



DSBD IGNITES ENGINEERING SPARK

Mfana Maseko Mathews is a qualified millwright Mechanical Engineer from Bethlehem, a small town in the Free State province.

The early exposure to gadgetry maintenance thanks to his mother's working environment triggered an academic inclination towards the electrical as well as mechanical world of engineering subjects whilst at high school.

In 2017, he registered his childhood dream Mfana Maseko Mathews Electrical Mechanical Services with (CIPRO) and in 2019 the doors of engineering grind open and sparks flew from electrical grinders as they chipped off chunks from giant metal blocks.

"I enrolled at Transnet School of Engineering after high school and upon graduation worked as a millwright."

"In 2019 the doors of MMM Electro-Mech services swung open for the first time and in 2020 a switch in the circuit board went up as business started to trick slowly leading to the recruit of three more personal to boost the team's capabilities," said Maseko.

MMM Electro-Mech has now attracted business from big companies in other towns in and around Free State province, with the bulk of the projects coming from companies in Bloemfontein.

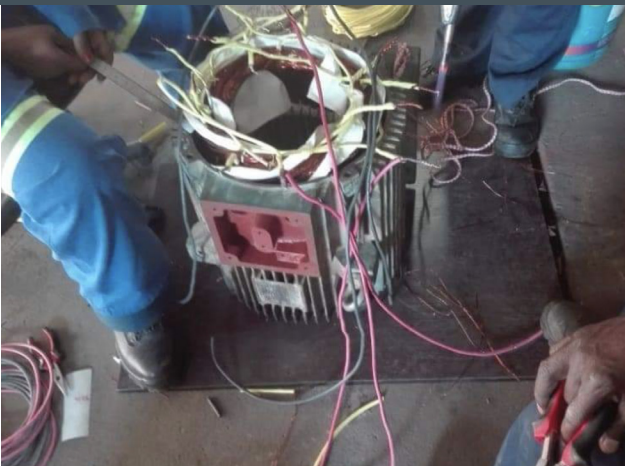
"We have now attracted more business from big companies like Afrimat, Afgri, Ferrero Groep and Bloukruin amongst others and a result we have increased our staff to six employees and two other temporal members who only come in when there's a need for more fire power work in our workshop".

Starting a business isn't for the faint hearted as problems start to develop as the business grows and various challenges start to show up as well.

"I thought after opening the doors the customers will start flocking, only to find out I was dreaming, that's when the real challenge started. Rent and salaries needed to be paid and any other operational cost."

"I think the most challenging experience I encountered is market penetration as it is not easy to build relationships and trust with well-established companies and corporates," said Maseko.

Another challenge that MMM Electro-Mech must overcome is constant certification of compliance as you need certain systems and equipment to be fully compliant, thus companies must comply with various international certification bodies and have in their possession modern machinery to complement the work down.



In 2022 November, MMM was shortlisted amongst the top 3 in the SMME category HOMETOWN SMME: SERVICES and we won the first prize of R100 000.

“My long-term goal is to have a one stop shop, where we will be doing repairs as usual, other side we will be selling spares and equipment. So, I will be retaining customers and attracting more of which that will increase productivity and improve profit.”

“I would highly recommend DSBD to any entrepreneur looking to grow, I have learned that such institutions help you when they progress and proof of what you are doing. My perspective changed since I started being operational that not everything needs connections and corruption, connections come through your hard work. I do not have any person I know from government institutions, but I received a lot of learning and assistance without any connections but through our work, so I believe in putting in the work and opportunities will follow” he added.



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They have not been hit hard by a power outage instead Maseko sees more business opportunities from it.

“Equipment gets burned/damaged, and we still make money from that. we also planning on inventor and solar panels rentals of which we see demand in that, we are looking on how we can invest on that.”

Maseko recommends that the solution to navigate power-cuts is to invest in solar power as he feels, buying generators and diesel is expensive for small enterprises.