

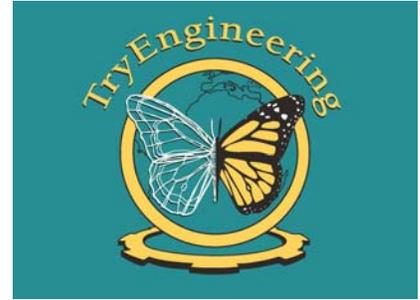
# Profiles of Engineering Students

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**Rina Mostert**

**Electronic Engineering Student  
University of Pretoria (Tukkies)**



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## Education in Progress:

Electronic Engineering Student  
University of Pretoria (Tukkies), South Africa

## Advice to Pre-university Learners:

"Work hard – Play hard – Do everything to your best ability and don't take no for an answer!"

## Interview:

■ **Q:** When did you know you wanted to become an Engineer?

■ **Mostert:** I knew I wanted to become an Engineer in Gr 10 when I took Technical Electronics. The subject was fun, interesting and motivated me to excel in the subject.

■ **Q:** What is your higher education experience like in terms of the amount of time you find you need to study each day?

■ **Mostert:** Normally attending classes takes the most of your time, you can have up to 7 hours of classes each day (but luckily it decreases to about 4-5 hours in your 3rd and 4th year). I managed to study about 2 hours a day above the attending classes. But I made sure to finish my studies during the week to have some relaxation time during the weekends.

■ **Q:** Are you incorporating any work experiences while you are a student? (include both internships/co-ops and any other jobs you may be holding while in school)

■ **Mostert:** Normally I worked as a student at engineering firms over the June and December holiday. This gives you a good idea of what to expect when you complete your degree and it helps by giving you some spending money for when the varsity starts.

■ **Q:** How did you prepare for your higher education experience?

■ **Mostert:** I had a good background in mathematics and technical electronics. I also attended the engineering week at Tukkies to give me more information of what to expect when I enroll.

■ **Q:** Did/do you have a mentor that has helped guide you thus far? (If so, describe the impact of this person on your education and career plans)

■ **Mostert:** Unfortunately I did not have a mentor dedicated to me, but I filled my life with role models. These role models helped me by motivating me to work harder and keep me positive. I would not have been able to be where I am now without these role models.

■ Q: Is there a specialty area you have focused on in engineering? If so, what is it, and how did you decide on this specialty? Also, at what point in your higher education experience did you decide?

■ Mostert: I would like to complete my post graduate studies in Electro Magnetism (EM) after having an EM final year project.

■ Q: Is it hard to balance your engineering studies with other university activities (entertainment, travel, having fun)?

■ Mostert: Yes and no! You have to make sure that you prioritize everything, sometimes studying will win (exams, test, etc), but it is possible to still have an active student life! :) I do!

■ Q: Do you find yourself studying more in a team situation or alone? Do you have a preference?

■ Mostert: I prefer to prepare for exams and tests in a team situation (compare class notes, discuss possible questions and answers), but the actual studying I prefer to do alone.

■ Q: What's the hardest thing you have found about your university experience working toward a degree in engineering?

■ Mostert: I found that the hardest thing is to keep positive and motivated. Sometimes the workload can be very demanding while the test results did not look good, the best is to keep motivated and remember that what you put in (work/attitude) is what you will get back.

■ Q: What's the most rewarding aspect about working toward a degree in engineering?

■ Mostert: Knowing that at the end of the day I worked hard to get where I am and that I am following a career path that I love.

■ Q: Do you think you'll continue studying engineering, or do you think you'll switch to another area? Why?

■ Mostert: I would like to continue studying engineering but I would also like to further my education in a management area.

■ Q: Do you have any idea what sort of industry or work you'd like to do when you graduate? If so, how did you find out about this industry or field?

■ Mostert: I am very fortunate to have received a bursary for my studies and will be working for my sponsor after I receive my degree.

■ Q: Do you think you'll want to pursue additional degrees after you complete the one you are working on? Why or why not?

■ Mostert: Yes, I would like to complete a post graduate management course. I think having a strong engineering background together with management skills can take a person a long way. (If you want to go the management route:))

■ Q: Did you think that school will prepare you for the way the work gets done in the real world?

■ Mostert: In some way yes I do. In the real world you also have deadlines, work pressure, etc that you have at school, it might be more intense than in school but luckily we grow as people to be able to handle the unknown.

■ Q: How did you decide which FET college to go to?

■ Mostert: I was very fortunate that we had a good FET college close to my home.

■ Q: How did you decide which tertiary institution to go to?

■ Mostert: I looked at the courses they presented, the atmosphere (academically/student life, etc) of the institution, the geographic location of the institution (as well as the effect of this (cost of accommodation/distance between my loved ones, etc)). It's also helpful to get a rough estimate of your course cost since institutions differ in prices.

■ Q: How many engineering universities did you apply to? How many accepted you?

■ Mostert: I only applied to Tukkies and got accepted right away.

■ Q: Did you have a "first choice?" Were you accepted into your "first choice?"

■ Mostert: At the University of Pretoria you can enter 3 choices when enrolling for your undergrad studies. The Department of your first choice will then evaluate you (typically on your M-score) if you fulfill all the requirements, you will then be accepted to enroll in your first choice. If you do not fulfill all the requirements, you will be evaluated by the department of your second choice, etc. I just really wanted to become an Engineer so I only filled in my first choice and was accepted.

■ Q: What should pre-university learners do to prepare themselves to take on the work that engineering students do?

■ Mostert: Prepare yourself mentally, create a 1/3/5/10 year goal for yourself, surround yourself with positive people that will motivate you and enjoy the freedom you have as a growing individual.

■ Q: What other advice do you have for pre-university learners?

■ Mostert: Work hard – Play hard – Do everything to your best ability and don't take no for an answer!