

# Feminine attributes more relevant to business

Speaking recently at a preview of his new book, *Value through Values*, Jerry Schuitema told members of Women in Finance (WIF) that by and large, feminine attributes of nurturing and caring are becoming more relevant to business than the conventional categories of aggressiveness and being predatory.

“Of course generalisations are always dangerous, but without assuming that these traits cannot exist in either male or female they do impact on company behaviour,” he said.

“The new generation organisations will have to be built on higher human values such as care for others and compassion, attributes that women seemingly are more comfortable with than men. This will automatically lead to women being more seriously considered for company leadership, independently from affirmative action or women's rights lobbies. Indeed the latter could muddy this trend.”

The key and fundamental development was the way the understanding of what drives good business was shifting from being profit-driven to being market-driven. In Schuitema's view, the two are not synonymous: the first puts shareholder value ahead of customer service as the fundamental purpose of business.

WIF is a non-profit, national organisation promoting women within in business, and assisting in the empowerment of women in the broader market with regards to financial literacy and finances. WIF was formed with a view to carrying out the objectives laid in terms of the Financial Sector Charter and the policies which have been promoted by Department of Trade and Industry in terms of the support for creation of women-owned SMMEs.

Colleen Larsen, CEO and founder of WIF, welcomed Schuitema's new book, saying that it promoted a return to values for business.

“*Value through Values* should be a text book for women in business as it supports the notion that people can achieve personal abundance and contentment while being of service to their fellow human beings. It offers a contribution-based approach which is a refreshing and much-needed alternative to the greed and pure profit-based philosophy that has dogged business. The book is particularly relevant in terms of unleashing entrepreneurial behaviour for growth,” she said.