

# Assisting with transformation

**MANY COMPANIES** have by now conducted black economic empowerment transactions, with many more setting about obtaining an empowerment rating from one of South Africa's recently-accredited verification agencies. There are even some industries that claim they have transformed so much that empowerment is no longer an issue for them.

However, Bravura Consulting – a consulting business focusing on the broad-based elements of empowerment – says while such gross inequities as “fronting” are becoming more of a thing of the past there's still a great deal more to do before transformation is fully embedded in SA's business culture.

Alana Bond, a founding member and MD of Bravura Consulting, says one reason industries may claim to have “fully transformed” when the evidence points to the contrary is that they have – in common with many large corporates – adopted a purely compliance-based approach to transformation without due regard for the true spirit of

the legislation. That view says if they can tick certain boxes they've transformed.

Says Bond: “We have a detailed understanding of the Department of Trade & Industry Codes of Good Practice and I'm convinced most people still regard empowerment as something akin to a tax, viewing it as a straightforward cost rather than a process. By contrast, we look at a company from the viewpoint of whether what it's doing to be compliant is in actuality adding value as well as transforming the business.”

Whereas some companies seem to be empowered in terms of the scorecard – but are in actual fact doing little to facilitate real transformation – other companies are spending huge amounts of money and resources that's actually not advancing their scorecard rating, says Bond.

“It's important to try to achieve ‘quick wins’. To that end we locate those areas within the business where relatively simple actions can achieve the most points rapidly. Companies need to be strategic about their initiatives.



Back: *Ledile Shadung and Xolile Rubushe*  
Front: *Alana Bond*

“After we have engaged with them, clients are often amazed that empowerment isn't as impossible as perceived and can be done in a positive way,” adds Bond. ■

**COPY:** *Eamonn Ryan*