

My GEAP Journey

Hi my name is Rashmee Ramdeen; I am the director at Zilon Trading (Pty) Ltd. We manufacture bulk bags for all your packaging needs. We are based in Merrivale just outside Howick. My GEAP journey has led me to build many relationships not only on a business networking side but also created many friends that one can say we are a big GEAP Family.

My business was introduced to the program by a lady called Glyniss from the SASDC [South African Supplier Diversity Council]. After being interviewed and then accepted on the program our family members [being a family run business], were ecstatic and I was eager to start my new adventure. Every Thursday was now set aside to spend my day learning and absorbing as much as possible from all the amazingly knowledgeable people we were introduced to.

At first it all felt like it was information overload and even at times seemed as if it was not going to be possible to learn everything about exporting my product. I kept thinking that I might not get to do this. As the weeks went by it all started to make sense and all the export/import jargon started making sense. I realised that I have a long way to go in order to be export ready and that there is always help out there with all the networking and meeting with people who know these things that can offer assistance when in doubt.

My meeting with my mentor Anne Morrow and Shan was great. They came out to meet me at my factory and saw how we made our bags. They were introduced to a machine that we just finished working on which was our new bailing press. This machine is able to reduce the size of our packaging and transporting of the bags to a third of the size it previously was. Now I was sure that in terms of us exporting the bags we would be able to maximise the space on a container. This is very important in export.

I have registered with the Chamber to be a member and am looking forward to being part of the bigger family of networking. The Geap program has taught us how to use our various talents and help each other by referral business, as well as by sharing what is working well in our own business that could work in other

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businesses as well. My Geap journey has brought me a lot closer to where I want to be in terms of knowing what to expect and what to look out for in terms of potential customers, how to read the documents and the channels to follow. I have managed to speak to and take a sample bag to PDC, a company that uses our type bags in their industry, this lead came from the PMCB as they are listed on the Chamber as a member as well.

I am looking forward to seeing what the next leg of my GEAP Journey is going to be. Thus far the knowledge and information shared has been priceless. The sales course I am currently on is also sponsored by PMCB and it has taught me a lot on what to do and what not to do when marketing my product.

I am indebted to Shan and her team for making our sessions so informative and trying to get the best people to train and impart their knowledge to all of us.

Kind regards

Rashmee Ramdeen

The Zilon Team

Rashmee Ramdeen

Director

Cell: 082 777 3232 • admin@zilontrading.co.za

9 Rookeridge Road • Merrivale • 3291



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