

BUSINESS LEADER

Mehran Zarrebini

Mathe Group

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Full Name: Dr Mehran Zarrebini

Position and Company Name: CEO of Mathe Group

Main Activity of the Company: Recycling of post-consumer tyres

Date and Place of Birth: June 18, 1974, Isfahan, Iran

Schools and Tertiary Education: Loughborough University, UK, BEng (Hons) Chemical Engineering; Cambridge University, UK, PhD (Chemical Engineering); Stellenbosch University, South Africa, MBA; University of Nicosia, Cyprus, MSc (Blockchain and Digital Currency)

First Job: I started working as an engineer in Halifax, West Yorkshire, in the UK

Size of First Pay Packet: £1 500 a month, in 2001

Career Path to Date: Shortly after I started working in the UK, I had the opportunity to move to South Africa towards the end of 2001. I started my career in this country in a company that was involved in the extrusion of polypropylene and the manufacture of area rugs for both the local and US markets. Eventually, this company was sold and the shareholders had invested in another flooring manufacturer in KwaZulu-Natal. I was a director of this company for several years, before being appointed CEO. The formation of Mathe Group was as a result of trying to identify ways in which waste material could be valourised and incorporated into some of the products that were being manufactured. In 2016, the shareholders decided to invest in a recycling facility in Durban, and hence Mathe Group started recycling post-consumer truck tyres which, at the time, were mainly discarded and sent to landfill

Value of Assets under Your Control: R100-million

Number of People under Your Leadership: 230

Management Style: Open and collaborative

Personal Best Achievement: My research at Cambridge has always been the highlight of my personal career

Person Who Has Had the Biggest Influence on Your Life: My father

Person Who Has Had the Biggest Influence on Your Career: My father

Person You Would Most Like to Meet: Ben Francis, founder and CEO of UK fitness apparel and accessories brand Gymshark

Businessperson Who Has Impressed You Most: British entrepreneur and philanthropist John Cauldwell

Philosophy of Life: I strive for balance by seeking harmony in work, personal growth and leisure. I am committed to lifelong learning and I continuously seek knowledge and self-improvement. I aim to be resilient by adapting and growing through life's challenges. Also central to my philosophy are purpose – finding meaning in contributing to others; integrity – living with honesty and strong ethical values; mindfulness – staying present and appreciating each moment; relationships – building and nurturing meaningful connections; and creativity – embracing innovation and new ideas

Biggest Ever Opportunity: The opportunity to work in a senior role in South Africa early in my career – shortly after completing my PhD

Biggest Ever Disappointment: None

Hope for the Future: I aspire to a future where sustainability is woven into the very fabric of society, fostering an enduring equilibrium between human progress

and the preservation of our planet's ecosystems

Favourite Reading: Various business and leadership books

Favourite TV Programme: I very rarely watch TV, other than business news and current affairs

Favourite Food/Drink: Ghormeh Sabzi and Persian cuisine

Favourite Music: I like a variety of music across several genres, including classical, house and R&B

Favourite Sport: Running and tennis

Hobbies: Running, reading and tech

Car: Not stated

Pets: None, owing to extensive travelling

Miscellaneous Dislikes: Chewing gum

Married: To Patricia

Children: Cyrus, 21; Giovanna, 20



Ben Francis