



FORESTRY SOUTH AFRICA

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CAREERS IN FORESTRY: MANAGEMENT FORESTER



FORESTRY EXPLAINED: OUR *HUMAN* LEGACY

A FORESTER - LOOKING BEYOND THE TREES

A JOB WHERE THE DEFINITION AND JOB DESCRIPTION DIFFER:

The Oxford Dictionary defines a forester as, 'a person in charge of a forest, or skilled in planting, managing and caring for trees'.

In reality, the job involves far more than simply the trees.



THERE IS MORE THAN JUST ONE TYPE OF FORESTER IN A PLANTATION:

There are many rungs on the career ladder of a forester, as shown below, although the Job Titles may differ between companies.

Forestry graduates coming out of University with a Degree or Diploma can expect to start as **Foresters-In-Training** or **Junior Foresters** depending on their skill level and experience.

The next stage up is becoming a **Senior Forester** and then a **Management Forester** overseeing a specific aspect like Silviculture or Harvesting.

At the top of the ladder there are **Area Managers, Business Unit Managers** and ultimately **Forest Operations Managers**.

Making Forestry a fun and rewarding career path to choose!

Management Forester

JOB DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE:

To plan, execute and achieve the operational estate management, harvesting objectives and production targets within resource and Safety, Health, Environmental and Quality parameters to ensure sustainable production targets are met.

QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE:

National Diploma in Forestry, Agriculture and Horticulture or Forestry Degree, up to 5 years relevant experience & a valid drivers license.

WHERE TO STUDY?

STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY:

4-year Undergraduate Programme, to study either: Forest and Natural Resource Management, or Wood Product Science. As well as various Postgraduate Programmes.

www.sun.ac.za/english/faculty/agri/forestry

UNIVERSITY OF VENDA:

Offers a Bachelor of Science (Hons) in Forestry Sciences as part of their School of Agriculture's Undergraduate Programme.

http://www.univen.ac.za/old_server/agriculture/dep_forestry.html

NELSON MANDELA METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY - GEORGE CAMPUS:

3-year diploma in Forestry or Wood Technology, of which a year (two semesters) is spent in the field doing practical work (experiential training). They offer BTech degree options as well as Postgraduate MTech and DTech opportunities.

<http://www.nmmu.ac.za/Academic/Courses-on-offer/Career-study-fields-details?careerID=49>

FORT COX COLLEGE - EASTERN CAPE:

3-year Diploma in Forestry accredited and recognised by the Council on Higher Education and the equivalent of an NQF Level 6.

www.fortcox.ac.za/faculties/forestry.html

MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES:

Here is where the role of Management Forester falls well beyond the trees.

While PRODUCTION, HARVESTING, & CROP PROTECTION are all key responsibilities, LOGISTICS, HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT, POST-HARVEST SALES, STAKEHOLDER RELATIONS and UNDERSTANDING THE LEGISLATION are equally crucial aspects of the job.

It is when you start looking at the wide array of responsibilities that a Management Forester has to take on, the need for industry experience becomes clear. This is why there are so many rungs on a forester's ladder.

On each step you will gain invaluable knowledge and experience, which will give you a wealth of transferable skills and enable you to get to the top.

INFRASTRUCTURE & FLEET MANAGEMENT

Ensure company infrastructural assets are maintained and managed according to company standards

Ensure the vehicle fleet is maintained and managed in accordance with lease terms or company guidelines

ROAD MAINTENANCE

Identify and ensure maintenance plans are communicated and implemented **efficiently**

Compile the annual tactical road maintenance plan

Ensure expenditure is within budget

TRANSPORTATION

Ensure optimum delivery planning

Schedule short-haul loading operations

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

Ensure compliance with legislative and company policies and procedures

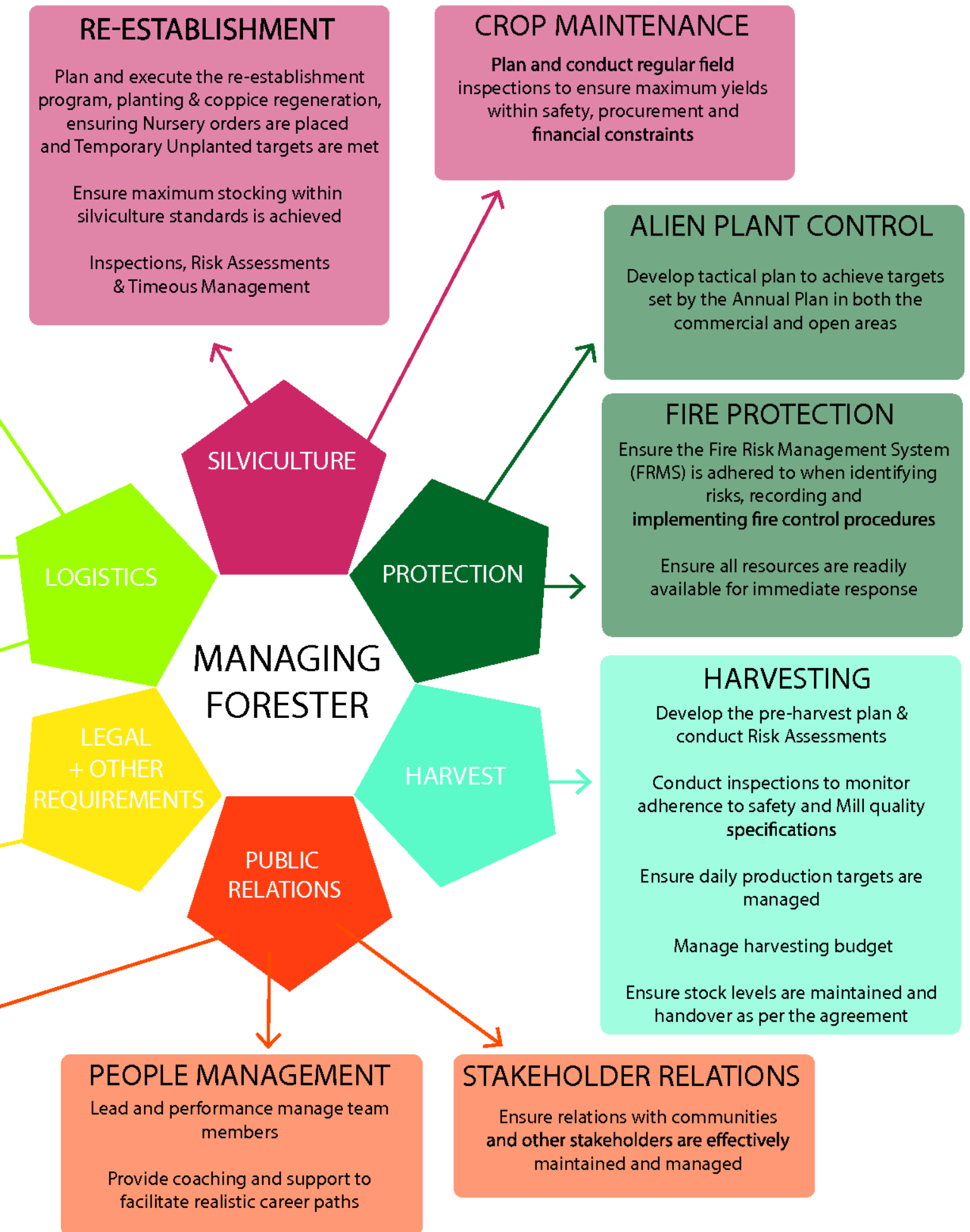
Ensure all operations comply with service level agreements

CONTRACTOR MANAGEMENT

Ensure a professional relationship

Ensure quality, delivery and compliance of standards

Ensure contracted work matches the annual plan of operations



WHAT KIND OF PERSON ARE WE LOOKING FOR?

Qualifications and experience only make up part of the perfect 'Management Forester parcel' employers are looking for.

There are also a number of essential personal competencies and technical competencies they also require our ideal candidate to have.

PERSONAL COMPETENCIES / TRANSFERABLE SKILLS

- Leadership Skills
- Team Work
- Planning & Organisation
- Negotiation
- Attention to Detail
- Innovative
- Interpersonal Skills
- Risk Management
- Ability to Work Independently
- Self-motivated & Self-disciplined
- Responsible & Accountable
- Good Work Ethic

WHY COMMUNICATION IS KEY!

In any job, the ability communicate well, to express yourself verbally and in writing, is often a critical. Forestry is no different, as a Management Forester you will be working closely with numerous individuals both within the industry and outside of it. As a result, you will need to be able to communicate technical and business aspects of forestry to both those with industry knowledge and lay individuals (with little understanding of the technical side of forestry).

These will include:

- Forestry Personnel
- Local Government and Statutory Agencies
- Local Farmers
- Local Communities and Tribal Leadership
- Other Forestry Companies
- Contractors
- Fire Protection Agencies

FUNCTIONAL & TECHNICAL COMPETENCIES

- Budget & Financial Controls
- Silviculture & Fire Fighting
- Basic Legal Compliance
- Project Management
- Innovation and Persuasiveness
- Mechanical & Logistic Appreciation
- Forestry Planning & Recording Systems
- Management of a Contract & Contractor
- Productivity Management & Harvest Planning
- Stakeholder Relations
- Conflict Resolution, Coaching & Mentoring
- Technical & Administrative Knowledge
- Safety, Health, Environmental & Quality Management (SHEQ)



PHOTO CREDITS: Mondi

Special thanks to Sappi and Mondi for their help in providing the job descriptions and photos that this Case Study has been based upon.

