

GIRL POWER

MIMI PIENAAR

The perfect fit...



As the first Head of Practice Management at Masthead, Mimi Pienaar sets the direction and strategy of the organisation's practice management offering and assumes responsibility for the competence and professionalism of the Masthead practice consultants.

Filling this position at an Exco level since 1 July 2010, Mimi offers a wealth of skills and experience through which she seeks to further entrench Masthead's leading position as a practice management specialist.

Impressive credentials

And she has the credentials to do so. Having operated in the financial service industry since 1984, her experience stretches across a variety of areas, namely strategic management, operations, mediation and facilitation, sales, marketing, human resources and industrial relations. She holds a BA (Psychology), CFP® and a Masters in Advanced Labour Law. She is a member of the FPI, SASLAW and IRASA, and has run her own business for four years.

Mimi believes her passion for working with people and passing on skills will enhance Masthead's practice management delivery. She also offers a feminine perspective through Masthead, whose membership comprises some 85% male independent financial advisors.

A new era

"There are comparatively few female advisors in the industry, mostly due to a continuing skills deficit stemming from the time when women didn't travel or work at night," says Mimi. "However, the fairer sex has proven they can run successful practices – Natasja Norval Hart recently won the coveted title of Financial Planner of the

Year for 2010, and Pat Blamire ranked among the two runners-up. This is the second time a lady has taken top honours since Debbie Netto received the inaugural award in 2001."

Critical skills

Mimi believes men and women run their practices differently. "Women have softer skills, which are critical for leadership and people development. They take a gentler approach to change, are wired to be multi-skilled, have the potential to nurture and use intuition more extensively."

She points out, however, that these skills can be learned. "The perfect vehicle through which to learn these skills is practice management. Masthead's practice management modules are based on generic business management principles. By honing advisors' skills and processes, and addressing the challenges that practices face, our interventions assist advisors to run more successful financial planning practices."

Advisors who already productively manage their practices may be instinctively applying the right skills and processes. "Even then, practice management intervention is useful in identifying and addressing any gaps."

Producing results

"Practice management has achieved significant results," says Mimi. "Generally profitability improves as a result of better cash flow, effective staff members, work flow or more time to see clients. The future of the practice is secured through succession planning and building value, which offers an opportunity to encourage women to grow their careers in the advice industry."

Masthead has more than five years' experience in delivering practice management interventions. "With us holding your hand, the change process may be easier than you think," says Mimi, "and the benefits for your practice better than imagined."

THE ADVISOR'S ADVISOR

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