

game changer

# a maverick non-conformist

## the journey of changing lives

*Lyn Mansour*

Chief Executive Officer

KLM Empowered Human Solutions Specialists (Pty) Ltd

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LYN MANSOUR IS PASSIONATE ABOUT PEOPLE LIVING THEIR DREAMS. IT'S SUCH A SIMPLE EQUATION - EMPOWER THROUGH EDUCATION, EDUCATION, EDUCATION! AN EDUCATED EMPLOYEE IS A HAPPY, EQUIPPED EMPLOYEE THAT IS WORKING TOWARDS GREATER GOALS. LYN SAYS, "IT'S CRITICAL TO ENSURE THAT THE PEOPLE IN YOUR EMPLOY ARE HAPPY, WORKING AT OPTIMAL PRODUCTIVITY LEVELS, AND CONTINUE TO ADD VALUE TO YOUR ORGANISATION." HERE IS A BUSINESS LEADER WITH A PROFOUND RESPECT FOR HUMAN BEINGS AND THE JOURNEY THEY EMBARK UPON.

Although she openly admits with a smile that she is chaos personified - Lyn has the hidden talent of somehow managing to do in a day what Ghengis Kahn's entire army did in a year!

This dynamic business woman has managed to launch endless initiatives and ensure they all flourish, whilst running a national FET Institute, being a hands-on campus principal, a wife, a mother and devoted (and proud) attendee of every KLM Empowered learnership graduation ceremony, since 2005.

*"I'm entrepreneurial and I'm still always leading people - but 'leading' has come to mean something different to me now; if you lead the way, you must live the way, and that's important."*

KLM Empowered Human Solutions Specialists carries Lyn's multi-lateral DNA - there's no

doubt about it. Whether you're engaging with a team member, visiting their offices or experiencing their service excellence, it's clear this is Lyn's company and she has entrenched the forward thinking principles and optimistic attributes that keep KLM Empowered driving strong in the field of skills development. This is a company proudly built on honesty and integrity, having scooped numerous awards, including the SABPP Top Accredited Training Provider and the Direct Marketing Association of SA's Award for the Training provider of the year. A humble master at bridging the divide between the business world and the world of social outreach, Lyn has put her company at the forefront of empowering disadvantage youth and persons living with disability into the workplace. It's for this and numerous other reasons that KLM Empowered has been awarded government, SETA and corporate client contracts on leading national projects for learnerships, skills programmes and internship projects.

*"If there's anything I can tell you, it's to be and to remain. To be is to be connected, but what's even more vital is to remain connected. You have to be plugged into the matrix, on the playing field, engaging with the world."*





Lyn finds purpose in her team and in empowering her tribe, this is a CEO with a big heart and an enviable track record - a formidable force with a humanitarian edge in the hardcore world of business. She comments, "the 21st Century is the age of enlightenment and humanity is evolving into a state of higher consciousness; we're beginning to open our minds to new, innovative and creative ways of thinking and doing." Lyn believes that "only through the adoption of changed thinking and altered actions can we fully realise the potential of our investment in business and the extraordinary commodities that are our people."

You'd be surprised to know that this business maverick is in fact humble and down to earth - in short, truly authentic. Yet, driven like the winter snow since her early days, with an ambition and passion that kept her leading the pack in many imaginative, youthful pursuits as the local neighbourhood counselor, team leader and piano coach (all at 13 years old!). She says, "if I look back, the truth is I didn't know anything about goals, dreams or visions or where my imagination would lead me, but now I'm actually living the dream because everything I've ever wanted to be or become or do, I've been blessed to achieve. My journey has changed and morphed in different ways. As an adult, I'm entrepreneurial and I'm still always leading people - but 'leading' has come to mean something different to me now; if you lead the way, you must live the way, and that's important."

There are certain traits from her childhood that have not only remained, but flourished. She is very adventurous, curious and pioneering in all she does - even more so today than yesterday. It's one of the keys to her success. As Lyn scales up, certain realities rear their heads, the one being delegation. She confesses, "I used to be hands on and do everything myself, but only now, so late in the journey am I realising the value of delegating. I realise that if I want to accomplish what I want to still achieve, I need to go broader and faster and to be able to do that, I need to surround myself with the right people." Lyn calls her team a 'tribe' and when one gets acquainted, there's the realisation that she's got it spot on. As one of her peers commented, Lyn is like Mother Teresa with Warren Buffet's brain! This is a tribe, a bona fide tribe of committed warriors, warriors who are not doubtful of their own capability and will deliver on

the vision because they believe in it so much. Lyn says, "we're all motivated to really have a meaningful impact on peoples lives." These warriors are changing lives by empowering through education, it's a simple formula with a life-altering result. Knowing that there is hope of a better tomorrow is a far greater way of starting your day than waking up with no sense of purpose. Lyn says, "It's amazing - once the mind is engaged and knowledge processed, there is an awaking of greatness inside, and a new kind of hope is born."

As Lyn has achieved one game changing victory after another, this woman has never rested on her laurels. "As Mahatma Gandhi says, 'be the change that you wish to see in the world.' I've always been driven irrespective of where I am on the journey. When you live a purpose driven



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life, you can never slow down," says Lyn. She's a firm believer in continual re-invention. To Lyn, it's a matter of being curious as to how far you can go. In 2017 she decided to enroll for a helicopter pilot's license. She says, "I knew with this challenge I had to really dig deep and face my fears. The fear is not about flying. It's when you're sitting in that chopper, the controls in your hand and you know then - you are totally owning your life. That's the real challenge - to remove all the noise so that you're just vulnerable and alone - that's what a real challenge asks of you."

Lyn and her formidable team at KLM Empowered are changing lives in a very real way. Everyday. She says, "We're opening the windows of the mind. I'll walk into a classroom of Learners a few weeks into a programme the lights of knowledge are literally on. It's like these individuals have been handed a super power to know more and to be more. It's astounding for these youngsters and even seasoned employees that have had the opportunity to come together as a collective and share knowledge." But what about failure? Failure to achieve, failure to succeed? To

her this is a gift, she says, "There will always be failure. It's part of what keeps us pressing on. What failure teaches you is resilience. You're more resilient, more empowered and better equipped mentally to deal with so much more; you rediscover who you are - your flaws and strengths - and it teaches you how to focus. I've had many a hard lesson along my journey; I've lost and I've fallen, and I've had days when the lights stay on but the door stays shut. The key here is acceptance. When you learn acceptance when things go wrong - you have the power to change that; as long as you keep believing in yourself and wake up with a hope of a better day, and a knowing that you, in any small little way, are capable of great things" And Lyn is clear about the fact that it is never too late. Never. She adds, "who said we have an expiry date in the world of accomplishment and making a difference? Until you know the truth, you'll always be a seeker."

Having scooped the top honours as CEO Today's CEO of Africa 2017, Lyn doesn't subscribe to the expected gender upliftment model. She says, "I AM WOMAN and I am equal in the boardroom. I have men and women icons that inspire me, Oprah Winfrey - who's just incredible, and I gravitate towards business minds like Elon Musk and Richard Branson. Although I draw inspiration from such enlightened individuals who have so much to offer our world in terms of change and possibility, I don't seek to be anyone else but who I am. I just want to be me. I don't want to change my core being - I am happy with me. There are some key attributes to living a journey of such steady success. On the top of Lyn's list is staying connected. Nothing ranks with more importance. Being connected to the world, around the world, in your community is key. Lyn says, "If there's anything I can tell you, it's to be and to remain in the world, with

your mind and your heart connected to your people, your community and your purpose. You have to be plugged into the matrix, on the playing field, engaging with humanity because that's what's real - and that's what keeps you real."

*"To have a mind that's constantly on fire, is probably the most attractive part of anybody's make up."*

Ironically, given the extent of Lyn's connection with the world, she is actually an introvert you may catch from time to time, sitting quietly in natural surroundings, in silence and devoid of clutter - just naturally quieting her mind and focusing on her journey. To Lyn, this quiet time is truly 'me time'. An early riser, she's a morning person, loving the silence and serenity of dawn. There's an energy there that Lyn captures. Doing what she loves and loving what she does makes Lyn a very content and happy person, and a conquering titan all the same. However, like most supersonic individuals she strives to find a better work-life balance by going to gym, upskilling herself in exciting areas of self-development (like aviation!) spending time with her grandson, cooking up new recipes for her family and traveling to far and exciting cities. But balance is forever a work in progress according to Lyn; it's one of life's hardest projects to attain, to achieve, and to retain. Since she's the type that just hits the ground running, grabbing a bite to eat when and if she can, or working late into the early hours just to bring value to even the smallest project, "Balance - we don't always get it right, but as long as we never stop trying we'll begin to make friends with 'time', and learn when and how to draw a line in the sand," she says.

With "Balance and success" at the top of Lyn's to-do list, she enjoys a healthy disrespect for the conventional rules of society, a firm believer in 'go big or don't bother', many a team member has struggled to keep up. There's always a nervous energy when Lyn enters a meeting with a fresh new inspiration. But speak to any team member and without hesitation, they'll admit to loving it - to loving the driving energy that comes from this business maverick. Even her husband loves this unpredictability. She does not conform. She never has. She says, "Growing up, I was schooled in an environment where we were indoctrinated and taught to be the conservative dismissive. You had to conform, you had to know your place. I'm against that in every way because it silences the human spirit, it limits the mind and it victimises your future. I am empowered and I am human and I have purpose, and I don't see myself as a victim. I am a maverick."

It's scary and thrilling all at once to encounter the supernatural force that is Lyn Mansour and to witness the breakneck speed of growth at the juggernaut she has created, KLM Empowered. She's one of the few new breed of talented individuals changing the world's business landscape. Here is the maverick you've heard about, she's taking over the world and you're the spectator gasping in awe! 🌟

## KLM Empowered Quick Facts...

**KLM Empowered a registered DHET Private FET College services a diverse range of industries such as: transport and logistics; media and broadcasting; IT and communications; culinary, hospitality and tourism industries and is accredited across SETAs to name but a few.**

**Since its inception in 2005, KLM Empowered has dedicated its ethos to transforming the nation through purpose-driven education.**

**With its Level 1 B-BBEE scorecard and a highly experienced project management team, facilitators and operational professionals, a steady climb to success within the industry is the ever-onward goal for KLM Empowered and their team.**

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