

Beyond The Tracks: Jacques De Klerk



INTRODUCING: Jacques De Klerk, Security Manager

Starting Out and Progression

MEET Jacques De Klerk, the new Security Manager at Gibela. He joined Gibela in November 2024.

"I began my career in security with entry-level roles, where I built a solid foundation in operational security, risk assessment, and incident response. Over the years, within my 28 years of experience in the security discipline, I have obtained numerous national and international qualifications in security management, risk mitigation, and crisis handling. Currently, I am in my second year of studying towards a Security Management degree from the University of South Africa (UNISA), which is deepening my theoretical knowledge and aligning with my practical experience," shared Jacques.

Balancing Professional Life and Social Life

"Being in security management means that my work often extends beyond regular hours. My family understands this, and we've adapted over the years to ensure that my professional commitments do not overshadow our personal lives. Clear communication and setting aside dedicated family time help us maintain a strong connection. My wife, a professional nurse, understands the demands of my role because of her own experience in a challenging profession. We support each other fully, and together, we've created a home environment where balance is a shared goal. As a family, we cherish our shared love for rugby. Having season tickets for the Blue Bulls games at Loftus Versfeld Stadium gives us a chance to unwind and spend quality time together. These moments are an important way for us to recharge and bond. Even though my son never played rugby but excels in Hockey, and playing for provincial Hockey(Eastern Gauteng)," stated De Klerk.

Overcoming Challenges

"As a Security Manager at Gibela, I face a range of challenges that are both industry-specific and unique to our operations. The dynamic nature of security in the rail sector requires proactive measures, adaptability, and strategic thinking. Ensuring the safety of employees and visitors at our sites is paramount. Workplace incidents or external threats can disrupt operations and impact morale. As technology integrates into our operations, cybersecurity threats such as data breaches and system hacks become significant concerns," said Jacques.

Further explaining, Jacques added that "Gibela operates within diverse communities, and ensuring mutual trust and cooperation is vital to our success. Issues such as trespassing or community protests can pose challenges. The nature of security threats is constantly changing, requiring us to stay ahead of new risks. By focusing on innovation, collaboration, and proactive planning, I ensure that Gibela's operations remain secure and resilient. My approach is to view challenges as opportunities to strengthen our systems and build a culture of safety and security."

Instilling Values

"As a father, I believe in setting a strong foundation for my children by teaching them values that will guide them through life. I focus on principles that build character, foster resilience, and prepare them to make a positive impact on the world. Religious faith also plays a central role in our family. Through our religious practices and teachings, I instill the importance of **integrity**, **compassion**, and **gratitude**. Religion provides a moral compass for my children, helping them understand the right from the wrong and stay grounded in their beliefs," said Jacques.

"Respect is a cornerstone of our home. I teach my children to treat everyone with dignity, whether it is either family, friends, or strangers. Respect for oneself, others, and the world around us is something I model daily, encouraging them to listen, empathize, and value diversity. I emphasize the value of hard work and perseverance. By sharing my own journey and showing them the importance of commitment, I encourage them to give their best effort in everything they do, whether it is school, sports, or personal goals. I remind them that success comes through consistency and a positive attitude," he added.

"I believe the best way to teach these values is by living them. Children learn from what they see, and I strive to be a role model in how I approach challenges, treat others, and maintain balance in my own life," stated Jacques.



Jacques De Klerk, Security Manager, with his wife

The Journey & Memorable Experience at Gibela so far...

"One of the aspects I truly enjoy about working at Gibela is the culture of accessibility and collaboration. The interaction with leadership is unlike anything I have experienced in my career. At Gibela, leaders are approachable, engaged, and deeply invested in the success and well-being of their teams," stated De Klerk.

As he continued to reflect, Jacques said "on my first day, I was struck by how approachable and supportive everyone was, from my colleagues to the leadership team. This is unlike other workplaces where it takes time to integrate. Gibela's environment immediately made me feel part of the family(Gibela). This sense of belonging has stayed with me and continues to motivate me daily."

"What stands out most about working at Gibela is the alignment between the company's mission and my personal values. Being part of a team that prioritizes safety, innovation, and stakeholders makes every accomplishment meaningful," shared Jacques.



Jacques De Klerk after a hunting session at a farm.

Future Aspirations

“My professional aspirations are to advance in leadership, as I continue to gain experience. I aspire to further develop my leadership skills and take on even more strategic roles. I aim to contribute to shaping the future of security management, not only at Gibela but within the broader industry. I plan to pursue additional certifications and training to stay at the forefront of industry developments. This will help me remain adaptable and innovative in the face of new challenges in ensuring that I produce the best strategies and solutions in my role,” shared Jacques.

He added that “personally, I am committed to play an active role as a parent in my children’s lives as well as being a responsible husband to my wife. As my son transitions from high school into the next stage of his life, I want to support him as he pursues his own dreams, while continuing to strengthen the bond with my wife. I aim to continue finding the right balance between work and personal life, making time for the activities that I love such as playing action cricket, watching rugby, and spending time outdoors hunting. Above all, I want to live a life that is purposeful, focused on building meaningful relationships, contributing to my community, and maintaining a positive impact on those around me.”

One-Day CEO

“If I were the CEO of Gibela for one day, I would implement a "Braai Day" once a week, where the entire company comes together to celebrate South Africa’s rich braai culture. Here’s how I envision it:

1. A Dedicated Day for Team Building

One day each week, we would set aside time exclusively for a company-wide braai. It would be an opportunity for employees to relax, bond, and take a break from their busy schedules. The emphasis would be on bringing the team together in a more informal setting where everyone can connect, enjoy good food, and unwind.

2. No Chicken, Only Real Meat

As part of the tradition, chicken would be banned (because, as we all know, chicken is practically a vegetable!). Instead, the focus would be on real, hearty meat such as steaks, boerewors, lamb chops, and all the other delicious cuts of meat that make a South African braai truly special. This would not only encourage people to enjoy authentic local cuisine but also create a fun, light-hearted atmosphere.

3. The Power of Tradition

Braai Day wouldn’t just be about the food but rather about celebrating our culture, fostering a sense of unity, and creating lasting memories. By sharing in the joy of a well-cooked meal and good company, we can build stronger relationships and improve morale within the company,” stated Jacques.



Jacques De Klerk, Security Manager, with his son



Jacques De Klerk enjoying his social time with friends and family