performance excellence," Brink-Kleinhans says.

Similarly, Van Niekerk urges women to remain focused and stand their ground in executing their duties: "Keep your head high, your voice audible and be strong!"

While Brink-Kleinhans adds that women should be themselves, respect themselves and define success in their own terms, rather than base it on the opinion of others, she advocates women remain open to learning from others. "There is always room for improvement and making the most of additional learning opportunities. Last, but not least, believe in yourself and dream your dreams – after all, if you can dream it, you can achieve it," she concludes.

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