

Press Release from Atlas Copco South Africa

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Atlas Copco exposes teenage girls to working environment & future career options

In acknowledgment of the importance of empowering young women for the promotion of socio-economic growth in South Africa, Atlas Copco invited 24 Grade 11 and 12 learners from Lethukuthula Secondary School, situated in Katlehong on the East Rand to share sound advice and career planning with the young ladies.

“This was the perfect platform to expose young ladies to a technical work environment and also to give them options for their future careers,” says Kgothatso Ntsie, Corporate Communications Manager for Atlas Copco South Africa who explains that this year was a bit different from what they normally do. “We decided to give the girls entrepreneurship guidance because not all of them are fortunate enough to have tertiary education opportunities. Job shadowing was not included in the agenda this year but we invited women role models who are in the technical field at Atlas Copco to address the young ladies.”

The day, which was hosted at Atlas Copco head office in Jet Park, Johannesburg, on 26th May 2016, also coincided with the Take a Girl Child to Work initiative, a project that Atlas Copco has supported over the years. The event was sponsored by Reality Wellness Group and was facilitated by Operations Manager, Angie Bazan. Reality Wellness Group has been in partnership with Atlas Copco for approximately 11 years as one of Atlas Copco’s service providers for health and wellness.

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“We are proud to host all of Atlas Copco’s wellness days and this year we decided to get on board with this career initiative,” says Angie.

Angie introduced the three spokespersons for the day - Lucy Netshishivhe who is a Qualified Electrician at Atlas Copco and works full time for one of the company’s contractors, Oliver Mateman, Customer Service Manager - Mining Division, and Sharon Seleke, Atlas Copco Apprentice. They shared their career experiences with the girls and also gave them a lot of encouragement for their future.

Sharing her life story and career with the girls, Lucy explained how Atlas Copco helped her to succeed. Lucy also motivated them not to be discouraged by the fact that most engineers, technicians etc. are men. “You can do anything you put your heart to and I am proof that today girls have the same opportunities as men.”

Oliver informed the girls about the importance of customer service and discussed his career journey with Atlas Copco. In closing, Oliver gave the girls some good advice: “Think about where you would like to be in 10 years from now and never forget that getting there takes hard work, dedication. But never doubt yourself and don’t lose sight of your dreams.”

Explaining why this event is such a great initiative for the girls, Sharon said, “I was never given this opportunity so you should appreciate and embrace this day because it allows you to see what you want to do with your lives.” Sharon also explained that it is not the end of the world if one cannot afford to go to university as there are many opportunities out there, like at Atlas Copco to help you forward.

Gretha Cook, Managing Director - Reality Wellness Group, discussed career planning with the girls. “Nowadays a career is seen as a continuous process of learning and development. It is not just a single occupation, it is a life long journey. Make sure you learn every day because it will benefit you going forward.”

Gretha explained the Holland RIASEC Theory – Theory of Career Choice to the girls which advocates that there are six types of personalities: Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising and Convectional. “It is important to find a career that suits your personality.” Gretha gave the girls a questionnaire to help them determine their personalities and possible career opportunities they might enjoy or relate to.

Angie ended the day by discussing four very important points; Self Awareness, Boundaries, HIV and Treatment. “Always find out who you are so you know which direction you need to go in, replace the negativity in your life with positivity. It is your responsibility to teach people your boundaries, show people how to treat you and know your sexual boundaries. Know the signs of trouble. A healthy relationship means equality, dignity and respect.” Angie says that it was an absolute privilege to interact with young adults prior to putting themselves at risk and before making wrong choices. “Take a Girl Child to Work is a great initiative to empower young ladies from an early start in life, and teaches them to take responsibility for themselves and have the power to make the right choices in life.”

Mandisa Kahla – English and Life Orientation Teacher at Lethukuthula Secondary school explained that this day brought a lot of clarity to the girls, some of whom were struggling with career choices. Lerato Mokoena – Grade 11 learner, learnt that engineering is not only for men and that anyone can choose an engineering career. “You can overcome your challenges and move towards your goals.” Grade 12 learner Londeka Ndaba, said she benefited from the personality questionnaire as it allowed her to make a better choice of career. “I also saw the dangers of HIV and how I can take control of my boundaries. I can now imagine where I want to be in 10 years.”

“The success of the day left us in no doubt that we will continue to support this excellent drive,” affirms Kgothatso. “It presents us with such a brilliant opportunity to communicate the many different career opportunities that Atlas Copco, as a global industrial group, has to offer and that it truly is one of the best companies to work for.

For us it is a win-win situation because not only do we have the opportunity to impart vital career information to the girls, it also opens the doors for us to potential future employees.” /Ends

Atlas Copco is a world-leading provider of sustainable productivity solutions. The Group serves customers with innovative compressors, vacuum solutions and air treatment systems, construction and mining equipment, power tools and assembly systems. Atlas Copco develops products and service focused on productivity, energy efficiency, safety and ergonomics. The company was founded in 1873, is based in Stockholm, Sweden, and has a global reach spanning more than 180 countries. In 2015, Atlas Copco had revenues of BSEK 102 (BEUR 11) and more than 43 000 employees. Learn more at www.atlascopcogroup.com