

GIDION MUNYARADZI



Gidion completed his apprenticeship training in 1996 and worked as an electrician for 6 years at Zimbabwe Alloys, never imagining that one day he would head up Safety, Health and Environment (SHE) activities for Tongaat Hulett. During his time as an electrician, his career aspirations were focused on becoming an electrical engineer resulting in him studying part time to achieve a Diploma in electrical engineering. His role as shift electrician allowed him to work closely with employees from various disciplines at all levels as he was the only electrician responsible for addressing electrical issues during the course of his shift. He therefore established good working relationships with shop floor employees, supervisory and shift management teams. During the same period, he was elected by fellow employees to represent them at a Steering Committee overseeing the implementation of a Behaviour Based Safety (BBS) process for the organisation.

This role entailed bridging communication between management and employees to not only develop Golden Safety Rules for the company but to also interact and positively influence fellow employees, promoting a safe behavioural culture among the workforce. It was during his tenure on this BBS Committee that he realised his passion in Occupational Health, Safety and Environmental issues, leading him to apply for an intra-company transfer to work as a full time BBS Champion. The successful turnaround of his organisation's SHE performance, which saw Zimbabwe Alloys winning a Silver Award as Anglo American's second best safety performing operation in the world, inspired Gidion to work harder for the safety of his colleagues. In 2005, Hippo Valley Estates (then a sister company to Zimbabwe Alloys) persuaded Gidion to join them and similarly contribute to their efforts in re-energising the BBS process. He accepted.

With Gidion's assistance, Hippo Valley's safety culture and management systems were improved, resulting in a significant reduction in work related injuries. On numerous occasions Hippo Valley was recognised as one of Zimbabwe's leading companies in Occupational Health and Safety at annual national Safety and Health at Work conferences. Gidion was promoted through various positions at Hippo Valley until he became SHE Manager for Hippo Valley Estates in 2007 and SHE and Sustainability Manager for Tongaat Hulett Zimbabwe in 2010. In 2011, Gidion successfully applied for the role of Tongaat Hulett Corporate SHE Manager, a position that he currently holds. In the meantime, Gidion undertook part time studies to achieve a Bsc (Honours) Degree in Geography and Environmental studies. He continues to pursue studies and development programmes to enhance his professional knowledge and experience.

Gidion takes pride in working with multiple leadership teams and employees across Tongaat Hulett's operations with a mission to completely eliminate work related injuries, maintain healthy lifestyles and protect the environment; to achieve "zero harm". The company's satisfactory SHE performance, sustained over the past few years, bears testimony to the fact that Tongaat Hulett's team efforts are delivering the desired results. Gidion says that he is proud of team Tongaat Hulett and he feels privileged to be part of a successful group of people who share the same "zero harm" philosophy.

He believes that every employee, regardless of their position or qualifications, has the potential to meaningfully contribute to the company's growth. Given the right exposure, development and with full commitment, there is nothing that can stop each employee from realising their full potential, which could include senior leadership roles.