

# PUTTING THE “HUMAN” BACK IN HUMAN RESOURCES



Janine Olivier.

New president of the South African Collieries Human Resources Association (SACHRA) Janine Olivier talks about improving workers' lives and advancing the role of women in the mining sector

Janine Olivier took on the role of president at SACHRA at the start of July and is human resources (HR) manager at the Thungela-owned Zibulo Colliery. Thungela, the largest coal exporter in the country, was certified as a Top Employer in South Africa by the Global Top Employers' Institute early this year.

SACHRA, a forum for HR professionals in the coal mining sector, gives members an opportunity to grow in a field that is often seen as a support function. However HR has a critical strategic role to play in any organisation's success, she says.

“As HR, we're responsible for attracting the right talent and then developing and retaining that talent so that we can take our business forward.

“At the same time, we must give our people every opportunity to reach their personal and professional potential.”

Added to this, she believes, positive people practices have the power to influence behavioural safety.

“It's up to us to ensure that our people can bring their best selves to work so that they can be safe and productive. Are they happy and healthy? Do they feel rewarded and that their work is meaningful? Are they responsible and accountable? And, if not, what are we as HR professionals doing about it?”

During her presidency Olivier will be building on the work the mining sector has done to create an enabling environment for women.

She notes that if the industry hopes to increase the participation of women, it is imperative that they are seen to occupy senior positions.

“The question is no longer whether women can achieve success in mining. They've been doing that for years. Now it's more about how we can grow women into positions that will strengthen the sector as a whole.



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“We should be asking how we can grow women into positions that will strengthen the organisation as a whole.”

– Olivier

“HR has a crucial role to play here too, especially in changing gender perceptions. We need to have programmes in place to help women grow their careers, while still being able to focus on their families. While equality and parity have not yet been achieved, we have seen a tangible uptick over the last

decade; we simply need to continue on this path,” Olivier concludes.

In her role at SACHRA, she's on a drive to grow the association's membership by attracting bright, diverse and dynamic new talent and putting a fresh new face on a body that has been serving the industry for more than 20 years. ■