**Road to Academic Excellence with Shelton Zvichauya**

What did you study?

* Master of Commerce specialising in Strategic Management

Why did you choose to study it?

* I wanted to build on my undergraduate degree, and since my bachelor’s degree was in Commerce, I had to look for a field that is within the commerce range. With regards to Strategic Management specifically, I am of the view that it is a discipline that is on the cornerstone of every organisation’s success.

How do you foresee this aiding your long term goal?

* My long term goal is to be a fully fledged academic, and this can only be possible if I subscribe to the concept of life-long learning. This means educating myself continuously for as long as I am alive.

How long have you been studying it?

* The whole program was supposed to be 18 months. The first 12 months went on smoothly, however the last 6 months, which was basically the last semester, was affected by the lockdown regulations and so everything ended up taking about 2 years. I enrolled in July 2019 and got my final results in June 2021.

How did you effectively manage your time while working and studying?

* I was studying through block-release sessions. This is a system whereby we attended lectures for 2 weeks then get back to the workplace for a month before coming back again. There are normally three sessions in a semester, then assignments and projects before writing semester examinations. That means the majority of the studying is done outside lecture time, and so my work was not greatly affected. I mostly utilized my weekends for studying and completing schoolwork. That being said, it was never easy balancing work, studies and family. Every now and then family time had to be sacrificed for my studies.

What lessons from your studying will you take into the classroom?

* The greatest lesson for me was time management and being able to complete assigned tasks in the assigned time period. The volume of work that we were assigned for completion within certain deadlines is something I have to continue with in my work and in my personal life.

What is the most valuable lesson learnt while studying?

* I have come to realise that learning is a life-long process. Whatever discipline we choose to learn and master, we do not become masters of it but rather students of it. We can really never reach a position of knowing everything, but we rather continuously expand our existing knowledge.

Next steps?

* My goal is to complete the whole NQF. I am one notch away from achieving that feat, and so my target is to have attained a Level 10 qualification by 2025. Having graduated with a university book prize, I should easily secure a bursary and so I will embark on searching for one to finance my next studies