

ethos.


Kyla Smith

Aspiring Luxury African
Travel Professional

PEOPLE • DETAILS • PURPOSE

*Prepared in support of my for my career move into **Luxury African Travel***

WHAT DRIVES ME

Some career moves are driven by progression. Others are driven by purpose. For me, the most fulfilling opportunity combines **both**.

My career has equipped me with the operational leadership, project management and customer experience skills needed to coordinate complex operations.

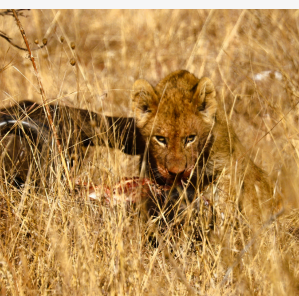
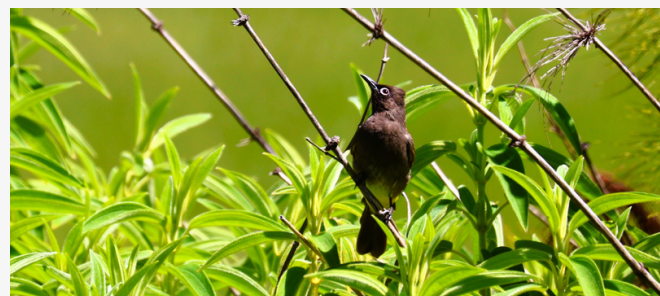
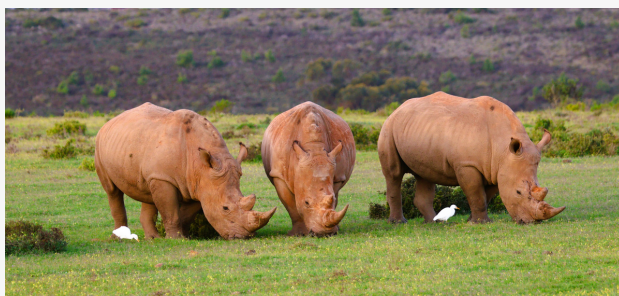
Outside of my work, I've developed a **long-standing passion for Africa** through completing my FGASA Level 1 Field Guide training, developing a keen interest in conservation and eco-tourism, and enjoying many personal safari experiences across South Africa.

Over time, I've realised I'm at my best when my work reflects something I genuinely care about. Finding opportunities that align my professional strengths with my personal values has become increasingly important to me.

I'm particularly drawn to organisations that create exceptional experiences while fostering a deeper appreciation for Africa, conservation and meaningful travel. Contributing my skills in an environment that aligns with these values would be incredibly rewarding.

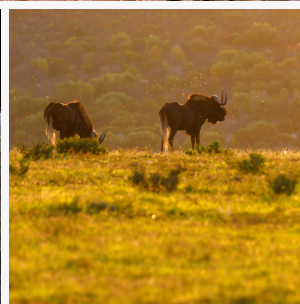
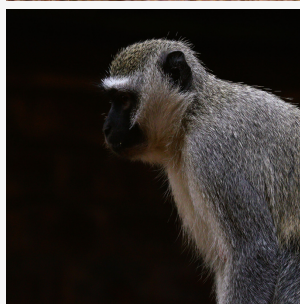
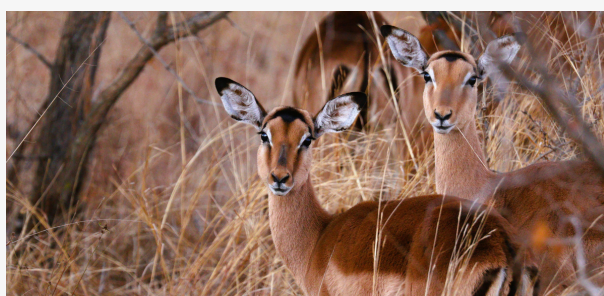
WHAT I BRING

- Operational leadership
- Project delivery
- Customer experience
- Process improvement
- Attention to detail
- Calm under pressure
- Passion for Africa
- Customer-centric mindset



**AFRICA CHANGES
YOU FOREVER,
LIKE NOWHERE ELSE
ON EARTH.**

**ONCE YOU HAVE BEEN
THERE YOU WILL
NEVER BE THE SAME.**



DESIGNING SEAMLESS EXPERIENCES

It didn't take me long to realise that the part of my work I enjoy most isn't managing projects, improving processes or coordinating teams.

It's designing experiences.

That might seem like an unusual way to describe a career in ecommerce, but when I look back, it's the thread that connects almost everything I've done.

I approach every challenge by asking:

- What experience are we trying to create?
- Where could friction interrupt that experience?
- How can we remove complexity before it is noticed?
- How do we create confidence for everyone involved?
- What can we do now that will make everything feel effortless later?

I don't see systems, spreadsheets and workflows as the end goal. They're simply the framework that allows someone else's experience to be seamless.

In many ways, good operations should almost be invisible. Customers shouldn't notice the countless decisions, conversations and contingency plans happening behind the scenes. They should simply feel confident that everything is working exactly as it should.

That's what excites me about luxury African Travel.

Behind every remarkable journey, every thoughtfully curated itinerary and every smooth transition from one destination to the next is a team of people quietly solving problems before travellers ever know they existed.

To me, that's where exceptional experiences truly begin, not in the moment they're enjoyed, but in the countless decisions that make them feel effortless.

WHAT I'VE LEARNED ALONG THE WAY

Over the years, I've noticed that the projects I'm most proud of all have a few things in common:

- They start with understanding the customer as well as the process.
- They remove complexity instead of adding it.
- They rely on clear communication and strong relationships.
- They pay attention to details that many people might overlook.

And perhaps most importantly, they create confidence, because when people feel confident that everything is under control, they're free to simply enjoy the experience.

Those are the standards I try to bring to every piece of work I do.

DESIGNING EXCEPTIONAL EXPERIENCES

One thing I've come to appreciate is that my way of thinking isn't limited to my career.

Whether I'm planning a wedding, hosting friends for dinner or organising an event, I naturally approach it the same way I would approach my professional projects.

I start with one question:

"How do I want people to feel?"

Everything else follows from there.

When I planned my own wedding, I wasn't focused solely on creating a beautiful day. Of course I wanted everything to look wonderful, but what mattered most to me was creating an experience where every guest felt welcomed, comfortable and genuinely considered.

Every decision, from timelines and suppliers to seating arrangements and final walkthroughs, was made by asking what would create the best possible experience for everyone attending.

That same mindset has been the forefront in other parts of my life. I've planned corporate events, regularly host curated dinners for friends and family, and have been trusted to coordinate both my father's wedding and a close friend's upcoming wedding.

I've realised that people don't ask me because I enjoy organising logistics. They ask because they know I'll think about the details that influence how people feel.

HOW I MEASURE SUCCESS

Success isn't measured by whether everything went exactly to plan.

It's measured by how people remember feeling afterwards.

That's the standard I naturally hold myself to. If people leave feeling relaxed, cared for and believing that every detail was thoughtfully considered, then I know I've achieved what I set out to do.

MY DEFINITION OF EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE

I've always believed that exceptional service is less about exceeding expectations with grand gestures and more about consistently getting the small things right.

The details that many people never consciously notice are often the ones that leave the strongest impression.

- It's remembering a preference before someone has to repeat it.
- It's anticipating a question before it needs to be asked.
- It's recognising when reassurance is needed just as much as a solution.

Most people won't remember every interaction they had with a company. They'll remember how those interactions made them feel.

- Did they feel heard?
- Did they feel looked after?
- Did they feel like just another customer, or did they feel that someone genuinely cared about creating a positive experience for them?

I've learnt this throughout my career in customer experience. Problems are sometimes unavoidable, but how you respond to those moments often defines the entire relationship.

The final interaction is usually the one that stays with people the longest.

That's why I've always believed that exceptional service **isn't about following a script**. It's about being fully present, listening carefully and understanding what matters to the person in front of you.

To me, luxury isn't simply beautiful accommodation or extraordinary destinations. Luxury is the feeling that every detail has been thoughtfully considered before you even realised you wanted it.

That's the kind of experience I strive to create, whether I'm leading a team, planning an event or helping a customer.

WHAT MATTERS MOST TO ME

Paying attention to the small details that tell someone, "***This was created with you in mind.***"

Because when every detail has been carefully considered, people rarely notice the work. They simply remember the experience.

I think that's exactly what makes exceptional service unforgettable.