Meet Fatima Motala: NADA Transformation Committee Convenor and Chairperson, Dealer Principal, NMI Umhlanga (Mercedes Benz Umhlanga)

1. **How long have you worked;**
   - In the motor industry: 20 years
   - In this dealership/company: 20 years

2. **What do you love about this industry?**
   Fast pace, ever changing, always a new challenge

3. **What is your take on Women in the Motoring Industry?**
   Women still find themselves in the shadows of the "old boys club", but that's changing at a rapid pace with focus on women empowerment and identifying women contributions to the motor industry. There is a certain sense of intimidation around strong women taking on roles within the industry, yet women themselves are open to working together with men without any gender distinctions.

   Women are strong, passionate, dedicated, and detail orientated. Women are able to grasp and take on most challenges, as do our male counterparts. They are generally empathetic and provide an overall balanced approach to situations.

4. **What strategy/strategies have been key to your growth in the industry? Personal or otherwise?**
   My training pathway both theory and predominantly practical has allowed for my personal growth in terms of self-confidence, trusting my capabilities and securing my position within the company. My ability to adapt to the market and the position as well as the individuals and personalities I've had to work with.

5. **What would you like to tell young women who may want to get into this industry?**
   Don't let anyone tell you that you can't do something. You will soon find out that you can do it as well as they can, or sometimes better.
   Don't be intimidated by this so-called male dominated industry.
   Stand firm in your beliefs and work towards achieving your goals.
   It's a long journey but, a very rewarding one.

6. **What three words best describe you?**
   Determined, passionate, self-motivated

7. **Do you believe that senior-level women are under the same pressure to perform right now as senior-level men?**
   I am generalising here, but it is my belief that women at this level are under massive pressure. In addition to driving the business, there is a continuous, unspoken, added pressure to justify or prove ones' self, prior to tackling the actual challenge at hand. It seems that decisions and outcomes are scrutinised more than those taken by male counterparts. Women are seen as "*emotional*" as opposed to "*passionate*" and "*arrogant*" not "*confident*".

8. **A good mentor can make a big difference when it comes to career growth. This is especially true for women in male-dominated career paths like the automotive industry. Do you have a mentor or have you ever worked with a mentor in the advancement of your career?**

   I have been fortunate to have had various mentors along this journey who added immense value to the different aspects of my career. They have motivated me, kept me focused on my career path, allowed me to question the status-quo and they exposed me to areas that developed both my knowledge and self-confidence.

9. **What was your biggest challenge and achievement in your business?**
   Challenge: Getting colleagues to embrace the change to a female Dealer Principal.
   Achievement: Building trust over a period of time. Creating a culture of 'one' inside the business with equal opportunities being open to all.

10. **What was your first paying job?**
    I had a part time job at Truworths while studying at uni.

11. **Who inspires you?**
    Without question, my mother. She is strong, determined and hardworking

12. **What kind of music do you like?**
    Pop as well as alternative music

13. **What's the best place you have travelled and where would you still like to go?**
    Best trip was to Arjeplog, in Sweden. A unique winter driving experience.
    I would like to experience the Northern Lights.

14. **As a child, what did you want to become when you grew up?**
    I wanted to work in the travel and hospitality industry.

15. **What was the best life lesson you've been taught?**
    Perseverance

16. **Your favourite book ever read?**
    The kite runner, by Khaled Hosseini.

17. **One item on your bucket list?**
    Skydiving