

# Clockwork's mentoring programme, GrowthLab, invests in young staff for comprehensive career growth

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Clockwork's youth mentorship programme, GrowthLab, celebrates its first successful year this Youth Month as the agency's primary internal junior leadership forum. GrowthLab has 20 junior staff members under the personal guidance of Clockwork's Exco committee, and was specifically created and designed to actively put younger staff on a path to self-improvement, whilst enjoying purpose-driven careers.



Motivated and conceptualised by co-CEO Nic Simmonds, GrowthLab is an extension of his passionate, authentic leadership policy. Opposed to the faceless corporate stereotype, the thinking behind the programme is to push back against the divide between junior staff and upper management often found in larger agencies. With this thinking in mind, the 20 members of GrowthLab are given carte blanche on which Exco member they would like to be mentored by. This provides opportunities for the juniors to interact with people in the business they would not normally have access to, as well as to learn, grow and develop the confidence often lacked when facing more senior staff. With the GrowthLab initiative, Simmonds gets to witness young staff become better managers and leaders. "I've always found that our younger staff are amazing at soaking up industry specific skills and knowledge by just showing up and working with their more experienced senior colleagues. There is this hunger for knowledge and a desire to grow, which I find really inspiring. GrowthLab is about creating collaborative spaces for young staff to explicitly focus on some of the broader skills in management, leadership and personal growth that can sometimes be overlooked in the daily routine of agency life," he states.

Sticking with the Clockwork values of authentic care and empowerment, GrowthLab invests in leadership, management and personal skills for all the junior staff members. Tackling quarterly themes that are chosen by the members themselves in brainstorming workshops, the programme focuses on general skills that are not necessarily specific to the marketing industry and can be used throughout their lives. Themes such as improved productivity, creative leadership, hinge career moments, and many others give the members the opportunity to curate an arsenal of skills for their careers ahead.

Being part of GrowthLab has added a dynamic layer of learning and insight to the younger staff members' lives. Production manager and GrowthLab president Palesa Booi is excited about her future under the GrowthLab programme: "I've learnt from all our leaders that you need to think of yourself as more than a number, or a job. You can lead ethically and make a difference no matter your level in the workplace. We're a team that creates an environment that makes it okay for you to bet on yourself. No matter your position, leadership begins at any stage, given the right environment."

#### Footnotes:

*Clockwork is a full-service, independent agency with branches in Johannesburg, Cape Town and the UK. Clockwork's clients include Microsoft, Netflix, Standard Bank, LG, Meta and many others.*

*Clockwork employs approximately 150 staff members and is a BEE Level 1 company.*

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