

## **CURRICULUM VITAE OF THABO LESHILO**

### **PERSONAL DETAILS**

**Full Names** : Thabo Jerry (Maphike) Leshilo

**Nationality** : South African

**Date of Birth** :

**I.D Number** :

**Contact Details:**

### **Career Synopsis**

I am the Politics and Society editor at The Conversation Africa, the non-profit news and analysis online publication. The site sources articles from the academic and the research community, which are then published and republished free of charge.

My journalism career started over 25 years ago as a cadet reporter at The Star, where I later became a Labour Reporter, Politics Reporter and Business Reporter. I was part of the launch team of Business Report in 1995, which amalgamated the Business Sections of newspapers in the Independent Newspapers stable.

I have been editor of Pretoria News, Sowetan, Sunday World and Business Times and a columnist. I have chaired the judging panel for the SAB Sports Media Awards and am on the judging panel of the Standard Bank Sikuville Journalism Awards.

I am a past winner of the Sanlam Business Journalist of the Year Award (small business section), a former Nieman Fellow in journalism at Harvard University (2008/2009), and spent a stint as a reporter at Daytona Beach News Journal in Florida.

I hold a B. Admin degree with majors in Public Administration and International Relations from the University of Limpopo, and have submitted my Masters thesis in Applied Ethics, focusing on Media Ethics, for marking at the University of the Witwatersrand.

My career highlights include the successful relaunch of Sowetan, which had suffered a huge loss in circulation. We managed to stem the loss and set the iconic newspaper on a path to growth.

I am a strong champion for press freedom, editorial independence and journalism in the public interest. Hence, I have been the deputy head of the SA National Editors' Forum and the head of its press freedom committee. I have also served on the boards of the SA Press Association and the Institute for the Advancement of Journalism.

### **Employment History**

#### **Current Position**

**Company** : The Conversation Africa  
**Date** : April 2015 to date  
**Duties** : Commissioning academics to write for the general public and editing  
**Position held** : Commissioning Editor

**Company** : Rekord Newspaper, Pretoria  
**Date** : April 2014 – March 2015  
**Duties** : Directing news collection operation and editing  
**Position held** : News editor

**Company** : Agang SA  
**Date** : May 2013 – January 2014  
**Duties** : Media strategist, communications  
**Position Held** : Communications director

**Company** : Fleishman-Hillard Public Relations  
**Period** : April 2012 – May 2014  
**Duties** : Media specialist and head of a corporate portfolio, providing strategic leadership to a team four  
**Position Held** : Director: Public relations

**Company** : Self-employed  
**Date** : November 2011 – April 2012  
**Position Held** : Freelance Writer and Editor  
**Duties** : Writing stories, editing

**Company** : Magna Carta  
**Position Held** : Chief Executive Officer  
**Period** : March 2011 – October 2011

**Duties** : Running the public relations company with a staff of 75; finding new business etc.

**Company** : Avusa Media

**Position Held** : Public Editor

**Period** : July 2009 – February 2011

**Duties** : Being the readers' advocate for the company's eight newspapers. Promoting quality, ethical journalism and enforcing adherence to the company's editorial policies; adjudicating reader complaint and writing a weekly column.

**Company** : Avusa Media

**Position held** : Editor-in-chief – Sowetan and Sunday World

**Period** : September 2004 – June 2010

**Duties** : Providing overall leadership for the production of appropriate content for the two publications. Ensuring the newspapers' competitiveness in order to maintain and grow readership. Ensuring both newspapers are produced to the highest ethical and quality standards. The job required leading a staff of 120.

**Company** : Avusa Media

**Position Held** : Editor: Business Times

**Period** : September 2003 – September 2004

**Duties** : Leading a team of reporters and specialist section editors in producing South Africa's biggest and influential business publication in line with the Sunday Time's market positioning.

**Company** : New Africa Publications (Avusa/New Africa Investments Ltd)

**Position** : Editor: Sunday World

**Period** : August 2002- August 2003

**Duties** : Developing and implementing editorial policies and systems that raised the bar for ethical standards on the racy tabloid.

**Company** : Independent Newspapers

**Position Held** : Editor: Pretoria News

**Period** : February 1989 – August 2002

**Duties** : Provided strategic editorial leadership for capital city's most important newspaper serving its core readership that includes the diplomatic corps, the military, civil servants and professional agencies.

Before Pretoria News, I was the Assistant Editor of Business Report, where I previously held such key editorial leadership positions as night editor, news editor, business editor and assistant editor.

I joined Business Report in 1995 from The Star, which I had joined in 1989 as a cadet reporter, covering general news and writing features before becoming a senior reporter covering labour, politics and business.

## **EDUCATION**

**Institution** : Tladi Technical High School, Soweto

**Qualification** : Matric

**Year** : 1983

**Institution** : University of Limpopo

**Qualification** : Bachelor of Administration (Politics, Public Administration and Political Development majors)

**Institution** : Wits University

**Qualification** : Certificate Programme in Principles of Management

**Year** : October 1993 – May 1994

**Institution** : Harvard University

**Qualification** : Nieman Fellowship in Journalism

**Year** : 2008 -2009

**Institution** : Daytona Beach Community College, Florida, USA.

**Qualification** : Institute of International Education Mid-term career development fellowship

**Year** : January – March 1993

I have also attended numerous newsroom management, management and leadership, advanced writing, labour relations and other certificate courses offered by, among others, the Commonwealth Press Union, Howard University and the Institute for the Advancement of Journalism.

## **References:**