



Prof Vinessa Naidoo

Professor at the Business School, Marketing, Leadership and Branding Guru at the Faculty of Management Sciences.

Vinessa Naidoo is an inspirational woman and exceptional example of someone who's passion and resilience carried her to build a phenomenal career from scratch, despite difficult circumstances.

Hailing from humble beginnings, she grew up in Pietermaritzburg, where her late father taught her the value of discipline and respect. "Losing my father when I was 13 was one of the most difficult things I've had to deal with. However, our great memories and all he taught me, kept me going and inspired me to tirelessly work towards achieving my goals,"

After completing matric, Prof Naidoo scooped the American funded EOC scholarship and enrolled for a Bachelor of Commerce degree at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. She then proceeded to do her Master's in Business Leadership at UNISA, followed by a Doctorate in Leadership and Performance Change, obtained from the University of Johannesburg.

Her Doctorate in Leadership focused on the alignment of External and Internal Branding, clearly articulates that leaders must go all-out to ensure that their company's external brand (to customers) is aligned to its employees (their internal brand). Employees must be emotionally connected and feel that they are brand ambassadors of their organisation.

As a professional coach, MBA lecturer, former Khula Business Consultant and now acting Head of the TUT Business School, Prof Naidoo has been coaching and developing leaders for more than 10 years. She understands leadership from all sides, having served in an executive capacity as well as facilitating organisational change and

leadership development for many years. She was recently nominated to attend an advanced leadership seminar in Hawaii - the only delegate representing South Africa out of 20 countries.

During her tenure as the longest serving Head (Acting) of the TUT Business School, she has coordinated the accreditation of the Masters in Business Administration (MBA) NQF9 and the DBA. She also spearheaded the growth in the graduation rate from 15 MBA/Masters and Doctorate students in 20.. to 65 in 2017. Personally, she also received the Institutional Award for being the best Emerging Researcher of the year (Female) 2016, and successfully promoted 10 MBA and Master's students for graduation in 2017.

This year, she will lead the MBA students on a visit to Finland, as their first European destination. This will be the fifth international trip for the MBA students since her tenure as Director (Acting) of the TUT Business School.

She said, she would lead her students with the highest distinction of leadership, excellence and passion, for as long as she lives.

Prof Naidoo has been happily married for 28 years to Mr Naidoo, a successful businessman and entrepreneur with two thriving business entities. They have raised two equally successful daughters. One is a Medical Doctor (MBChB) and the other an interior designer (B Tech degree). Both daughters have received their respective qualifications *cum laude*.

