

Press Release from Atlas Copco South Africa

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Atlas Copco shares technology expertise with Wits Mining Engineering students

Atlas Copco Mining and Rock Excavation Technique shared valuable practical information on the diverse and fascinating field of mining with 33 final year BSc Mining Engineering Honours students from the University of the Witwatersrand on 29 September 2015.

“South Africa’s mining, industrial, business and commercial future lies firmly in the hands of our youth and how aptly they are able to apply their knowledge when they embark on their working careers,” says Kgothatso Ntsie, Corporate Communications Manager for Atlas Copco South Africa. “I decided to extend an invitation to the students to join us for a few hours at Jet Park-based Atlas Copco House to gain an insight into the multi-tiered business relationships between the customer (in this instance the mining industry) and the supplier which goes far beyond simply the sale of equipment to include expert advice, after-sales service, etc. It is essential that students, irrespective of their field of study, gain a practical taste of the working world to assist them in orientating theory within the perspective of real situations.”

The day’s proceedings kicked off with a presentation from Vince Tyler, Business Line Manager – Underground Rock Equipment, who gave an overview of Atlas Copco’s expansive range of underground as well as opencast mining equipment and consumables. Vince shared with the students that equally important as the supply of world-class quality equipment solutions is the development of long term customer relationships. “Every time we supply equipment we enter into a partnership with our customer so that we get to know his specific requirements so as to be able to offer the best solution to meet not only his immediate but also his future needs. We support our customer over the equipment’s life-time.”

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Following Vince's Q&A session that prompted some excellent questions and yielded interesting discussions, students were taken on a tour through Atlas Copco's Distribution Centre and workshop. All this activity led to some very hungry students who were treated to lunch in the Atlas Copco canteen.

Wits students, Siphwe Nkosi and Steven Valoi, shared their thoughts on their Atlas Copco experience and agreed that the day was extremely valuable. "The time spent at Atlas Copco was for me the perfect follow up to a tour to a number of mines in Mpumalanga and Limpopo they sponsored in June 2015," remarks Siphwe who, after graduating, will focus on obtaining her blasting certificate in 2016. "My bursary enables me to work at Mponeng, South Africa's deepest gold mine located in Carletonville for 12 months where I will obtain my blasting certificate after which I will be a qualified mine engineer.

"I was impressed by Atlas Copco's innovative approach of looking at distinctive solutions to solve South Africa's unique mining challenges," continues Siphwe. "Atlas Copco understands that challenges for a gold mine in South Africa will be radically different to those for an Australian gold mine for example, which means that standard equipment will simply not do the job optimally. With the end-user or customer's best interests at heart, Atlas Copco goes the extra mile, conducts mine visits and studies conditions to be able to 'spec' a fit-for-purpose machine."

Siphwe was blown away by the immaculate state of the Atlas Copco workshop and says that a clean structured environment provides a good working space and conveys the message that they are a dedicated, committed and professional team with the ability to not only provide the right quality products but also offer the necessary back-up and maintenance support to keep customer downtime to an absolute minimum.

While Steven's main focus lies in underground technology, he says Vince gave him a good perspective on opencast mining. "What really impressed me was that while most companies are shying away from hard rock mining due to the extreme depths that are both difficult and extremely expensive to reach, Atlas Copco's focus is here, finding a workable solution for the local mining industry which is in dire need of assistance. They are prepared to share their know-how without necessarily selling any equipment. That is true commitment to South Africa and the mining industry!"

Steven says that Atlas Copco has also helped him to gain a better understanding of the current unique challenges facing South Africa's mining industry. "On the one hand the future of mining in this country lies in keeping up to date with modern technology through mechanisation while on the other hand being mindful of the labour force. It is about keeping a fine balance between the level of mechanisation and people skills."

Siphiwe and Steven felt that Atlas Copco went out of their way to give the students a memorable experience which made them all feel very special. "On behalf of all the students, we extend a sincere thank you to Atlas Copco for adding so much value and for exceptional experience that we will be able to apply in our future careers." /Ends

Caption to photos

1. Atlas Copco shares expertise with WITS Student _Kgothatso Ntsie (centre) with Steven Valoi and Siphiwe Nkosi
2. WITS Mining Engineering Student gained a practical taste of the Working World during their visit to Atlas Copco Mining & Rock Excavation - 29 September 2015
3. Atlas Copco Mining & Rock Excavation Technique sharing valuable practical information with 33 final year BSc Mining Engineering Honours Students from WITS - 29 September 2015

Atlas Copco is a world-leading provider of sustainable productivity solutions. The Group serves customers with innovative compressors, vacuum solutions and air treatment systems, construction and mining equipment, power tools and assembly systems. Atlas Copco develops products and service focused on productivity, energy efficiency, safety and ergonomics. The company was founded in 1873, is based in Stockholm, Sweden, and has a global reach spanning more than 180 countries. In 2014, Atlas Copco had revenues of BSEK 94 (BEUR 10.3) and more than 44 000 employees. Learn more at www.atlascopco.co.za.