

# Redefining creative direction with Shilo Maloney

 By [Karabo Ledwaba](#)

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Sisonke 'Shilo' Maloney is known as the young creative director who knows how to do a big job.



Shilo Maloney is the creative director at Lucky Hustle.

Throughout his career he has led creative projects and campaigns for brands such as Vodacom, KFC, Defy, Coca-Cola, MTN, Jägermeister, FNB, DStv, Showmax, Multichoice, Sprite, Standard Bank, Johnson & Johnson, Sanlam, Jaguar, Land Rover and much more.

**Positive voice**

As the creative director for young agency Lucky Hustle, he says it's important to be a positive voice for his community by promoting cultural authenticity when he is in the room with big brands.

“ I think any Black creative will tell you, there seems to be a lot more weight on you in advertising. I think when you're in the room and you're brainstorming people are looking at you for cool phrases where they can use Black faces to drive that market. So as someone in that room you kind of have to sit there and align yourself with how you want to represent your community ”

As a kid, the award winning creative wanted to be a film director and screenwriter after being influenced by blockbuster movies like *Transformers*. He went to Afda where he was introduced to the possibilities of working in advertising.

## Opportunities

“When you get to third year at Afda they start to talk about what is going to happen if you are not going to postgrad. I wanted to go straight into the industry, and lecturers float the idea that you are probably going to start off in advertising long before you get to anything feature or TV show related if you are lucky,” he says.

After graduating he was lucky enough to find a job that was a happy medium between advertising and filmmaking.

“I worked for a design agency for Multichoice and the role I had was a promotional director, so directing the promotion of content that DStv produced,” says Maloney.



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Part of his responsibilities was writing conceptual copy to promote DStv, write scripts and look at existing footage and make a narrative from that.

“I could take my love for film and come up with creative ideas to promote the content,” he says.

## Finding your identity

One of his main challenges as a newly employed graduate was finding his identity in new spaces. He says it's important to not compare yourself with people who have been in the industry for decades longer than you.

“As creatives you never feel like you are enough, it's about getting over that insecurity and understanding that no matter

how young you are you deserve to be in that space.”

Maloney says his highlights during his career was being entrusted to do senior work despite being a junior.

“I have been trusted with working with big brands and I think being recruited as a creative director at 27, when it was my goal for 30, has been the biggest eye opener that on this journey people believe in me for a reason and that I belong in this space,” he says.

## Always value growth

Maloney’s advice to young creatives is to never stop growing.

“You need to earn your opinion in the room, you have to work hard and put yourself out there and grow your voice. The only way people are going to listen to you is if you work hard, you have to take risks and it’s important to always look towards growth. I don’t think I would be in my position now if I stayed at my first job for five years,” he says.

He adds that it is also important to advocate for yourself to be paid your value and not be afraid to bring up these discussions with stakeholders.

“You can’t demand a lot of money as an intern but you have to make sure that in every new job you are moving up in your pay scale. You have to protect your value, not just what you contribute creatively but as yourself as a person.”

In the future he still wants to build his name in film and television but only after he has solidified himself in advertising.

“I want to be a powerhouse in advertising, and I love that I am in an agency where I can help build the culture and growing myself as a creative. I also want to give people opportunities,” concludes Maloney.

## ABOUT KARABO LEDWABA

Karabo Ledwaba is a Marketing and Media Editor at Bizcommunity and award-winning journalist. Before joining the publication she worked at Sowetan as a content producer and reporter. She was also responsible for the leadership page at SIVag, Sowetan’s lifestyle magazine. Contact her at [karabo@bizcommunity.com](mailto:karabo@bizcommunity.com)

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