

# Think outside the hexagon

‘I love seeing the growth in the people that Relate exists for.’

TINKIE OLCKERS is chief financial officer and production manager for 100 percent not-for-profit social enterprise Relate Bracelets.

## What does your job entail?

Everything! I work, happily, behind the scenes doing not only the books and finances, but a lot of operational tasks daily. If your receptionist is on study leave, as ours currently is, then you answer the phone. None of us at Relate Bracelets are above any small task.

## What is your background?

I studied my honours degree in accounting and auditing in Port Elizabeth before completing three years of articles at a small audit firm where I was their first article clerk. I then qualified as a Chartered Accountant, and straight after realised I didn't want to be in auditing. In operations, you're predicting the future and living in the moment.

So I worked in the fishing industry in St Francis Bay, and then moved to Cape Town and worked in the wine industry. **Describe a typical day.**

In a normal business, your challenge is to make sure you're covering costs and making as much profit as you want. But with a non-profit you have to balance both ends. The pendulum can't swing; it has to stay balanced.

**What are the biggest challenges that face you at work?**

One of the other biggest chal-



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lenges at Relate, and the thing that keeps me on my toes in a fun way, is that we deliver to retailers – so if you're half an hour late on a delivery, then the whole order could potentially be rejected. But our supplier is the Gogos in the township who thread beads in their spare time. So I am the buffer between the two, managing and ensuring we make our strict deadlines.

**What are your major rewards?**

We support the seniors who thread beads and the youngsters

who work in our offices closing and packing bracelets while being put through training to benefit their futures. I love seeing the growth in the people that Relate exists for. I love seeing them grown, learning skills that will take them to the next level. Then there are all the causes that we are supporting.

**What do you need to succeed in your industry?**

At most companies you're expected to think out of the box, but in a non-profit world you need

to think out of the hexagon.

**What are the minimum educational requirements?**

You just need to have honesty, integrity, and a strong desire to help others. Not only am I allowed to be, but I have to be completely open, honest and transparent. I struggled with the lack of that in the corporate world.

**What is the basic starting salary?**

How do you put a Rand value to spiritual wealth?