

Machaba Machaba

By Philippe Turian

My dear Machaba,

First time we met was at the McKinsey “introduction week” in Johannesburg, back in February 2006. We didn’t talk much, but we spent some good time together - mainly outside of the professional part of the programme, when we could enjoy a nice dinner or some drinks.



I think most people would agree that you didn't look like the most typical McKinsey consultant, or more precisely 1st week consultant: you didn't look nervous, you didn't seem to be too insecure, you didn't look like your only goal in life was to be an overachiever... You actually looked quite the opposite: poised, projecting an image of calm and serenity that was almost unsettling given your young age. As if you knew where you were heading, as if you had already understood that success is not defined by a career but rather by happiness.

I often wondered during the 3 years that followed what your life looked like, whether you were still in consulting. And then I saw you again in January 2009 in Singapore at INSEAD. There again, you didn't look like the most typical INSEAD MBA participant - if there is such thing as “typical” INSEAD student: we didn't hear you speak as often as we saw you sleep during class - but every time you spoke, your interventions were smart and wise. Again, you didn't seem to worry too much about the team projects, the exams, etc. and it looked like you were rather focusing on the human experience. . As if you knew already that in the end, this is what INSEAD is about: an extraordinary personal journey, made possible by extraordinary classmates.

I am sure where you are, you still shine on people with your big smile and your kindness. Thank for having shun on us for one full year.

We miss you my friend”

Machaba Machaba

By Monica Li

We had very little in common, but he was someone that made me feel safe during INSEAD. When you enter a room full of smart people, it's daunting to ask questions or admit that you don't understand an equation. I was blessed to have a such an amazing and committed group, and Machaba would selflessly take the time to explain things to me in a non-judgmental way. In heated situations between teammates, he would step in to cool things down, and everyone would listen to him because it was Machaba and he had no ill intentions towards anyone.



I think it sometimes bothered Machaba to be propagandised as a class mascot (Sleeping Beauty), but he went along with it for the joy and laughter of the greater whole. And that was who he was - happy to go along with the consensus. He had no agenda or ulterior motives. I used to think that Carl was the smartest guy in our class/group (he certainly talked the most!), but it may have been Machaba, who passively listened and spoke with mindful observation. When Machaba said something, it was with intention and consideration. A sweeping statement.

I will never forget our sunrise hot air balloon ride in Siem Reap, when Machaba pulled up in a tuk tuk at the crack of dawn with a beer in a paper lunch bag.