

Fixing cars. Changing gender roles. All in a day's work

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As a young boy, Isaac Boshomane loved cars, motorbikes, even tractors – any vehicle that moved. He wanted to know what made them work. With his inquisitive nature, he saw how people took their cars to backyard mechanics, only to have them come back with more problems. Then it all fell into place for Boshomane: he was going to become a mechanic, one who solved problems instead of causing them.

Boshomane trained at a technical college, but struggled. The course was theory heavy, without enough practical application. Yet Boshomane pushed through, and opened his own business, Kgabo Cars. High unemployment in his community of Soshanguve left many young people without purpose. So Boshomane started sharing his skills with them on the weekends, and eventually opened his own training centre. By providing the youth with theoretical and practical training, he is helping them to become qualified artisans and provide professional motor services. Boshomane also teaches them leadership skills, self-awareness, and customer service. The female mechanics in particular are showing exceptional skills, having been given the opportunity to enter the male-dominated industry. They are fast learners, and pay attention to the finer details. “These women are the best mechanics I have ever seen,” Boshomane says.

Boshomane is driving his community forward, not only by offering employment to the youth, but in his pursuit of gender equality. He believes that social circumstances should not stop us from achieving, and creating opportunities for other people. “Where you come from does not determine where you are going,” Boshomane says. There’s a future for everyone.

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