



Dumisane Malinga, Managing Director,
Motseng Investment Holdings

Motseng Properties: Doing Things Differently

Motseng Investment Holdings is an investment company that specialises in property investments, soft services and industrials sectors. It also offers a wide range of property management services and facilities management, particularly in retail markets.

Originally formed through a partnership with Marriott Properties in 2002, Motseng Investment Holdings bought out its independence after only two years.

“At Motseng, growth is not only concerned with business growth, it’s about skills growth and it’s about doing things differently, smarter and better,” for Motseng Managing Director, Dumisane Malinga, this confident boldness sums up the philosophy of the company perfectly.

Motseng’s uniqueness in the investment business starts at the ground and builds from there. As opposed to companies who simply wear the coat of Black Economic Empowerment, in the form of BEE shareholding and equity levels, Motseng is a fully operational BEE organisation and is run as such in its day-to-day business. It is a model he hopes will become a business trend. “Motseng encourages values of professionalism, but also courageous determination,” Malinga states.

Over the last five years, and particularly during the global financial crisis, Motseng – along with many companies in the property sector – experienced some disappointments, but through it all, there has been some positive growth from that experience. Thanks to a unity of fundamental and sound business practises, Malinga feels that Motseng was able to combat the effects of the crisis. “With that in place, we can weather whatever storm that comes our way,” he says. Because of Motseng’s dealings in the retail property area, the effects had been tangible,

point of view, the property industry should not stagnate with the same people, and there should always be fresh blood injected into the sector.

Motseng wants the industry to attract the right kind of skills and talent, and, as Malinga argues, business in South Africa must appreciate the value of training more. Not only does business get a return on that investment in talent, in the form of rebates from government and the like, but there is satisfaction from seeing people becoming confident property practitioners.

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yet the company was quick to recover as the tide turned again. “Consumers,” Malinga says, “are now spending again, they are going back into the stores, but are wiser about how they spend their money.” So for Motseng, it is important to have investments that were sound enough to attract interest, offering better products and a little re-invention of the approach that the industry has towards the market, particularly in the case of the shopping centre and retail areas.

“Companies think of property management as a nice-to-have and not as an obligatory part of their business,” says Malinga. “The tendency is to rather have an in-house management system, but Motseng strives to offer something unique to this situation. The insight we bring to the sector is fresh and different.”

The company prides itself on being responsible for introducing some of the best qualified candidates into the property industry. In partnership with Pareto Limited, their primary client for whom they manage Durban’s Pavilion and Gauteng’s Westgate shopping centres, Motseng have initiated a training programme, which builds on the attributes needed to compete in the sector in persons who would not normally have exposure to the industry. “We hope, through this programme, we have contributed something to the skills development of the property investment industry,” Malinga says.

Malinga believes that growth and transformation, developing skills and widening the pool of talent, is essential to the evolution of business ideas, “if you have ten people in the room, you have ten ideas to source from,” he says. From Motseng’s business continuity

“It is our duty, those already in the industry, to give those who want to enter the business a fair chance,” Malinga stresses.

So what does Motseng hope for its future in the property sector? “Diversification is key,” Malinga says.

“We will, in the future, strive to have vertical integration of all the disciplines of the property market, from conception, through the construction phase to management excellence, and everything in between.

“When one does things smarter and differently, that’s when you find the opportunities,” he says. Malinga believes that Motseng can confidently re-position what they offer, recalibrate their way of thinking and re-engineer their processes to offer a variety of services and good value to existing and prospective clients. “Being able to offer that value helps the company grow,” he says.

Malinga says that South Africa sometimes misreads the issue of the lack of skills.

“Skills,” he explains, “are composed of four things, namely, formal training, access to information, correct application of this training and information and a willingness to learn.”

Each piece of the puzzle must be looked at to see the whole picture, yet willingness and the right attitude will determine how far one can go in any business.

“I think the property management industry has slowly and genuinely transformed, making it more sustainable instead of just being window dressing,” Malinga concludes.

“In the larger picture, South Africa is great at planning and executing, but we must look at how we follow through on our executed plans.” □