

# Niel Tolken

## Qualified Accountant & Auditor

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June 2023 - present

**Independent contractor, working hybrid (currently based in Johannesburg, South Africa)**

- ✓ I do various types of projects and assignments across various industries.
- ✓ I excel at strategic tools i.e. business plans, risk assessments and financial report writing.
- ✓ I have specific experience in global NGO, non-profit and Africa.
- ✓ I have gained experience in manufacturing, as a key business partner for Production, I focus on cost reduction initiatives, strategy, management information and C-Suite.
- ✓ Notable clients: WorldFish and ArcelorMittal.

I am thrilled to have the opportunity to work in a Global NGO as well as manufacturing and standard costing environments- that also includes forex, logistics and mining. As a life-long learner I feel very fortunate to build up a diverse set of experiences and skills.

Nov 2021 - May 2023

**Group Finance manager at Fundamental Media, London, United Kingdom**

- ✓ I owned and developed a full FP&A function, which included management accounts with commentary as well as initial M&A valuations and reports.
- ✓ I performed group audit activities incl. transfer pricing calculations and structures, financial statements of 5 entities and country-specific tax returns.
- ✓ I occupied a senior position on a NetSuite implementation, which stretched and improved my skills on data management and process integration between NetSuite and a bespoke operational system.
- ✓ I improved the debtors and credit control process by reconciling various balances, implementing controls to prevent future issues and reduced the unpaid balance by > GBP5m through active credit control procedures.
- ✓ I reduced audit time by designing and implementing group consolidation tools. This including some automation from data sources and elevated the process from a manual consolidation in Excel.
- ✓ I performed all my work in multi-currency operations across multi-time zone teams. It has been a cultural enriching experience that taught me more about time management, working under pressure and planning.

I was disappointed that the merger & acquisition transaction was structured in a way that led to my retrenchment, but I still believe that it was a very valuable experience and I take a lot from it.

Jul 2017 – Oct 2021

Group Finance and Project manager at [Motus Mobility Solutions](#), Johannesburg, Gauteng, South Africa

- ✓ I acted as the divisional head of Group Audit ERM framework and prepared detailed risk reports to the audit committee, following CFO and CEO review.
- ✓ I owned the ESG and sustainability reporting agenda, for which I was the recipient of a CEO award, after designing and implementing a communication campaign that was featured in the group annual report.
- ✓ I was the implementation manager of all BBBEE reporting and initiatives. We achieved industry-first success on employment of disabled people, which greatly helped our Skills Development, SED and participation in the national YES program.
- ✓ I served as the business partner on procurement and innovation. This included project valuations, pricing calculations (including tax consequences) as well as general compliance and group strategy alignment.
- ✓ I was selected to lead the JSE CSA program and other financial services projects. This included division-wide process mapping and implementation of financial controls.
- ✓ I owned the divisional DOA and chart of accounts. I ensured alignment with Group requirements and managed an approved change to the chart of accounts. I also project-managed any changes to the GL with outsourced developers.
- ✓ I managed teams of 4 – 11 staff members at various intervals, including 3 newly qualified CA(SA), 1 qualified actuary and system developers.

I was very fortunate to get the opportunity to stretch my skills at Motus and have new experiences in a group setting. I am thankful for all the support I had through a challenging period in the organisation's life cycle.

I reported to the MMS CFO in this role. The UK opportunity came across my path via an old Imperial contact and I felt I had to grab the chance to get international exposure.

Jan 2010 - Jun 2017

Finance manager and later subsidiary GM/ MD at [Imperial Holdings](#), Johannesburg, Gauteng, South Africa

- ✓ Registered with SAICA as CA(SA) in March 2010.
- ✓ I completed part 1 and 2 of the IIA CIA exams in April 2011.
- ✓ I identified industry non-compliance on VAT and designed and led a national implementation in conjunction with SARS Legal. I achieved an industry-first VAT accounting and compliance for [Regent Insurance](#) and the [Imperial Automotive network](#).
- ✓ I performed full IFRS and legislative implementations, including IFRS7, 9, and 17.
- ✓ I designed and implemented various processes and controls around bespoke systems and group integrations.
- ✓ I completed [FSCA and FSB](#) reporting.
- ✓ I excelled at various C-Suite, Group Audit Committee and BOD responsibilities including company budgets, 5-year plans and forecasts prepared and presented to Imperial Holdings group CEO and his budget committee.

Imperial was a career-defining experience for me. I am also very fortunate to have worked with giants of the industry in very close proximity.

My director that I reported to is still the group treasurer of DP World after the Imperial Motus unbundling.

**Jan 2009 - Dec 2009**

**Third year articles at EY, Johannesburg, Gauteng, South Africa**

- ✓ Led audit teams of various sizes across a variety of industries.
- ✓ L&D coach at Central Learning.
- ✓ Performed highly regulated public sector audits – [Telkom and NYDA](#).
- ✓ Participated as a first roll-out tester of new global audit methodology.
- ✓ Performed outsourced internal audit assignments in mining – [Lonmin PLC](#).
- ✓ Performed fully outsourced internal audit function at [Transnet](#).

**Jan 2008 – Dec 2008**

**Second year articles at EY, Johannesburg, Gauteng, South Africa**

[SAICA / IRBA board exam 2 – first time pass](#)

**Jan 2007 – Dec 2007**

**First year articles at Ernst & Young (“EY”), Johannesburg, Gauteng, South Africa**

[SAICA board exam 1 – first time pass](#)

I enjoyed my time at EY very much, and I was planning to stay on longer as an audit manager. The Imperial position came about urgently, following the resignation of the subsidiary MD and there was an urgent need to step into the role ahead of their year-end. I took on the challenge as I am very passionate about good process design, compliance and technical accounting.

My career counsellor is currently a partner at EY.

**Jan 2006 – Dec 2006**

**Postgraduate diploma in Accounting (Honours / CTA) at Stellenbosch University, Western Cape, South Africa**

Financial Accounting

Management Accounting

Taxation

Auditing

**Jan 2003 – Dec 2005**

**Bachelors of Accounting at Stellenbosch University, Western Cape, South Africa**

Financial Accounting

Management Accounting

Taxation

Auditing

Mercantile Law

Information Systems

**Jan 1998 – Dec 2002**

**Senior certificate (high school) at Vredenburg High School, Western Cape, South Africa**

Afrikaans 1<sup>st</sup> Language HG – A

English 1<sup>st</sup> Language HG – B

Mathematics HG – B

Physical Science HG – A

Accounting HG – A

Music HG – A