A Black Man's New Definition Of Success



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'Unlocking the human truth behind the trend'

A 2015 TrendER Insights' study



A shift towards the
Next Generation
of successful **Black** men

All quotations are the exact words from our respondents. Please also refer to VOX POPS (Video Survey) attachment as an edition to the report.

Please email: mogorosi@trender.co.za
To request link to the VOX POPS videos

Research Methodology

❖ Research
Research was conducted using a sample size of 150 respondents
Age 25-40, Black males in urban areas , LSM 6-10

❖ Digestion
This phase involves the collection of all research data for analysis. In the digestion phase our trend analysts scrutinize all information received in order to export the data into relevant and meaningful insights. This is where we 'unlock the human truth behind the trend.'

❖ Report
In the report phase we use the research insights from the second phase to compile a consumer research report. These research reports are the tools designed to help marketers and brands gain a deeper understanding of the consumer market in their path to developing differentiating brand positioning, impactful communication and successful campaigns.





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The ever constant shift in lifestyle creates new experiences. These new experiences in turn redefine and create a new perspective to what success currently is now, compared to what it was.

Introduction

The objective of this research report is to uncover what it means to be a successful black man in Africa today. We look into the changes in perceptions and how the modern Black African man has redefined success for himself.

Some say success is, "about defeating ones struggles to live highly."

However, success is defined by the individual. One individual may reflect on his life, acknowledge all that he has accomplished and believe he has succeeded, while another can do the same and still believe success is yet to be attained.

There is a unique story behind each successful Black man. However their formula to success stems from common principles and set of beliefs.

This is what we uncover to gain a deeper understanding of the driving forces behind success for the modern Black man.

Money – *"My ticket to peace of mind"*

Lifestyle – As freedom of expression

Entrepreneurship – Is the highest qualification

Ubuntu – The connected African spirit

4 Key Areas Of Success

Money – *"My ticket to peace of mind"*

Money not as the end goal but rather a means to a comfortable life.

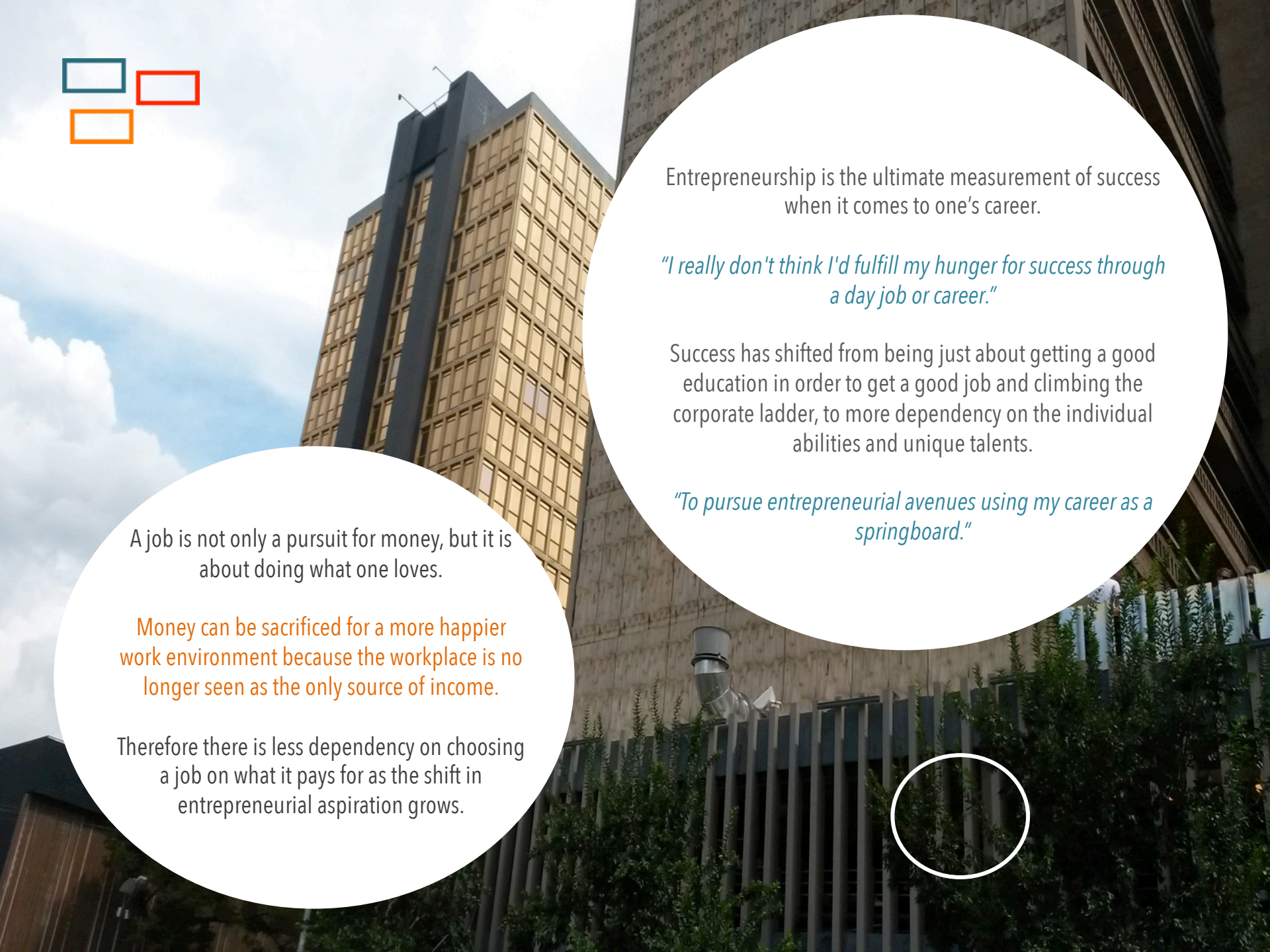
They want to be able to buy whatever they need and provide for their families without worrying about 'payday' as their only source of income.

Money provides access to the finer things in life and they want to be able to afford all that they desire.



Entrepreneurship – Is the highest qualification

"Unfortunately, I can't use the words JOB and Success in the same sentence."



Entrepreneurship is the ultimate measurement of success when it comes to one's career.

"I really don't think I'd fulfill my hunger for success through a day job or career."

Success has shifted from being just about getting a good education in order to get a good job and climbing the corporate ladder, to more dependency on the individual abilities and unique talents.

"To pursue entrepreneurial avenues using my career as a springboard."

A job is not only a pursuit for money, but it is about doing what one loves.

Money can be sacrificed for a more happier work environment because the workplace is no longer seen as the only source of income.

Therefore there is less dependency on choosing a job on what it pays for as the shift in entrepreneurial aspiration grows.



Lifestyle – As freedom of expression

"Not only do I want people to see me with all these achievements and money, but I also want to enjoy them to the fullest."



Shift from public admiration to self fulfillment.

It is no longer about having material possessions to gain public admiration but about living life to the fullest and enjoying every aspect of their money and achievements.

Success is now all about one's experiences in life and making the best of every moment.

"Living life to the fullest, I can do whatever I like, whenever I like, with whomever I like, without being stifled by resources."

We see this becoming more of an individual expression than it is about anyone else.

It's a way for one to be able to pat themselves on the back and be proud of what they have achieved, reflected by the activities they do.


Living with the ability to make positive change for others is one of the most fundamental duties of a successful Black man.
It is not even something one thinks about or considers but something that is deeply entrenched in one's DNA.
Ubuntu – The connected African spirit
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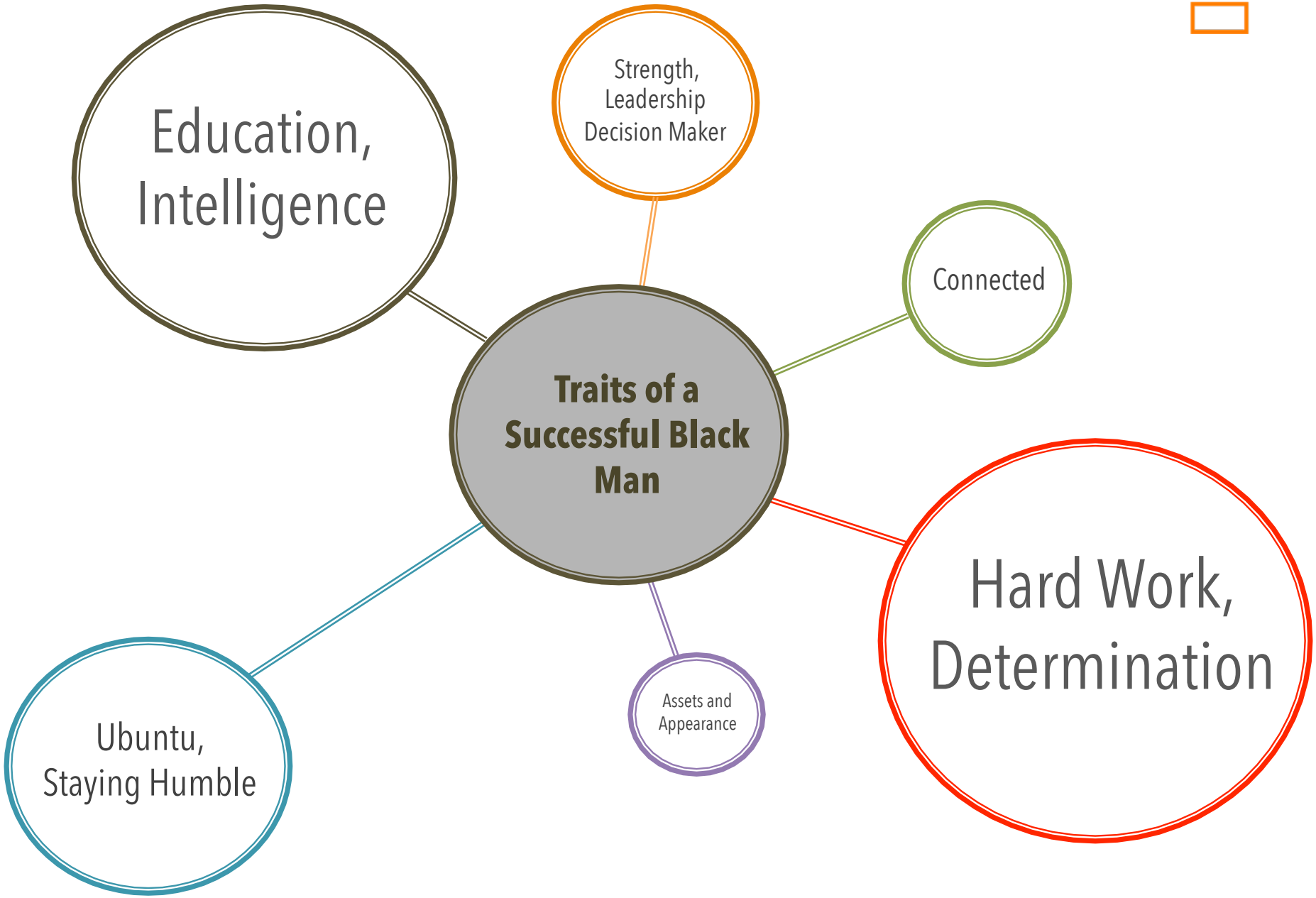


Fig 1: Traits of a Successful Black Man

*Size of bubble represents importance

Purchase Decisions Considerations

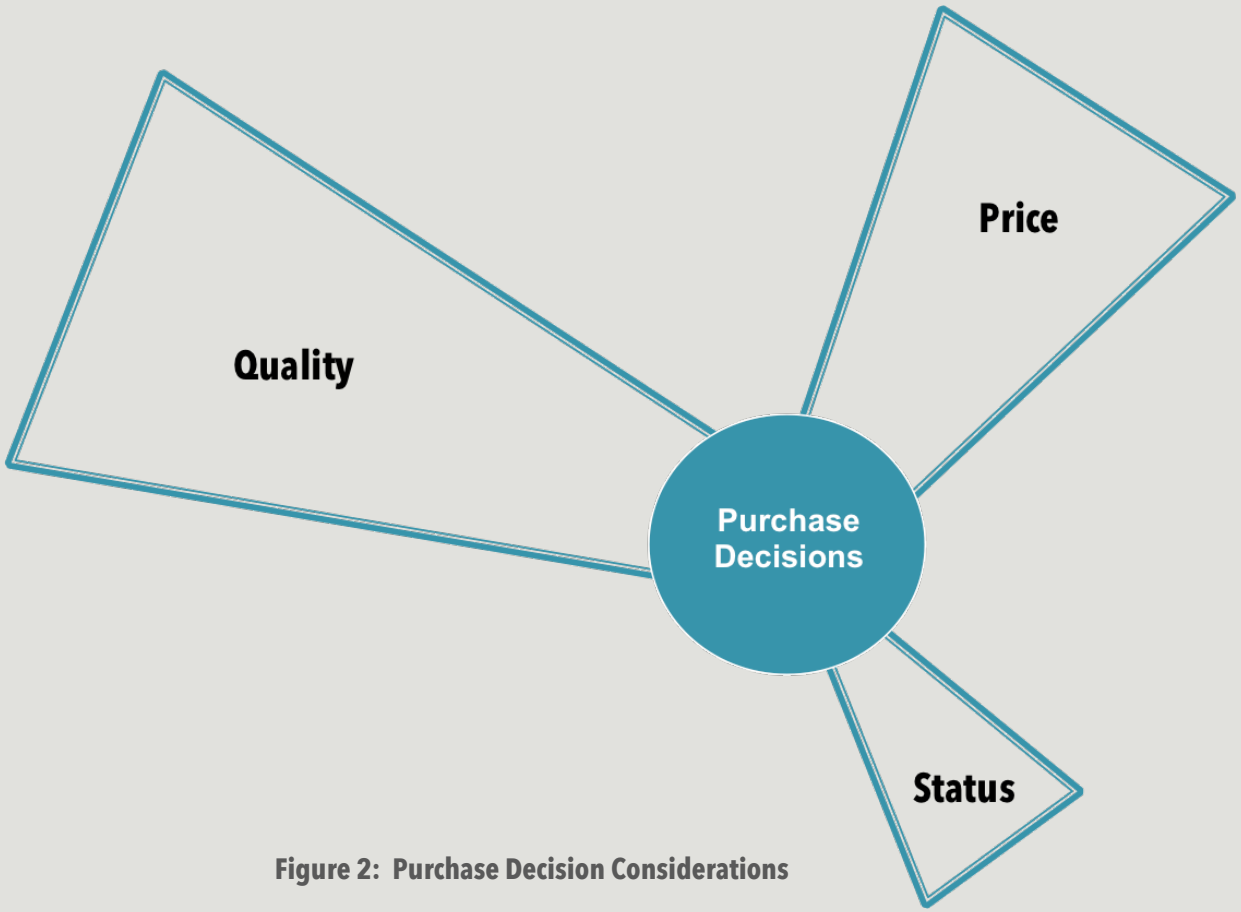


Figure 2: Purchase Decision Considerations

A good quality product ranks the highest consideration when purchasing a product/service or brand, as quality is reassurance that one has not wasted their money.

"If I am going to be spending quite a bit of money on a particular product, I have to make sure that product will last and not fall apart after purchase."

Price is the second consideration when purchasing a product, as a high price is often closely associated with a good quality product.

The status of the product/service or brand takes the 3rd spot on the purchase decision consideration scale.

This purchase consideration set is, in essence, a representation of how the modern Black successful man is more about substance and value than status.

"If you are successful it will be evident and sometimes it's not about who has the most toys"

"Success is a state of mind, like being positive - no need to advertise it."

"Success shows for itself, you do not need to advertise it at all."



Fig 3: Do you feel that there is a need for you to show off your success?

Material possessions more as a sense of recognition: Not bragging

It is not about flashing or bragging but rather a symbol of recognition. Material possessions will always come with the territory, it just depends on how one behaves when having acquired these possessions.
Many Black men use material possessions to signify success.

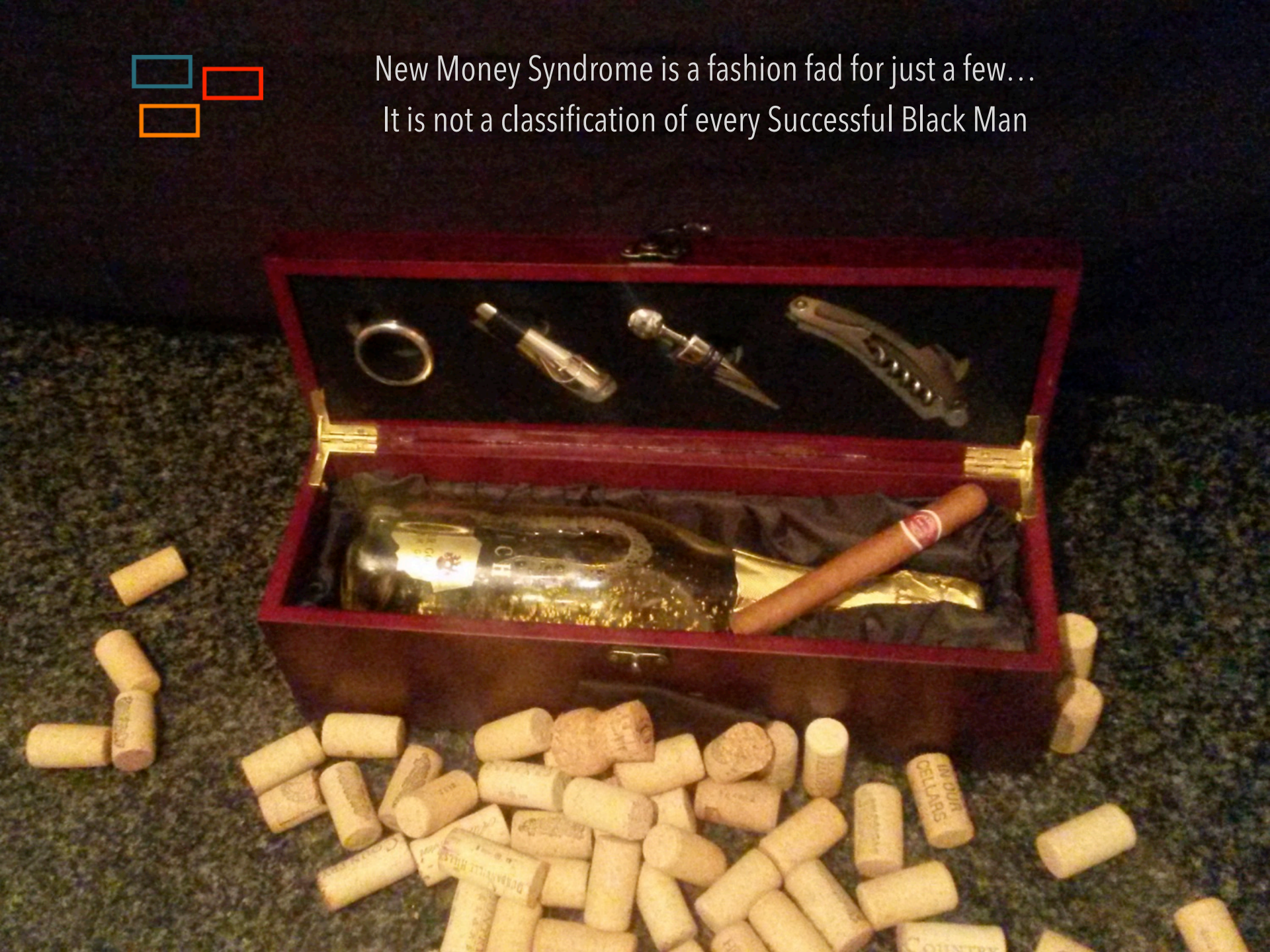
"Most times I'm content in who I am and what I have achieved so far. But that uncomfortable feeling knowing that I could have achieved more and better makes me want to acquire certain assets that will prove that I'm also on this journey to success and I've at least achieved something. especially to my parents."

"Success is contagious - we should not be apologetic when it comes to our achievements. However; there's a big difference between shining the light for your fellow brothers to see what's possible and bragging about how awesome you are."



New Money Syndrome is a fashion fad for just a few…

It is not a classification of every Successful Black Man



How do you think society portrays a successful Black man and do you agree?



Perceptions about a successful Black man

Society has negative perceptions of successful Black men

*"There is some **criminality involved** in them attaining their success - it was acquired **illegally** or as a **BEE handout.**"*

The societal perceptions of successful Black men are often negative. Respondents highlighted that society does not recognise the successful Black man by his individual merits, hard work and passion; but believes that their success was enabled by another or a result of criminal activity.



A typical modern successful man is still not given the credit that they deserve but instead have been turned into a gimmick. For example, the portraying of the current successful man as a BEE stereotype with poor English fluency and a big belly, driving a big SUV car; with a family on the one hand and a young university student girlfriend on the other.

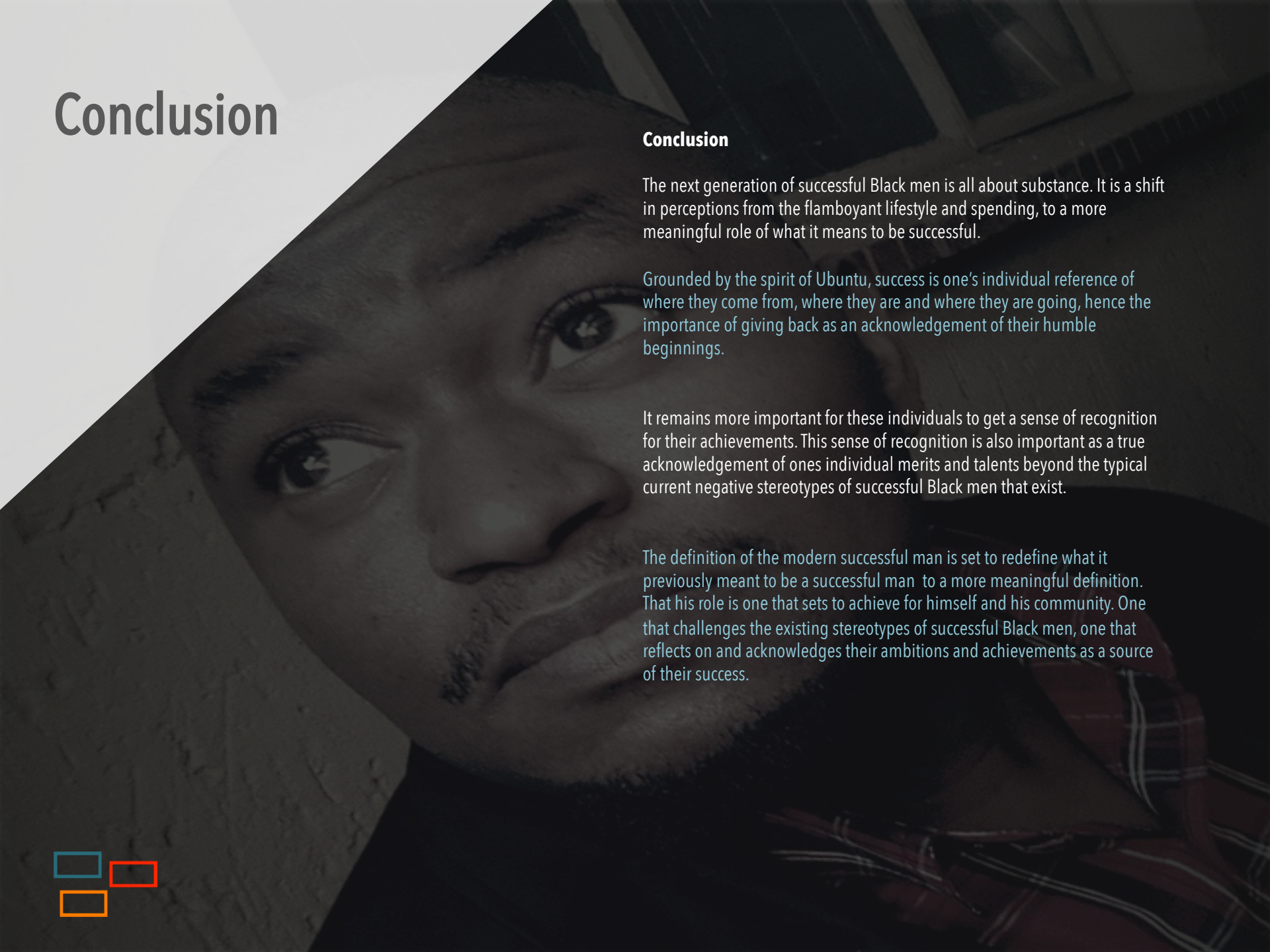
Successful Black men have also been associated with terms that some respondents feel are misleading; terms such as "Black Diamonds", which have negative connotations to them.

These exemplifiers of successful Black men are not necessarily true reflections and can be considered to be quite offensive to others.

"The black diamond has to shine for others to see. Big car, big house, big ego. That's why no one talks about Richard Maponya. He doesn't drive a Bugatti Veyron. I do not agree with the stereotype."



Conclusion



Conclusion

The next generation of successful Black men is all about substance. It is a shift in perceptions from the flamboyant lifestyle and spending, to a more meaningful role of what it means to be successful.

Grounded by the spirit of Ubuntu, success is one's individual reference of where they come from, where they are and where they are going, hence the importance of giving back as an acknowledgement of their humble beginnings.

It remains more important for these individuals to get a sense of recognition for their achievements. This sense of recognition is also important as a true acknowledgement of ones individual merits and talents beyond the typical current negative stereotypes of successful Black men that exist.

The definition of the modern successful man is set to redefine what it previously meant to be a successful man to a more meaningful definition. That his role is one that sets to achieve for himself and his community. One that challenges the existing stereotypes of successful Black men, one that reflects on and acknowledges their ambitions and achievements as a source of their success.

About TrendER

TrendER Insights is a South African consumer insights research agency. We follow trends and survey consumers to gain a deeper understanding behind the trends in our consumer environment.

South African planners and marketers have limited access to local insights and research. TrendER Insights aims to bridge this gap and equip planners and marketers with the relevant South African insights from surveys conducted with local South African consumers.

www.trender.co.za
mogorosi@trender.co.za



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