

❖ Q&A with Tania Conry



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Celebrating Namdeb gems: The value of Inclusion

AUGETTO GRAIG

Met Tania Conry, whose lifelong association with the diamond mining company has proven that inclusion of women in the industry to accelerate equal opportunities inspires to positively create a balance for a better tomorrow. She elaborates how this opportunity has given her tools to unlock her potential as a woman, and the unique culture allows her to contribute to the Namdeb legacy of Mining for Good, well beyond retirement.

How did you first hear about Namdeb?

My father was a CDM employee, so I spent the latter part of my childhood in Oranjemund.

How did you get your first job at Namdeb?

I relocated back temporarily to my family in Oranjemund during 2000 to recover from a serious motor vehicle injury, and I never left. I started to work for Namdeb as a temporary expedite buyer for capital projects to pay my bills.

What was your experience as a woman when you joined the company?

I could identify that everybody was made to feel welcome and treated equally. Even though my background was more commercial than technical, I was never made to feel inferior. Instead, time and care were taken to explain my function and role and how this fit into the bigger Namdeb picture.

What memory stands out from your first day on the job?

I started off in the engineering projects section, which was situated in what was

then referred to as the 'Chocolate Box', and I was fascinated that more than one project was running at the same time. Several projects to mine diamonds were either in the conception or execution phases. I previously worked in retail, and I realised on my first day that this was totally different and I had to expand my mind to think big. It was a very challenging and satisfying - but never boring - working environment that opened up my mind and where I felt I contributed.

How have working conditions for women at Namdeb improved since you started with the organisation?

There are definitely more equal opportunities awarded to women, and our representation in Namdeb has definitely increased. My opinion matters, and I am frequently involved in decision-making or requested for advice, regardless of my gender.

What is your current position?

I fulfil the role of supply chain purchasing manager.

What about working for Namdeb makes you proud?

The fact that Namdeb, first and foremost, always strives to conduct its business in a responsible manner and the fact that the business is still standing despite the

challenges and adversity throughout the years makes me feel pride as an employee. I'm also proud that employees from different departments can collaborate with mutual respect and as one team to execute the objective at hand."

It is my belief that Namdeb employees are proud of the brand.



At Namdeb, Tania Conry passionately fulfils the role of supply chain purchasing manager. PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

How has your time at the company changed you as a person?

My time at Namdeb has given me perseverance, resilience and collaboration skills for a world that is continuously changing and evolving.

How do your household, family and friends see Namdeb?

I am proud of the fact that I am a second-generation employee, as my father worked at CDM. Several of my colleagues' parents were also employed at CDM or Namdeb, so it is a great privilege and very unique honor to work together in this diverse and inclusive environment which was established by our parents years ago. My parents also reside in Oranjemund and have always taken an active interest in Namdeb, and I have heard many interesting stories about the past, which form part of Namdeb's positive legacy. I was privileged to having been able to purchase the house in which I grew up, making it my retirement home in Oranjemund when I retire.

What lessons learnt at Namdeb have you been able to practice in your life?

Namdeb is very considerate about the environment in which it operates, so I have become a true sustainability ambassador living out our Sustainability value by being an active recycler at home and I strive to continuously reduce my carbon footprint. I also try to emulate the company's STAIRS (Safety, Teamwork, Accountability, Innovation, Respect, Sustainability) values and believe that it is very important to always treat people with respect and importance and to always have a plan.

What do you hope to achieve in your time at Namdeb?

I would like to contribute to the longevity of the company by making a difference in my role as purchasing manager, and I would like to see Oranjemund thrive through collaboration with our Namdeb supplier base.

What advice would you give to other Namibian women considering a career with Namdeb?

These days, it is all about inclusivity and diversity, and as women, we are sometimes our own worst enemies. There are lots of opportunities for women, but you must work for them, as they will not fall into your lap. Create your vision, and remember that Superwoman (the comic-book character) does not cry. She gets up to fly and touch the sky, so keep on going.

When was the first time you saw a diamond?

A few years ago during a mine visit to the Red Area Complex, but I see and work with shining human diamonds every day at work.



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