

# Armstrong Appointments

## Placing people first

**With skilled consultants and technology that is ahead of its time, Armstrong Appointments has distinguished itself as a recruitment agency with an impressive history of permanent, high-level placements in both the domestic and international markets.**

Armstrong Appointments, which opened its doors in August 2003, specialises in placing candidates from middle to executive level in sectors such as marketing, information technology, mining, engineering, human resources, finance and logistics.

Managing Director Sharon Armstrong says her consultants have extensive experience in these industry-specific areas, which ensures there is thorough knowledge of each project.

The consultants are trained to search for short-skilled candidates by adopting strategies such as headhunting, referrals, networking, and standard search methods.

Armstrong Appointments is one of a very few agencies that hosts national road shows where they entertain top-level candidates to ensure they have the best skills in the industry.

"We currently use a recruitment database that was developed in the United Kingdom and Ireland," Armstrong adds.

The company's preferred clients include some of the largest corporates in South Africa and internationally. Locally, these companies include South African Breweries, Woolworths, AngloGold, First National Bank, Investec and Unilever. Internationally, they recruit for companies in Ireland and Australia; and for large auditing firms in the Caribbean, Africa and Dubai.

Armstrong explains that when recruiting, the candidate must not only have all the relevant skills, but must be hardworking, ethical, committed and honest. This type of analysis is done through competency-based interviewing techniques. "To ensure that Armstrong has exceptional consultants the company also runs



*Head Office based on the Umhlanga Ridge*

extensive psychometric testing which includes an ethical test that is set at a standard that is above normal ethical requirements, which ensures the values of the company are adhered to," says Armstrong.

Armstrong Appointments has been involved in extensive international advertising campaigns to encourage South Africans working abroad to return to their home country. This exposure, notes Armstrong, has benefited the company immensely.

Armstrong Appointments has a strong corporate social investment focus, and contributes to two organisations: The first one is I-Care, which is an organisation that makes a positive impact on disadvantaged and underprivileged communities as well as those in need of social support; the second organisation to which the company

contributes is a Corporate Education Funding Initiative that involves building up capital in an education fund.

The investment is owned by the company, which pays the contributions – but the previously disadvantaged child of the beneficiary benefits, as all proceeds from the fund will be paid to the university or educational institution to ensure the child gets a good education.

According to Armstrong, the company's major success over the last eight years has been that they "have grown into a reputable national and international recruitment agency, supplying most of the largest organisations in the country".

In addition, they have been nominated for a number of awards over the years, including the following:

- 2005 finalist in the Standard Bank KwaZulu-Natal Business Growth Awards for contributing to economic growth by focusing on turnover, profit, employment, training and social investments;
- 2006 finalist in the Standard Bank KwaZulu-Natal Business Growth Awards;
- A 2008 nomination for the "Standard Bank Salutes the Women of KwaZulu-Natal Campaign" in the Bright Stars Entrepreneur category; and
- 2011 finalist in the FNB KwaZulu-Natal Top Business Portfolio Awards in the financial and business sectors, which included some of the largest firms in the country.

According to Armstrong, one of the greatest challenges the company has faced was the recession, which had a huge impact on their international finance division. "But I think we managed to change our strategy, and quickly focused all our resources and energy into our local division, which proved to be very successful," she notes.

"We also made the decision to grow our organisation by 25% by embracing the opportunity to strengthen our team by recruiting more highly skilled recruitment consultants who had become available due to the recession and instability within the organisations that they came from."

Regarding the transformation issue, Armstrong elaborates: "Obviously, transformation is a critical element that needs to be addressed by companies in South Africa. Armstrong (Appointments) has continued to contribute toward the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment criteria.

"Over the years, we've been involved in financially supporting black-owned enterprises," she adds.

Where skills development is concerned, "we have ensured that our employees have had access to international recruitment seminars conducted via telecommunications from the UK to ensure they receive training that's the best in the industry. Along with the external training, we also continue our internal training," Armstrong concludes. ▲



*Sharon Armstrong, managing director*