

supplement

Daily Monitor
www.monitor.co.ug

CEOs

with the *midas Touch*



CEOs

EDITORIAL

Championing success in the corporate world

Great leaders nurture superior teams, offer winning customer experiences, and inspire cutting-edge innovations with sustainable solutions within and beyond their companies and industries.

These leaders are motivated by the desire to transform their societies whilst ensuring that the world is a better place.

Enterprises that are succeeding in building noteworthy competitive advantages over peers in today's digital era are being steered by knowledgeable, visionary and innovative strategists who are fully conversant with what it takes to do business in the present environment. The experience of CEOs who find the magic, and organisations that have turned around fortunes offer inspiration and insights into how we can dig deep to emerge top of the class.

In the past year, some corporate leaders have risen against the tide and found great success for their organisations and enterprises albeit a myriad of challenges. These leaders and their teams need to be celebrated to inspire others and to deliver the message that with creativity and exceptional leadership, challenges can be converted into opportunities.

CEOs With The Midas Touch explores how executives are championing exceptional success in Uganda's corporate enterprises.

CELEBRATED

These leaders and their teams need to be celebrated to inspire others and to deliver the message that with creativity and exceptional leadership, challenges can be converted into opportunities.

Enjoy the reading!

Managing Director	Tony Glencross
General Manager Editorial	Daniel Kalinaki
General Manager Commercial	Sam Barata
Managing Editor	Tabu Butagira
Supplements Editor	Henry Mulindwa
Supplements Sub Editor	Joan Salmon

Contributors: Ismail Musa Ladu, Joyce Aheebwa, Racheal Nabisubi, Joan Salmon

29/35 8th Street, P.O. Box 12141; Kampala, Uganda
Phones 0312301100/1
Fax 041 7744100
Email editorial@ug.nationmedia.com
Registered at the GPO as a newspaper

Great leadership quotes



"An effective CEO should have his hands on the present and an eye on the future while prioritising the staff, and people, who are the engine of the company,"
Mr Fabian Kasi, Managing Director Centenary Bank



"A CEO must be passionate about the cause and objectives that the organisation is pursuing. You cannot be like a headless chicken, you must aim at something impactful,"
Anthony Kituuka, MD Equity Bank



"Leaders should trust their team members and delegate responsibilities appropriately. This not only empowers team members but also frees up the leader's time to focus on higher-level tasks,"
Rev. Jasper Tumuhimbise, GCEO Church Commissioners Holding Company Ltd



"Leadership is more experiential than theoretical. Effective leadership is when those you are leading have confidence in what you are doing, believe in you, and trust you,"
Ms Judy Rugasira Kyanda, Knight Frank Managing Director



"If someone wants to become an outstanding leader, they must be more than ready to challenge their brains. Transformational leadership involves changing people to do the right thing starting with the mindset change,"
Mr Allan Mafabi, CEO Britam Insurance Company (Uganda) Ltd.



"Leadership means ensuring there is a common appreciation of the values within the organisation, a culture that guides the ship. Exceptional leadership is collaborative and situational,"
Mr Mumba Kalifungwa Absa Uganda Managing Director.



"You must also be knowledgeable and keep the focus lest you are diverted from the core objectives of the organisations vision. It is also crucial to create winning teams focused on attaining the organisations overall vision and mission, because you can never achieve anything alone. A leader sets the tone for the entire organisation, drive change, promote innovation, and lead effectively,"
Dr Patrick Birungi. UDC Executive Director



"I believe in the power of a motivated and inspired team. Building a winning team involves selecting individuals who resonate with our values and vision, complemented by their diverse skills and backgrounds. I prioritise personal and professional growth by providing robust mentoring and continuous learning opportunities for every team member,"
Ms Dorothy Kabagambe Ssemanda, Chief Executive Officer of ATC Uganda.



"A leader should ably listen to team members, building upon each one's strengths and guiding them to ensure that the collective effort focuses on the organisation's goals. Beyond courage and commitment, he says a leader must have the emotional intelligence to deal with the diversities in an organisation. Culture informs how things are done and it is crucial,"
Mr Santosh Narayan Gumte Kansai Placon Managing Director.



Technology, people and clients, at the heart of Stanbic's success

Interview. Ms Anne Juuko is the first woman Chief Executive of Stanbic Bank, Uganda's largest lender by assets, customer deposits, and profits. She is famed for successfully leading the bank through two years of a global pandemic managing to thrive with record growth milestones. In 2022, the bank reported a Profit After Tax of Shs366b from Shs275b in 2021 and announced Shs235b in dividends for the period. Ms. Juuko says the bank is building future-ready capabilities with technology, people, and the customer at the heart of the growth strategy.



Ms Anne Juuko, Chief Executive of Stanbic Bank Uganda.

PHOTO/MICHEAL KAKUMIRIZI

The interview for the Stanbic Bank top job is hard enough but leading through the pandemic must have been even harder for you. What's the journey been like for you?

By the time of my appointment, I had spent many years with the Standard Bank Group and privileged to serve in various senior roles in different markets including Uganda and Namibia. That experience enabled me to develop essential insights and valuable networks within the organisation and the industry to deliver on this mandate.

However, no amount of experience could have sufficiently prepared me for the unprecedented impact of the Covid-19 pandemic which created the need to throw out old rule-books and usher in new ones in real time.

We had to evolve our thinking and approach quickly. Prior to January 2020, who would ever have predicted that a bank our size could continue operating seamlessly with more than 90 percent of staff working off-site and still meet customers' daily expectations, without compromising shareholder value?

Or writing off a whole year's worth of interest revenue to an en-

tire sector as we did for our schools, to support their post-pandemic recovery? Any such assertions would have been considered preposterous but look at us now living this very reality.

You did not only survive but thrived, and while appreciating that the economy is still in recovery mode, can we talk about some of your achievements?

I think the first achievement is a shared one for all of us—we are both alive. Having lost many lives including some of our staff, customers, relatives, and friends, we must be thankful to be alive.

During the heat of the pandemic, I came to the office as often as possible, which puzzled some people who knew I could work from home. But it was important that I led by example, taking the same risk my colleagues working in the branches were taking as they were expected to show up for work every day. Of course, these were cautious risks

as the organisation went far and beyond to provide protection for our staff and customers.

Business wise, the last two years have been about innovation and adapting to our new reality. A key achievement on that front is that while at it, we have managed to attain a double-digit compounded annual growth rate (CAGR) above 14 percent in our loans and advances and 13 percent in deposits; this is critical to the bank's continued investment in innovative solutions for our customers and ensuring that we grow our shareholder value.

This sustained growth is not accidental—it is a dividend from our commitment to our customers throughout the pandemic and supporting their recovery.

How is Stanbic Bank approaching the innovation and adapting business re-orientation journey, especially dealing with emerging competition and disruptive fintech technologies?

We don't worry about the competition; our attention is fully on the bank customer, their evolving needs, transactional lifestyle, aspirations, and challenges and how we can partner to solution for them—this is our approach.

Today, operationally, we are a tech company with a banking license, because there's nothing we can do without technology—this is not necessarily competition driven but customer inspired. That is why all our strategies are geared towards digitising more and getting more technology into our customers' lives and their businesses.

As a result, today, only less than 7 percent of our transactions are executed in our traditional branches and the number grows smaller and smaller every year. The bulk of our transactions, about 40 percent is handled through agent banking and the remainder is through various digital channels.

Of these, FlexiPay has the highest number of new users, presenting us with the opportunity to take our services to more Ugandans hence deepening financial inclusion to segments previously underserved.

What are some of the unconventional skills you are hunting for in

STELLAR RESULTS

Business wise, the last two years have been about innovation and adapting to the new bank's reality. A key achievement on that front is that while at it, Stanbic Bank has managed to attain a double-digit compounded annual growth rate (CAGR) above 14 percent in our loans and advances and 13 percent in deposits; this is critical to the bank's continued investment in innovative solutions for its customers and ensuring the shareholder value growth.

the marketplace that young men and women out to be pursuing?

For decades, we hired candidates with business related degrees—consequently, we have a large part of our talent base with a similar skillset. Now we are more about 'future-ready-skills' such as data analytics, robotics, process automation, behavioural science, creatives, people good at communication and relationship management because ours is a people business.

Therefore, rather than lay-off the old staff and employ new ones, which would be lazy, we are adopting a more pragmatic approach. That is to re-skill the talent we have. We embarked on a serious investment in skills development, especially future skills, for our people.

The average learning of a Stanbic Bank employee is at least 90 hours a year worth of future skills learning. Those who are rising to the occasion, are transforming

themselves and I am pleased to share that over the last two years, we have promoted over 400 staff from within.

We want to be a future-ready bank and we can't be that if we are leaving our staff behind.

In the pursuit of new future-ready skills, how are you ensuring that the bank remains inclusive?

At Group and country level, we have done well to empower women and facilitate them to scale the heights of corporate leadership. Today, we have many mavens in different areas across the 20 countries where we operate, and are proud of that work.

As Stanbic Uganda, we have set our efforts on a new target—young people with disability. Our target is to have 10 percent of our total workforce to be persons with disability, in the medium to long term. And we have started.

Since last year, we have made it clear in our job adverts, encouraging—in block letters, persons with disabilities to apply and when they apply, they have been given first preference.

Your last word?

Listening and solutioning for the customer is our fulltime job and motivation behind our continuous innovation.

We acknowledge the challenging operating environment that we are in today, but our mindset at Stanbic is that every crisis is an opportunity to positively impact our customers and be true to our purpose of driving Uganda's growth, because it is our home.

10% SHARE OF WORKFORCE FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES



Ms Juuko shares a light moment with Stanbic Bank Board Chairman, Mr Damoni Kitabire (left), and former Stanbic Uganda Holdings Board Chairman Japheth Katto shortly after announcing the 2022 financial results.

CEOs with the

midas Touch



Daily Monitor
www.monitor.co.ug



A woman works from home during the Covid-19 lockdown. Companies need to develop strategies to enable business continuity in tumultuous times. PHOTO/ INTERNET

Corporate strategy and governance in an uncertain world

Technology. Doing strategy has further been complicated by the speed of technology change. What worked yesterday won't keep you in the winners' corner today.

BY PROF. SAMUEL SEJJAAKA

Writing about corporate strategy and governance in these uncertain times reminds one of the idioms that 'the best-laid plans of mice and men' are just those plans.

This proverb is used to suggest that even the most careful planning doesn't necessarily ensure success. More so in what we now call a VUCA world, a world full of volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity.

Rethinking some of the major events of the last five years will help any CEO to understand how fickle planning in these times has become.

The Covid-19 pandemic, Russia's war on Ukraine, rising fossil fuel prices, wildfires in various parts of the world, and the incessant flooding that is taking lives and destroying property like we have just seen in Libya.

All these 'unknown unknowns' make corporate strategy and governance a game of snakes and ladders. How can



Prof. Samuel Sejjaka. PHOTO COURTESY

captains of industry navigate their ships in these tumultuous times? It is a difficult and hazardous game where there will not be many winners.

Doing strategy has further been com-

licated by the speed of technology change. What worked yesterday won't keep you in the winners' corner today. Nevertheless, to achieve any reasonable modicum of success, CEOs must embrace corporate strategy and good governance.

Here are five of my favorite approaches to doing strategy and ensuring that a company maintains good governance.

The first is to rethink how we do corporate strategy. It is no longer adequate to sequester a group of chaps with a 'C' in their title to do corporate strategy.

Strategy must involve everybody in the company and it needs to be flexible. Rigidity is out, and versatility is in. The strategy must be agile in this era. It is an ongoing process and change is the only constant. It requires an all-embracing type of leadership to nudge the team in the right direction.

Second, we must learn to fail fast and fail cheap. If it doesn't work, you better be able to discard or change it as soon as possible. Gone are the days of 'don't change it if it ain't broken'.

Even if it works, it may be obsolete and others have just not yet figured out a way to outsmart you! You cannot be waiting for that 'Kodak moment'.

Traditional business boundaries are on the wane. Banking is not just for bankers, and insurance is no longer the remit of insurance companies. Watch who may be roaming on your territory or is already eating your dinner.

My third take on corporate strategy and good governance is to keep everyone informed, especially the board. We are all in the same boat and you don't want anybody paddling backwards.

The CEO's job now requires one to keep everybody singing from the same hymn sheet. Everybody is critical to success now and all hands must be on

deck.

Everyone must be carrying the weight. Speaking about which, what is the composition of your board? Have you heard about diversity, equity, and inclusiveness? Gone are the days when your board consisted of 12 old men in dark suits. The board comes with panache and colour now.

Fourth is the need to avoid those non-essential meetings and activities that do not create value. Many CEOs find themselves tied up in tinkering with internal issues instead of being customer-centric.

If you are not watching your external customers, be sure someone is wooing them. Keep the internal issues simple and understandable.

The most expensive solutions are not necessarily the ones that will give your customers satisfaction.

They want a service, and you need to deliver that service at the speed of light. Unfortunately, we live in the world of 'now'. If you cannot do it, your customers are smoke and mirrors. You need to get cracking to deliver those goodies.

Lastly, they say data is the new oil. Are you minding your data? In this age of machine learning and artificial intelligence, our offerings must be continually improved by learning about our customers and their very individualized needs.

Know your customer (KYC) has taken on a different meaning. It is no longer about identity cards and their next of kin. Customers are very individualised and winning is about anticipating and providing for their wants before they even ask!

Crazy, it must be, managing in these uncertain times. Regardless, planning and governance have never been more important, for the ones who want to have a Midas Touch. In the words of Steve Jobs, 'stay hungry, stay foolish.'

TALKING POINTS

Strategy must involve everybody in the company and it needs to be flexible. Rigidity is out, and versatility is in. The strategy must be agile in this era. It is an ongoing process and change is the only constant. It requires an all-embracing type of leadership to nudge the team in the right direction.

Traditional business boundaries are on the wane. Banking is not just for bankers, and insurance is no longer the remit of insurance companies. Watch who may be roaming on your territory or is already eating your dinner.

The CEO's job now requires one to keep everybody singing from the same hymn sheet. Everybody is critical to success now and all hands must be on deck. Everyone must be carrying the weight. Speaking about which, what is the composition of your board? Have you heard about diversity, equity, and inclusiveness? Gone are the days when your board consisted of 12 old men in dark suits. The board comes with panache and colour now.

The writer is board chairperson Monitor Publications Ltd

CEOs with the

midas touch

Daily Monitor
www.monitor.co.ug

Exceptional leadership takes Absa on the upward curve



Mr Mumba Kalifungwa Absa Uganda Managing Director.
PHOTO/JOAN SALMON

Status. Absa Bank Uganda Ltd is part of Absa Group Ltd, an African financial services group that aims to be the pride of the continent.

BY JOAN SALMON
jsalmon@ug.nationmedia.com

Mr Mumba Kalifungwa's appointment as Managing Director of Absa Bank Uganda was announced in March 2020.

A few weeks later, the country was sent into a lockdown in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, resulting into a disruption of both business and personal lives.

Since then, he has seen the bank through this tumultuous, volatile, and uncertain business environment, growing the bank to become the third-largest bank in Uganda by both revenue and profitability as of December 2022.

According to Mr Kalifungwa, exceptional leadership is collaborative and situational.

"It is collaborative because a leader's success comes through

having the right team. It can be situational depending on the prevailing circumstances. Therefore, I will hire the right people, and give them the latitude to work without micromanaging. I have also learned that the most effective way of leading senior executives is to empower them, be clear about what you expect of them, and let them run their ships according to the way they see fit," he says.

Leadership also means ensuring there is a common appreciation of the values within the organisation, a culture that guides the ship.

Mr Kalifungwa says he is primarily guided by the Absa purpose statement; 'Empowering Africa's tomorrow together, one story at a time'. This is facilitated by the bank's value system that speaks to high performance with people at the centre of it, being customer-obsessed, and having an African heartbeat.

"We are proudly African and a bank that exists to bring possibilities to life, helping our people to plan, dream and realise their ambitions. My role is to set the tone

on how to make this happen and one of my non-negotiables is excellence in all we do. As such, I have personal values around discipline, hard work, and humility in everything I do," he says, adding "For instance, if I commit to getting back to you in an hour, I should. But if I can't, I should call you 10 minutes before the hour lapses to communicate my failure to do so but also when I will make good on my promise."

Culture, he says, is set by communicating effectively to your team and living by the value system you say you believe in as a person.

Outstanding transformation

Mr Kalifungwa strongly believes that any positive transformation at Absa is birthed by his team with him as an enabler.

"To do that, we must have the right leaders in place, something I have greatly focused on in my role. The other is customer experience ensuring we anticipate and are responsive to their needs," he says.

Owing to culture transformation, there has been immense focus on how Absa Bank serves its customers which is evidenced by great improvement in the customer metrics such as the complaints resolution index, net promoter scores, customer experience index, product turnaround time and channels' up-time among others.

He says Absa has a deliberate strategy to attract, nurture, and retain the best talent in the market and ensure an attractive and competitive employee value proposition.

"Our growth to being one of the top three banks is in line with our strategy to generate sustainable growth in the community in which we operate. In so doing, we generate shared value and have an impact on society and the economy. It also communicates our relevance as business growth is tied to the growth of our customers," he says.

Nurturing high-performing teams

Teamwork is crucial to business success and Mr Kalifungwa says they see to it at the recruitment stage. For instance, with the executive leadership team, there are certain assumptions such as one being technically qualified for the role, having the right emotional intelligence, and emotional balance.

"My philosophy is that as one grows up in the corporate chain, it becomes less of the technical skills and more of stakeholder management skills. How do you manage people around, beneath, and above you? That comes with experience, self-awareness with a

backdrop of qualifications, experience, exposure, and if they have successfully led people before," he says.

That, he says, is assessed in the technical interview and psychometric testing where one must measure up to certain standards such as resilience, interpersonal skills, and change agility, a major ingredient for being a team player.

He emphasises that an emotional quotient is a big deal as it enables success or failure.

Absa Bank is also passionate about continuous talent development and nurturing through various initiatives and leadership programmes whose uptake is based on assessments, ambition and capabilities.

"We have interventions such as leadership and advanced management programmes both here and also within Absa Group to sharpen our people's skills. We trust, value and grow our people to achieve their full potential," Mr Kalifungwa says.

The people development programs are done at all levels within the bank.

"In my regard, I have fostered a culture of accountability because we win or lose as a team. Therefore, I want people who have a hunger to serve customers, grow the bank, and develop each other. That is because my growth and success will be dependent on my team," he adds.

Strategy

Mr Kalifungwa's role is to have directional clarity as to where he

wants to take the bank. The key component is having the right employees and the right strategy. He says Absa's strategy is to grow the business to improve its market positioning.

"We are working to improve the customer experience across every touch point where one interacts with Absa Uganda. Therefore, our growth strategy is purposed on customer and digital experience because the two are intertwined," he says.

As such our focus has been on making Absa Bank services more affordable, accessible, convenient and responsive to customer needs.

"We have done this by being clear and attuned to our customers' needs such as saving money, making a payment, and ably borrowing. For instance, we recently introduced Absa MobiTap, a function that enables businesses to utilize their smartphones as Point-of-Sale machines, allowing customers to make contactless payments. This is yet another innovation from Absa as we continue to leverage technology to create seamless experiences for our customers," he says.

Innovation

Absa Bank's innovations are focused on improving customer experience and delivering an enhanced product offering that also expands reach and accessibility for customers, including those who cannot reach physical branches.

Recently, the bank launched the Buy Now, Pay Later enhancement on its credit card that allows clients to get a credit top-up based on risk profiling.

A year ago, Absa Bank introduced the QR code on the ATM where a customer downloads the QR code and scans it on an ATM to get cash. The financial institution also launched the mobile NovoFX app that allows for international payments.

2020
MR MUMBA
KALIFUNGWA WAS
APPOINTED AS
ABSA UGANDA MD

MUMBA KALIFUNGWA'S PROFILE

Prior to this role, Mr Mumba Kalifungwa was the Executive Director of Finance at Absa Bank of Botswana and held a similar position at Absa Bank Zambia Plc until 2015. His organisational leadership experience and expertise includes business development, strategy formulation and implementation, people management, business performance management, enterprise risk management, capital and liquidity management, financial planning, and control.

Mr Kalifungwa is passionate about people and customers and has been successful in building high performing teams across the various markets that he has worked in, through the creation of incremental shareholder value.

He is a chartered accountant by training with over 25 years post qualification experience in both the private and public sector. He has spent most of his career with the Absa Group working across three different markets in Southern and East Africa; Zambia, Botswana and Uganda. He also has extensive board experience and once served as the board audit committee chairman of ZAMCOM in Zambia. He also served as international board member of the Africa region of the Association of International Certified Professional Accountants (AICPA) based in South Africa.

Disruption or distortion? The impact of AI on future operating models

Concern. While Artificial Intelligence brings the need for new skills and expertise which firms might not have, integrating the technology into workflows with existing infrastructure might prove difficult.

BY MONITOR REPORTER
editorial@ug.nationmedia.com

With the weekly drumbeat of generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) advancements and corporate leaders signaling the need for their organisations to harness the power of AI, questions are emerging for these same executives to address.

In addition to the ethical challenges that AI presents for their customers, employees, and society, companies must grapple with how AI will fundamentally shift their operating model, including the workforce.

Almost two-thirds (65 percent) of American executives believe generative AI will have a high or extremely high impact on their organisation in the next three to five years, but 60 percent say they are still one to two years from deploying their first GenAI solution, per a recent KPMG survey.

Ignoring the seismic shift brought about by AI, particularly with Large Language Models (LLMs) like ChatGPT is no longer a viable option for organisations. The torrential rise of AI, championed by industry titans such as OpenAI, Google, Meta, Microsoft, and Nvidia, is rapidly reshaping how work gets done and how companies operate and deliver value to their customers and shareholders. Let's explore the key components of operating models that are most profoundly transformed by AI's influence.

Organisation: Blueprint over structure

In an era dominated by rapid AI advancements, it's crucial to assess the impact on the entire organisational blueprint, rather than merely the organisational structure. The forward-looking and comprehensive nature of a blueprint, designed for adaptability, offers a more inclusive approach that anticipates future changes and can seamlessly integrate AI's transformative potential into the very fabric of an organisation's operations and strategy.

Preparing an organisation for AI is less a matter of stringent modi-



A robot at display. Both employers and employees must grapple with how AI will shift their operating model. PHOTO/INTERNET

fications and more about fluidity. Fluid organisations are capable of tapping into central expertise and data assets to augment AI skills and innovate. As opposed to brittle, hierarchical organisational structures, fluid organisations follow the 80/20 rule, able to respond to 80 percent of predictable events while remaining flexible enough to navigate the 20 percent of unforeseen challenges.

The primary challenge lies in establishing a dynamic organisational structure that optimises efficiency in addressing these regular tasks, allowing AI to enhance productivity while maximising agility in responding to opportunities and blind spots.

Culture: Mindset over skillset

When companies embarked on their digital transformation journeys, they saw the need to double down on digital literacy and deep technology to achieve their objectives.

But this era of AI requires a different emphasis one that focuses on mindset over skillset. Rather than cultivating an army of data scientists and programmers, companies need to evolve their culture to embrace continual experimentation, responsible innovation, and the potential of AI to drive lasting impact for employees, customers, and communities.

Moreover, it's imperative to acknowledge that AI is more than just a technology or tool. It has the capacity to learn, adapt, and even make decisions based on the data and content it has access to, creating a unique superpower for end-users that requires both creativity and caution in how it's deployed.

True leadership in an AI-first future isn't about tech prowess but the ability to integrate technology meaningfully into the broader objectives of the organisation, ensuring it aligns with human values and positive societal impact. Leaders must instill a mindset that allows the organisation to push itself and

challenge the status quo.

AI must be approached not as an infallible oracle but as a powerful ally that, when used with discernment, can amplify human capacities.

Lastly, it's essential to understand that the very essence of any digital technology is its evolutionary nature. What may be a groundbreaking innovation today could become obsolete tomorrow. Relying solely on the technical know-how of the present might lead to the trap of short-sightedness.

Process: Data over procedure

As AI begins to take on an increasingly dominant role in decision-making, a critical challenge has emerged; understanding the labyrinth of data-driven processes that can be transformed with AI while maintaining trust with end-users. Leaders must come to terms with the uncomfortable truth that AI's decision-making capabilities often far exceed human comprehension. Embracing practices like highlighting relevant data that contribute to AI outputs or building models that are more interpretable could enhance AI transparency. Using AI to diagnose a patient in a medical setting with oversight from the clinical staff is an example of how this transparency will be critical.

AI's effectiveness is heavily influenced by the data it processes. There will inevitably be biases because data are originally produced by humans, and the process of refining them involves humans again. To counter these biases, it is important to involve diverse teams in data collection and processing while also allowing AI models to learn and adapt from the data, including biases, to respond more genuinely to different perspectives.

There is also a trade-off around the size of data sets versus the accuracy and reliability of AI models. While big tech players race towards larger foundational models with over a trillion parameters trained on massive data sets, companies have an opportunity to leverage their own proprietary data sets to develop small, more focused LLMs with higher reliability and accuracy in domains such as content generation or customer assistance.

People: Human capital transition over reskilling

Leaders need to face the new human capital challenge AI poses.

While 62 percent of leaders are optimistic about AI, only 42 percent of frontline employees share that view, and only 14 percent have received AI training to date, according to a recent BCG survey. The emergence of AI necessitates new skill sets and competencies, redefining what expertise is essential for delivering value in this new "AI-conomic" era. But it goes beyond that.

The prospect of AI triggering mass unemployment is often overshadowed by optimistic predictions based on past technological revolutions. It is imperative, however, to examine AI's impact not through the lens of the past, but in the context of its own unique capabilities. The transition from horse-and-buggy to automobiles indeed reshaped job markets, but it did not render human skills redundant. AI, on the other hand, has the potential to do just that.

Contrary to the belief that AI should not create meaningful work products without human oversight, the use of AI in tasks like document or code generation can result in increased efficiency. Of course, human oversight is important to ensure quality, but relegating AI to merely auxiliary roles might prevent us from fully realizing its potential.

Take Collective[i]'s AI system for instance. Yes, it may free salespeople to focus on relationship building and actual selling, but it could also lead to a reduced need for personnel as AI handles an increasingly larger share of sales tasks. The efficiencies of AI could easily shift from job enhancement to job replacement, creating a precarious future for many roles. Similarly, while OpenAI's Codex may make programming more efficient, it could undermine the value of human programmers in the long run.

Certainly, investments in education and upskilling form a key part of any strategy to cope with job displacement due to AI. It is also imperative to craft comprehensive social and economic policies that provide immediate and long-term support to those displaced by AI's advancement.

Technology: Ethical stands over value proposition

AI introduces novel policies and standards, necessitating a reevaluation of decision-making protocols and organisational conduct. While having a flexible technology stack and data ecosystem are critical elements for scaling AI innovations, putting in place appropriate ground rules for responsible and ethical AI development is even more critical to ensure companies maximise benefit while minimising harm to stakeholders.

But the agile nature of AI evolution has outpaced the regulation meant to keep it in check. The burden of ensuring that AI tools are used ethically and safely thus rests heavily on the shoulders of the companies employing them.

Article adapted from Knowledge@Wharton

OPERATING MODELS

Organisations will need to chart their own AI-transformation journey by prioritizing an adaptive blueprint over structure, emphasizing mindset more than just skillset, valuing data above procedure, placing emphasis on the transition of human capital value instead of just reskilling, and elevating ethical stances above traditional value propositions. AI is like no other tech wave in history with the potential to empower employees, reimagine work, and shift how companies deliver value in leaps versus incremental steps.

Business is a team sport, says UBL MD

Interview. Mr Andrew Kilonzo has steered his team, and Uganda Breweries Limited to success because he believes in team work and empowers the teams. He talks to *Daily Monitor's* Joan Salmon.

Share your leadership philosophy and how it has contributed to Uganda Breweries' success, thus far?

I am constantly telling the people I work with that "business is a team sport". We all have our different roles and responsibilities, skills and talents and the execution for each person's mandate is critical to individual efficacy. However, the 'secret ingredient' to success is we must execute brilliantly, seamlessly and in concert with other individuals, functions, partners and customers to deliver the win.

For all those in leadership roles, regardless of the space and position, their most important responsibility as effective leaders is to simplify. This is critical to ensure that each team member is clear and connected to our collective task and their individual responsibility.

Through that, UBL has seized the opportunity in Uganda, recording strong performance and establishing itself as a critical socio-economic contributor by connecting in a meaningful and impactful way with our internal and external partners and stakeholders.

What in your view is the most outstanding transformation Uganda Breweries has undergone as a result of effective leadership?

Effective leadership serves as a pivotal driver of business transformation, providing a clear vision, inspiring motivation, and fostering a culture of innovation and adaptability.

A noteworthy transformation towards achieving world-class commercial excellence has been the business's investment in a cutting-edge commercial system dedicated to distributor and sales management. The suite of systems, processes and routines has embedded the capacity to consistently make data driven decisions. I have seen this empowering our commercial teams and distributor partners to enhance our trade activation standards through the implementation of KPIs, tools, and operational methodologies to ensure every day great execution. The data revolution extends into our manufacturing business where process tracking and diagnostics in



Mr Andrew Kilonzo, Managing Director, Uganda Breweries Ltd.
PHOTO/JOAN SALMON

all stages are real-time and the supply leadership team have the line of sight to make the right decisions and interventions at the right time. This integration of a state-of-the-art supply chain management system has also heavily improved our supply chain operations, enhancing overall quality, efficiency, productivity, and resource alignment with emerging opportunities.

Therefore the real game-changer is the wealth of data generated by systems, ensuring that it is readily available and the teams are connected to the collective goal and execute swift and informed decisions realtime. This approach revolutionises our efficiency, enabling us to elevate performance management, seize market opportunities guided by relevant consumer data and insights and consistently delivering outstanding value to our stakeholders.

What does it take to put together a winning team given in-

dividual diversity? How do you inspire and motivate your teams to achieve their best performance?

Building a winning team in the face of diverse backgrounds, motivations, and beliefs necessitates a multifaceted approach that embraces our cultural values and strategic principles. At UBL, we are unwaveringly committed to embodying our culture of being Bold, Progressive, and Connected in everything we undertake. Our core values, including Freedom to succeed, striving to be the best, and Valuing each other, act as a unifying force, fostering diversity, collaboration, and driving performance excellence across all departments.

Our strategic approach to assembling a triumphant team is grounded in several key pillars. These include an inspired and strong leadership team, well-defined KPIs and targets, clarified roles, painting a clear picture of success, simplifying processes and eliminating unnecessary obstacles, rhythms and routines.

In addition to these, we are dedicated to integrating our purpose, "Celebrating Life, Everyday Everywhere," into our performance

standards. We directly tie reward and recognition to living out this purpose, creating a culture of appreciation and motivation.

Furthermore, we demonstrate our unwavering commitment to nurturing employee capability through substantial investments in training and coaching initiatives, driven by our leadership team across all functions.

In essence, our culture, values, and strategic approach form a robust foundation for fostering diversity, driving excellence, and cultivating a dynamic winning team that thrives on collaboration, inspiration, and shared purpose.

Innovation is a business imperative for businesses all over the world. How is your leadership at Uganda Breweries leveraging on innovation to stay afloat and competitive?

Innovation stands as a top priority in our unwavering commitment to our Bold and Progressive culture. This commitment extends beyond the development of brands; it encompasses the enhancement of our entire spectrum of business processes and systems.

To realize our ambition and dedication to innovation, we allocate resources strategically to drive the process effectively. This ensures that innovation is not just a buzzword but a practical, ongoing and managed initiative. Actively engaging with focus groups, including consumers, customers, and partners, is an integral part of our innovation strategy.

We provide access to crucial data and research findings, enabling our teams to make informed decisions and stay ahead of market trends. This allows us to benchmark ourselves against industry standards and continually improve our offerings.

By investing in innovation, we gain the ability to tap into valuable insights. This, in turn, empowers us to adapt to changing consumer preferences and buying patterns, ensuring that our business remains future-proof. We are resolutely committed to our overarching strategy of leveraging data to inform our decisions. Through this approach, we effectively turn insights into opportunities and scale up our innovation efforts to meet the ever-evolving demands of our consumers, staying at the forefront of our industry.

Alcohol misuse and irresponsible drinking have been cited as one of the major causes of road carnage in Uganda. How is UBL helping its customers to drink responsibly?

As a business our purpose is to "celebrate life, everyday and everywhere" and alcohol plays a key role in our celebrations and is part of our African heritage. We want adults who choose to drink alcohol to "drink better, not more" and actively advocate moderation.

We are sensitive to the potential harm irresponsible drinking can cause and we therefore, first and foremost take self-regulation very

seriously. We have an internal very stringent marketing code designed to ensuring our brand marketing and portrayal of consumption, is responsible. We have actively engaged in the country with the various stakeholders and last year made great progress and jointly signed an industrywide marketing code with our peers.

Internally, the business has invested in responsible drinking awareness initiatives and extend the same to our customers. We have driven the consumer awareness and education on the importance of spacing alcohol consumption with water and food. We also provide guidance and tips on the perfect serve for our brands that help drive the drink better agenda.

We have provided access to a world-class platform known as DRINKiQ.com that is designed to educate the public on positive drinking. Our brands leverage the power of their platforms to communicate messages on drinking in moderation. Our latest campaign known as *Wrong Side of The Road* and seeks to enlighten the public on the dangers of drinking and driving and encourage all readers to explore these platforms.

INCLUSIVITY

UBL's Learning for Life programme is reducing inequality by offering hospitality education to the underrepresented demographics. Last year, there were 202 beneficiaries, 202 beneficiaries, 60 percent of whom were women, and 10 percent were persons with disabilities.

Organisations are committing a sizeable amount of resources towards Environment, Social and Governance (ESG). How has UBL integrated ESG principles into its operations?

We have integrated ESG aspects into our business strategy and every function in the business has a role to play. This is demonstrated in our Society 2030: Spirit of progress sustainability action plan. It consists of 3 pillars: promote positive drinking, champion inclusion and diversity and grain to glass sustainability which covers water, carbon, waste management and agriculture Preserve water for life.

We are proud of the impact we have created in Uganda. For example, currently, we offer a ready market to more than 30,000 sorghum and barley farmers, creating value for more than 40,000 households directly and indirectly, and supporting Buy Uganda Build Uganda.

We have grown our revenue contribution, moving to the top five largest taxpayer's in Uganda. We have fully transitioned from non-renewable sources of energy to using biomass, which is locally available and has effectively cutting over 90 percent of our carbon emissions.

**40,000
HOUSEHOLDS
DIRECTLY AND
INDIRECTLY
SUPPORTED BY
UBL**

CEOs ^{with the}

midas Touch

Daily Monitor
www.monitor.co.ug

The secret behind UDC's

Mission. Uganda Development Corporation mission is to "establish sustainable investments in areas strategic to Uganda's social and economic transformation, and prosperity of Uganda."

BY JOAN SALMON
jsalmon@ug.nationmedia.com

By 1970, Uganda Development Corporation (UDC) was a kingpin in the investment space in Uganda, manning over 70 percent of the industry either as subsidiaries or associated companies.

These investments were in; mining, hospitality, aviation, agriculture, real estate, chemicals, textiles, banking, and metals.

Hardly would you find an investment that UDC is not part of at the time. By 1970, UDC was thus the second largest employer of public service and was contributing 33 percent of the country's total revenue.

The political instability in the 1970's and early 1980's posed challenges to the corporation. The industries thus failed to create the desired impetus for economic take off for national development and in the end, the emerging industrial base of the country was destroyed.

Eventually, the government adopted policy reforms that promoted privatisation and thus most of the UDC investments were privatised leading to the winding up of UDC in 1998.

However, owing to its economic importance, conversations around re-vamping it started in 2009, and in 2016, the UDC Act re-established the Corporation.

Dr Patrick Birungi, the first substantive executive director of UDC was appointed in 2019, to steer the institution. Under his leadership, the institution has demonstrated a commitment to maintaining high professional and ethical standards in corporate governance, transparency, and accountability.

He believes, to be an effective director, one must be a team leader, able to lead, both from the technical and administrative point of view.

"The core responsibility of an executive director is to see that the institution's vision is clear, achievable, and is achieved. You are effective when you provide good leadership, grow the business, and



UDC Executive Director Dr Patrick Birungi (right), awards staff during a team building event. PHOTO/MICHAEL KAKUMIRIZI

achieve results," he says.

However, taking on the UDC reins was not a walk in the park. I joined an institution that was in its infant stages following the enactment of the UDC Act 2016.

Institutional framework and governance systems had to be put in place to adapt with the changing times. With a lean committed team of employees, the corporation was in position to start delivering on its agenda.

"However, this necessitated increasing employee workforce so as to create a winning team, and putting in place institutional systems and policies to aid UDC's growth. Transitioning from manual to digitalised systems has greatly improved the productivity and efficiency on how we manage our day to day operations," he says.

Bridging the gap

Building a team to embrace a common organizational culture and system required that the executive director merge the 20 percent existing staff with the 80 percent new staff and structure an institutional culture that would enable the corporation achieve its mandate.

"Owing to the nature of our work, the directorate of investment is the lead department. Therefore, all the other departments are supportive as opposed to working independently," he says.

"Regarding funding of projects, I

found that most of the funds were project specific, for example Soroti Fruit Factory. However, we started to advocate for capitalisation of the corporation which was backed by the board," he adds.

"We make investments on behalf of the government with the aim of serving communities and making money. This is often in areas of interest of government where the private sector may deem risky due to the high capital intensive nature of the investment yet it is of great value in terms of revenue and earnings, or is struggling and requires support," he adds.

UDC investments

UDC has invested in strategic

PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships and collaborations often drive transformative growth and while most of UDC's investee companies and partnerships are still young, they are not holding back.

Locally, UDC has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the National Planning Authority to develop projects together while harnessing the capacity to do feasibility studies. UDC has also formed partnerships with financial institutions to finance some of its initiatives. That is not forgetting the current discussion with the Private Sector Foundation of Uganda (PSFU) for joint project identification, execution, and support.

sectors that promote a great multiplier effect on the community namely agro processing, infrastructure and services, and mineral beneficiation.

In agro-processing, UDC has invested in sugarcane processing in Atiak, Amuru District, fruit processing in Soroti and Yumbe, tea processing in Kyenjojo, Kabarole, Kabale, Kisoro, and Kanungu districts.

"Value addition to the cotton being produced in Luuka District, coffee processing in Budadiri, and cassava processing in Nwoya District to produce denatured ethanol that is a green fuel for cooking. Our interventions are distributed across the whole country thus promoting balanced regional development," Dr Birungi says.

Under infrastructure and services, Kalangala Infrastructure Services (KIS) is providing water transport and electricity to the people on the Bukakata island.

UDC is also into road construction, where the corporation is partnering with Abubaker Technical Services, that is currently running two projects; Busunju-Hoima and Kapeka-Matugga roads construction and rehabilitation under the Uganda National Roads Authority.

"In the hospitality industry, we own Nile Hotel International Limited which houses the Kampala Serena Hotel through a concession agreement. Through Nile Hotel, we have a stake in Igongo Country Hotel in Mbarara. We also have stake in the Munyonyo Commonwealth Resort Hotel and the Speke Resort

Convention Centre (SRCC) that is under construction in Munyonyo. This will greatly promote MICE a key component in the Tourism sector of the country," he says.

UDC is also prospecting in the mineral sub-sector with the hope of establishing a cement processing plant in Moroto in Karamoja region, sheet glass in Masaka using lake sand found in the region, iron ore in Kabale, and revamping of the salt processing factory in lake katwe, Kasese District.

Embracing technology

Dr Birungi says they have integrated their systems across the different departments within the corporation thus promoting efficiency.

Investment impact

While UDC mostly indulges in long-term investments, impacts will be better measured at the project end. One of these transformational projects is ethanol for cooking with our partner Bukona Agro Processing Company located in Nwoya District. The factory produces denatured ethanol a green cooking fuel from starch extracted from Cassava, Maize, and sorghum, among others.

"The company has undertaken a corporate approach through sensitisation on the use of energy efficient cooking mechanisms while at the same time conserving the environment," he says. Adding "Refilling points are to be set up in corporate spaces in order to make it as easily accessible as charcoal.

2019
DR PATRICK
BIRUNGI APPOINTED
UDC EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR



Primary school children raise their milk sachets. Government wants to increase milk consumption in schools. PHOTO/JOAN SALMON

**20 LITRE
MILK DISPENSERS
DDA LOOKS TO
INTRODUCE**

Leverage your teams' strengths to triumph – DDA boss

Interview. The Dairy Development Authority (DDA) is a government agency mandated to regulate and develop the dairy sector. Under the leadership of Mr Samson Akankiza Mpiira, the dairy sector is transforming. He talks to *Daily Monitor's* Joan Salmon.

How long have you been at the helm of DDA and what have you learned as the leader?

I have been at the helm of DDA since December 2022 but first joined the sector in 2006 under dairy cooperation and rejoined it three years later as Director Technical Services. Therefore, I am familiar with the activities and needs in the industry.

Nonetheless, there are new experiences such as creating an enabling environment that is beyond the farm, which requires teamwork, and understanding synergies needed to supplement the DDA's mandate.

What has been your strongest resource as a leader?

I ensure that teams are empowered to deliver the services and allow people to individually contribute



Mr Samson Akankiza Mpiira, Acting Executive Director, Dairy Development Authority.

PHOTO/MICHEAL KAKUMIRIZI

tribute towards the development of the sector in their capacities at different levels.

How are you addressing the price and market challenges in the dairy sector?

As we push production and productivity, there must be demand as well. At the moment, production has increased due to government intervention, private sector involvement, and farmer interest in dairy farming as a business.

So, the pressure is due to price

fluctuation at the farm gate due to season-influenced milk production volumes.

Sometimes, the prices go lower than the production efficiency in terms of input price, which does not allow a farmer to project the business well.

We are thus looking for alternative markets, but also ensuring that additional equipment is installed to process long shelf life products such as ghee, and powdered milk. That will allow the products to reach further places but also avoid

wastage during bumper harvests. Additionally, local consumption must be ramped up. All this will help in stabilising prices along the value chain.

Why does milk consumption remain a challenge, especially on the local market?

While milk is crucial for a child's cognitive development, and the recommended litres per year are 200 per person, local consumption is still low. That is due to the poor culture of drinking milk and creating awareness of the benefits of milk.

We are also promoting the school milk feeding programme, which will cater even to those who cannot afford milk. We are piloting three models, starting with the parent-led to educate milk benefits to children's diets.

The processor-led to see how processors can subsidise the milk going to schools, followed by the government-led on subsidising the packaging material as these increase the price of packaged milk.

We have stimulated a policy conversation for a school feeding policy, working alongside the Ministry of Education and Sports, where school milk feeding becomes a subcomponent of the feeding programmes in schools.

However, culture change is gradual. Therefore, we need a 20-year plan to increase milk consumption in schools.

We are working to introduce 20-litre milk dispensers which deter adulteration. These will be put in places such as schools and markets for easy access to cheaper and safer milk. We are working with factories to ensure that the cans are industrially cleaned to avoid contamination during redistribution.

As a regulator and enforcer of dairy standards, how do you ensure Uganda produces the best milk?

DDA has a robust regulatory framework and since inception, we have been building our milk quality testing capacity. This has been through mobile vans with laboratories hence remote testing and prompt feedback. The regional offices also have mineral testing laboratories.

We do enforcement and inspection exercises of all milk handling premises that are licensed annually and could face closure in case the inspection results are wanting.

We have been training processor laboratory technicians to ably analyse dairy products using the harmonised dairy products standards in the region and globally.

We are also training all milk handlers such as farmers, and transporters on clean milk production, coupled with milk assistants who are the DDA gateman.

One of the biggest sector threats is climate change, what are you doing to deal with this?

We have been promoting the change of feeding practices from free range to zero grazing. That

feeds into having better breeds to aid reduction in the number of cattle without compromising milk production.

That will reduce the amount of cow dung as this generates methane which affects the ozone layer.

We continue to push for good animal nutrition where farmers plant good pastures and then cut and carry to the animals to reduce pressure on the greenery.

The President has set a production target of 20b liters of milk, as the sector leader what are your plans to achieve this?

We are looking to spread milk production to other regions, save Western Uganda which contributes 44 percent through farmer trainings. We are thus doing feasibility studies for a factory in Gulu and Soroti to add to that in Mbale.

The others are improving animal breeds through community breeding programmes.

We are training model farmers in artificial insemination management and then supply them with kits and straws from the National Animal Genetic Resources Centre and Data Bank, at subsidised prices. We are also emphasising nutrition improvement, and looking for market locally and internationally.

How challenging is it being ED of DDA and what advice do you have for leaders of similar entities?

We have this country-wide mandate hence a lot of work but the resource envelope is small. For instance, for fast response, we need more office space.

We are using a digital extension system (Kobo collector) where using a code, one can send their inquiry for a speedy and accurate answer. Currently, it works on smartphones but we are working to create a USSD code to cater to all farmers. That is coupled with model farms and farm extension services.

I advise leaders to embrace teamwork and ensure that every unit is utilised to bring out their competencies towards achieving a common goal of the institutions. They should also set goals to guide the teams well.

GROWTH

We are looking to spread milk production to other regions, save Western Uganda which contributes 44 percent through farmer trainings. We are thus doing feasibility studies for a factory in Gulu and Soroti to add to that in Mbale.

The others are improving animal breeds through community breeding programmes.

We are training model farmers in artificial insemination management and then supply them with kits and straws from the National Animal Genetic Resources Centre and Data Bank, at subsidised prices. We are also emphasising nutrition improvement, and looking for market locally and internationally.

Strategies that attract top talent to your firm

BY RICHARD MAGOMA
editorial@ug.nationmedia.com

// Capturing the employment value proposition is a memorable employment brand that states simply what makes your organisation a great choice." Rob Silzer and Ben E. Dowell.

Why do certain companies do very well in the "war on talent" than others? This is another way of asking what makes your company unique and better than others.

What is the human competitive advantage that makes your company beat the competition to attract and retain the best talent?

The Society for Human Resource Management has defined an employee value proposition (EVP) as "part of an employer's branding strategy that represents everything of value that the employer has to offer its employees.

Items such as pay, benefits and career development are common, but employers also highlight offer-

ings that are currently in demand—like technology, remote work and flexible scheduling". Other similar words to the concept of EVP comprise of Talent Value Proposition (TVP), Employment Value Proposition, Workforce Value Proposition, Employee Benefits Package, Employment Brand and Employment Value Proposition (EVP).

This is how an organisation brands itself to the potential highly qualified talent. Proper employee branding is the lifeblood of any successful organisation. Having very well understood what is EVP then we can proceed to enumerate the means and ways of engineering and achieving a successful workplace value proposition.

Consistent communication is one the infrastructures through which interested parties can get to know the existence of one's organisation. This is how customers get to know the products and services that a company offers. It is through magnetic communication that a



Stakeholders are a key component in building an indelible employer brand. PHOTO/COURTESY

company gets to pass its culture to potential talents. By now we all know the power of social media in carrying out the type of culture that an organisation espouses.

An organisation has to resolve how it wishes to be perceived by the outside world. How do you represent yourself through Facebook, Instagram, Tiktok and LinkedIn?

Stakeholders are a key component in building an indelible employer brand. The owners of the organisation must craft a positive image that they want employees, shareholders, customers, suppliers and vendors, investors, partners and alliances, regulators and government agencies, community and society, competitors, media, Non-Governmental Organisations

(NGOs), unions and employee associations and special interest groups to have.

It is through favourable stakeholder engagement that can produce an effect that attracts and retains top performers.

Metrics and analytics experts will always quip that what gets measured gets to be achieved. This means a good employee value proposition has to undergo various monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

Within the organisation, there has to be a clear and well-understood policy on career opportunities and development. Some employees will be excited about the presence of a well-established career growth plan

Employee wellness has become an imperative to consider when joining and staying an organisation. Employees desire to be happy where they work because that is where they spend a lot of their time. That is why wellness talks have become quite popular.

Covid-19 has taught us quite a number of things that we were taking for granted. The employer has to care for his or her human resources. There is controversy and debate about whether this is an appropriate term. Wellness can also be seen in how leaders practice emotional intelligence.

Research and development is an integral part of boosting a positive employee value proposition. This is how to understand one's audience. Nothing succeeds very well without the availability of lovely testimonials and success stories. The employer has to parade employees who have been very successful because of his/her organisation. Present and past employees are the true ambassadors of the brand. Employees are the true barometer of the organisations. Employees are the ones who have the power of the word of mouth.

Competitive remuneration strategies will always keep employees satisfied or happy to stay longer.

The author is an HR specialist and trainer (richardjellican@gmail.com)

Staff motivation makes ICEA LION thrive

Interview. Mr Emmanuel Mwaka, the chief executive officer at ICEA LION Life Assurance believes in fostering unity, trust and innovation in his team. He spoke to *Daily Monitor's* **Joan Salmon**, about the company's growth.

What do you think makes an outstanding leader?

Exceptional leaders possess a multifaceted leadership style, marked by active listening and a culture of open communication within their teams. They excel in emotional intelligence, and understanding how their decisions impact both the organisation and its members.

They foster trust, unity, and innovation while unwaveringly upholding the company's vision and values. Beyond their visionary qualities, they exhibit empathy, wisdom, integrity, and a profound sense of responsibility, serving as inspirational role models for their teams to emulate.

What are your leadership principles and how are they helping to set the organisation's culture?

My leadership is rooted in the belief that confidence in one's abilities unlocks their full potential.

As a leader, I guide and inspire by challenging individuals to embrace calculated risks and uncharted territories, promoting both personal growth and team unity.

Our culture thrives on continuous improvement, motivating each member to exceed their limits. This commitment to self-improvement, innovation, adaptability, and re-



Mr Emmanuel Mwaka, Chief Executive Officer, ICEA LION Life Assurance.

PHOTO/JOAN SALMON

silience defines our leadership philosophy's foundation.

How is your leadership steering the ICEA LION team to ensure the organisation continues to make a mark in Uganda?

It has propelled us to remarkable success in the insurance sector. We've risen from a 4th tier company to a top life assurance provider, emphasising innovation, customer-centricity, and excellence.

Through fostering creativity, adaptability, and consistent value delivery the company has continued to thrive even in the challenging economy and low insurance penetration.

The team has evolved tremendously and our commitment to pioneering and positively impacting Uganda's insurance landscape remains unwavering.

Technology is refining how business is done. What tools is ICEA LION using to remain relevant?

In the fast-paced world of technology, ICEA LION remains committed to leading the insurance industry. We recognise the transformative power of technology and prioritise customer centricity and have adopted cutting-edge tools that enable our customers to enjoy their journey in addition to advanced data analytics.

That enhances efficiency and tailoring services to customer needs. We've streamlined customer interactions through online access, ensuring convenience and top-notch service in this era of technological advancement. Our unwavering dedication to these innovations empowers our team and delivers exceptional value to our clients.

Environment, sustainability, and gover-

nance are crucial aspects today. What is ICEA LION doing to contribute to ensure sustainability in the insurance sector?

Our commitment to sustainability is exemplified through our partnership with the Uganda Wildlife Education Centre (UWEC) for Lions conservation and education.

We go beyond business interests to promote biodiversity and ecological balance in Uganda, reflecting our dedication to corporate responsibility. Our "Go Green" initiatives include tree planting to mitigate our ecological footprint and support reforestation, contributing to a healthier environment for future generations.

Our holistic approach aligns with our core values, promoting environmental responsibility, social welfare, and ethical governance. This commitment mirrors our vision of leadership, not only in insurance but in fostering a sustainable and inclusive future.

VISIONARY

Mr Emmanuel Mwaka's vision for ICEA LION is to impact the individuals and families they serve. Every claims payout, totalling billions, symbolises more than financial transactions; it's a story of resilience, keeping promises and fostering hope. This compels them to innovate, build trust, and be there when needed most. This vision goes beyond numbers, defining their role as a catalyst for positive change, empowering individuals to pursue their dreams with the assurance of a safety net. ICEA LION aims to lead the sector's transformation while providing unwavering support and togetherness to those they serve.



Centenary Bank thrives on digital transformation

Interview. Mr Fabian Kasi has been at the helm of Centenary Bank since 2010 and as the managing director, he has steered the bank to grow and become one of the most profitable financial institutions in Uganda. He spoke to *Daily Monitor's* Joan Salmon.

What defines an effective Chief Executive Officer (CEO)?

A CEO is a person who can inspire his team to walk with and deliver the vision and strategy of an organisation. One who builds trust and creates a great working environment and performance culture in which our people can thrive and achieve the best results for the organisation.

These results are defined by the value created by the impact in the communities we serve, increased sales, and increased profitability. An effective CEO should have his hands on the present and an eye on the future while prioritising the staff, and people, who are the engine of the company.

What the most outstanding transformation Centenary Bank has undergone because of effective leadership?

In the era of digital transformation, Centenary Bank has positioned itself to become a smart bank in the medium to long term. We continue to enhance our technology platforms to enhance our customer service and experience. Innovations in mobile, agent, and smart card services have propelled our customer acquisition strategy to grow our client base to more than 2.5 million customers.

The bank also provides digital financial services through a network of 79 branches, 205 ATMs, over 7,000 agents, and Internet banking platforms. We have also embarked on a holistic culture transformation journey focusing on our people who are key to delivering our business and we have registered significant growth due to improvement in our work and control environment.

It has often been said that a strong team is the foundation of best-performing businesses. How has your leadership identified, nurtured, and developed talent; and incorporated them into the team to deliver to your expectations?

Yes, indeed a strong and motivated team is key to unlocking great potential and opportunities present in our environment. At Centenary Bank, our staff start by identifying with our mission that

provides us with our purpose to serve, which is "To transform lives through inclusive sustainable financial solutions, especially in the rural areas". We recruit employees with positive attitudes, continuously train, skill, and motivate them to deliver the strategy of the bank.

Furthermore, we ensure our 11 strategic pillars are understood by the team so they can deliver on them. Lastly, we foster an environment that positions us as a leading employer of choice which has attracted great talent.

Today's demand for banking services is 'anytime anywhere banking. Consequently, banks require innovative, agile, robust, and secure systems fully optimised and ready to meet the expectations of tech-savvy customers. How is Centenary Bank positioned to innovate its way to customer satisfaction?

We already started our digital innovation journey to support our growing customer base where one out of every four people banked, is a Centenary Bank customer.

In the face of branchless and cashless services, now demanded by customers, we must remain relevant and responsive, building trust, and creating access and convenience as we provide enhanced safety on digital channels in the face of cyber threats. We are glad to inform you that our customer satisfaction survey rating this year is at 89 percent.

This has strengthened our resolve to have agile digital services to serve the unbanked, including a growing youth and tech-savvy population through financial inclusion initiatives for the digital global village.

Our innovations are linking the channels to increase accessibility to cash and e-payments, deposits, collections, transfer within and out to mobile, banks, and agents through our Centemobile, Centeagents, ATMs that also accept bulk

deposits, Visa, and Mastercard card suites.

All these provide greater customer experiences within the localities of our customers. We have a road map that enumerates the kind of innovations we want to put in place up to 2027. As we innovate, we shall continue to ensure that our channels are safe and secure as well as frequently sensitizing our customers.

Banking is a competitive industry. As such, high-quality customer care is invaluable to cultivating and retaining customers. How has your leadership positioned Centenary Bank to offer the best experiences to its customers?

We focus our strategy on the customer needs. As a bank, we ensure the products and services provided are simple, easy to understand, and meet the customers' needs. We continue to enhance our relationship management framework; we propose to be regularly in contact with our customers so that we can map opportunities with them and solve their challenges quickly.

We have also put in place good customer service systems that include good floor management in the banking halls and also support by queue management systems, social media and call centre to provide important feedback channels for our customers to understand needs, resolve complaints and provide solutions.

Executives across industries are executing digital transformation as part of their corporate strategies. How is Centenary Bank embracing and adapting to the digital revolution in its operations?

We started on the journey to review and automate most of our operations to make them more agile, dynamic, and efficient. We are continuously changing our technology platforms including our core banking systems to support future innovations.

With support from our sister company Cente Technology, we have enhanced our Centemobile platform with account onboarding services. For instance, one can open an account online and our sales team can open accounts in the field using tabs.

Our Agent banking network has increased financial inclusion in rural areas and now accounts for 45 percent of all transactions done through this channel. We continue to automate our internal processes to increase our speed to market for all services.

Organisational growth is closely tied to that of the community

adhered to, and we also support our customers in the governance of their businesses and financial literacy programs that improve their lives.

Our ESG strategy is aligned with the UN Sustainability Development Goals, and we are well positioned to comply, as ESG is becoming a compliance matter from the Central Bank.

Centenary Bank is celebrating 40 years of unprecedented growth and transforming livelihoods. What key milestones have been realised in the journey so far and what direction is the institution?

The key milestone to note is the contribution we have made toward the communities in which we operate. The bank boasts more than 2.5 million customers in retail, SME, and corporate segments.

We have managed to grow our balance sheet to over Shs6 trillion and are now ranked the number two bank in the industry. Currently, more than 45 percent of all transactions are done through our extensive agent network.

Our future in the next 40 years, is to continue to be the top provider of microfinance and leading Smart bank for all your needs. We pledge to continue to transform lives with a focus on the bottom of the pyramid providing services in the real economy for our ordinary Ugandans and beyond.

**45%
BANK
TRANSACTIONS
DONE THROUGH
AGENT BANKING**



**Mr Fabian Kasi,
Managing
Director,
Centenary
Bank.**

PHOTO/JOAN
SALMON

Why late-career entrepreneurs have most disruptive ideas

Age. Investing in older entrepreneurs might not just be a wise financial decision but a step toward a more inclusive and diverse business landscape that celebrates innovation at all ages.

BY SCOTT BELLOWES

When 60-year-old Samuel Mwangi launched his tech startup, many eyebrows were raised.

In a world enamoured by youthful exuberance and high-energy dynamism, it was easy to misjudge Samuel's ability to innovate. People often overlook wisdom, experience, and the distinct creativity that comes with age.

Those who doubted Samuel can be proven wrong as he can revolutionise different agricultural sub-sectors. Samuel's success, however, is not an isolated case.

It speaks to a broader misconception about older entrepreneurs.

Famous historical entrepreneurs such as Ray Kroc, who founded McDonald's at the age of 52, or Harland Sanders, who franchised KFC at 65, have not only shattered stereotypes but have also built brands that became global icons.

In many ways, these late-career entrepreneurs' success shows that innovation and enterprise are not

confined to youth but are nurtured by a blend of passion, wisdom, and experience.

A new study by researchers Martin Murmann, Virva Salmivaara, and Ewald Kibler throws light on this often-misunderstood phenomenon.

Contrary to popular belief, their research highlights that older founders, specifically those aged 50 years and above, are more likely to introduce new products or services to the market than their younger counterparts.

The study found that older entrepreneurs who combine their desire to innovate with personal wealth and managerial experience prove the most likely to generate groundbreaking innovations.

The research based on a study of 2,903 solo founders in Germany between 2008 and 2017, offers the first robust evidence of the innovation potential in late-career entrepreneurship.

While younger entrepreneurs are often credited with vigour and enthusiasm, and investor bias, thinking that these traits will launch a more successful and creative business, they erroneously believe they will return the invested funds with above average returns.

However, the research emphasises that age brings a higher likelihood of introducing 'new to the

market' innovations.

Entrepreneurs, young and old, must now view age as a powerful enabler rather than an unjustified barrier. Drawing from life experiences, late-career entrepreneurs can bring unique insights and innovative solutions to the table.

They have seen the world evolve and have the acumen to adapt and innovate in a way that can not only enhance their businesses but also make significant contributions to society in a realistic doable way, rather than the irrational exuberance of youth.

Investors, too, should pay heed. The prevailing pro-young and pro-attractive bias, often linked to perceived vigor, must be reassessed.

ENTREPRENEURS

While younger entrepreneurs are often credited with vigour and enthusiasm, and investor bias, thinking that these traits will launch a more successful and creative business, they erroneously believe they will return the invested funds with above average returns. However, the research emphasises that age brings a higher likelihood of introducing 'new to the market' innovations.



Innovation knows no age. PHOTO/SHUTTERSTOCK

Investors looking to back innovation and seeking long-term value must look beyond surface-level attributes. The wisdom, experience, and innovation orientation of late-career entrepreneurs presents untapped opportunities. Investing in older entrepreneurs might not just be a wise financial decision but a step toward a more inclusive and diverse business landscape that celebrates innovation at all ages.

In conclusion, the research by Martin Murmann, Virva Salmivaara, and Ewald Kibler is a beacon for all involved in the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Our incubators, accelerators, and training programmes across East Africa should incorporate more nuanced outreach to older prospective entrepreneurs.

Not only are wide open coworking spaces without physical barriers between workstations less conducive to creative outcomes as proved in multiple research studies, but also are less appealing to older entrepreneurs who prefer, on

average, a more professional perceived dignified coworking incubator office settings.

Those of us in the entrepreneurship ecosystem could also do well to hold networking events for older and youth entrepreneurs to meet and mix and perhaps cofound businesses together to take advantage of the diversity of skills commensurate with varying life experiences.

Let us remember that innovation knows no age and that the potential for groundbreaking ideas rests within individuals regardless of the number of candles on their birthday cake.

As the world ages and as wisdom continues to be a valuable asset, may we all learn to see the incredible potential that lies in the experienced minds of late-career entrepreneurs.

The writer is Assistant Professor of Management, Incubation and Innovation Center Chair, United States International University Africa

Quiet quitting: A misnomer or myth?

BY MATHANGANI MUYA

Quiet quitting as a workplace issue began appearing in 2022, and attracting the attention of psycho-social players, management, human resources specialists, employers and inevitably - employers.

It has gained traction during and after the Covid-19 pandemic slowed down.

Quiet quitting refers to a situation where an employee does the defined minimum requirements of their work and shows no discernible enthusiasm and effort to go the extra mile to add value or perform beyond the obvious expectations.

The employee, however, does not "quite quit" employment. It is therefore a misnomer.

At a glance, one wonders what is unusual about doing the bare minimum of what is required of your job

because that is what most employees do, and are expected to.

Quiet quitting has attracted attention largely due to a notable change in workplace behaviour and attitude to work, especially by the millennials (also referred to as Generation Y - born in the early 80s to late 90s).

It is this group that seems to have less loyalty in the workplace and has high expectations from employers to meet their material and job satisfaction.

They get easily distracted or bored if not challenged or lack resilience. If they are unhappy with a workplace, they "quit" for real without notice or withdraw their energy.

On a positive note, they are open-minded, innovative, freely express themselves, exude confidence, free thinker, flexible and open to experiments and new ideas and new lifestyles.

Another term for quiet quitting would be disengagement, where employees feel disengaged from the company's mission, vision, or values.

Performance and commitment are limited, they allow things to go wrong as long as it's not their direct responsibility, or won't be held accountable. Yusuf Saleh, Deputy Director of Human Resources &

QUITTING RATES

Nurses have the highest quiet, and real quitting rates, possibly due to the young workforce, demanding and stressful work, low pay, and inadequate resources. Corporate leaders should listen to the quiet quitters for they too have their stories from which we could learn how not to "quietly fire employees".

Administration at Business Registration Services says "it's all about the attitude towards work, which shapes the work culture. It could be a result of dissatisfaction due to other factors which could be intrinsic or extrinsic".

But is this behaviour limited to millennials? It seems some of the behaviour being frowned upon today was exhibited by the same generation that is most perplexed by the millennial's behaviour each generation resists control by the generation in authority.

The "quiet quitting phenomenon" has yet to attract academic research. Information is based on polls from the western world.

Research data would help address the underlying issues, and determine how it's affecting organisations' performance, employee productivity, and employee mental health.

Quiet quitting cuts across indus-

tries, and the technology, health, and fintech sectors seem to be the most hit, as well as the sales force.

This is a situation where an employee becomes "quietly frustrated by hostility, rejection, withdrawal of duties and responsibilities, and allocation of less prestigious roles inconsistent with their qualifications, competencies, and hierarchy.

It was common in the public sector, where errant employees were transferred to far-flung places. In the private sector, it's practised by denying employees responsibilities and confining them to small corner offices.

HR and corporate leaders must interrogate the causes of quiet quitting, and researchers provide data on its impact on employee well-being, and organisation performance, and come up with intervention measures.

Employees must also reflect if they are quitting for selfish reasons, personal values, or inability to handle challenges.

The writer is a HR strategist, career and leadership coach.



Through authentic leadership, Kabayiza is building an effective team

140
COUNTRIES WITH
WILLIS TOWERS
WATSON
FOOTPRINT

Transformative. Being intentional about growing leaders ensures that the sphere of influence at Willis Towers Watson Uganda Insurance Brokers Ltd is unstoppable.

BY JOYCE AHEEBWA
editorial@ug.nationmedia.com

// Leadership is not about being in charge. Leadership is about looking after those in our charge," Simon Sinek.

Ms Ritah Mutesi Kabayiza, the executive director at Willis Towers Watson (WTW) Uganda Insurance Brokers Ltd, says a star wants to see themselves at the top whereas a leader wants to see those around them rise to the top. A big believer in people, she prides herself in authentic leadership to create high-performance teams.

When a CEO brings their authentic selves to the workplace and genuinely cares for people, others do the same, creating an enviable work environment.

If your team trusts you, she says, they will follow you to unknown territories. Trust is built when CEOs care for their teams and also deliver results.

An effective CEO ought to listen

and understand their teams' values and then deliver on those values daily. Leadership is an honour and big responsibility bestowed on us by God, we ought to give our best while at it.

Building a winning team

She says the most outstanding people resource transformation that WTW has undergone as a result of authentic leadership is the intentional creation of more leaders daily.

"This is how we have increased the WTW footprint, effectively engaging clients and prospective ones in turn amplifying our market influence," Ms Kabayiza says.

WTW under her has successfully groomed leaders within the team as "you get all of us when you get one of us". The team cohesion and ability to serve clients irrespective of who receives the inquiry is a character we pride ourselves in.

Being intentional about growing leaders not only amplifies her capabilities as a leader but also ensures that the sphere of WTW influence is unstoppable.

"I'm confident enough to say that even if I retired today, someone in the team would easily pick up the mantle and do better than me,"

she adds.

To make the insurance claims process efficient, WTW under the leadership of Ms Kabayiza established a fully-fledged claims advisory team comprising seasoned professionals with different specialties within the claims cycle.

From the time a client reports a claim, to documentation, policy interpretation, and adjustment, the team can support and guide all parties involved in the claims journey.

Some insurers have given WTW, the claims pen allowing the firm to adjust claims internally, a service that has shortened turn around times for fast track claims.

A member of the claims team is facilitated to reach claim scenes

TEAM GROWTH

The most outstanding people resource transformation that WTW has undergone as a result of authentic leadership is the intentional creation of more leaders daily. This has enabled the firm to increase its footprint, and effectively engage clients.



Ms Ritah Mutesi Kabayiza, executive director at Willis Towers Watson Uganda. PHOTO/JOYCE AHEEBWA

in no time, his knowledge of processes and relationships with various authorities such as Police goes a long way in assisting clients during difficult times.

"We believe that claims experience is a key aspect of our business and therefore work towards perfecting this competence. We are making good progress as most of our client referrals have originated from excellent claims services," she adds.

Customer-centric services

With the evolving market needs, WTW does not sell off-the-shelf policies to the client, each policy is tailored based on understanding of the client's specific needs and business model. This has enabled them to develop bespoke unique solutions in conjunction with their insurer partners. WTW serves clients

across all economic sectors such as industry, agriculture, infrastructure development and services.

Ms Kabayiza says with increased public sensitisation about the benefits of insurance and learnings from other jurisdictions, the insurance sector is destined for growth and WTW is no doubt a key player ready to offer unique solutions to the ever-evolving needs of clients across variant business segments.

Innovation

Technology is used to prepare market reports that provide great insights to clients in diverse fields empowering them to make informed decisions on risks. To her, technology has facilitated efficiency in many ways.

"During Covid-19 times, all colleagues were able to effectively work and serve clients from their homes the next day as if we were in the office. The ability to work from anywhere anytime and access all our resources is a plus for us given the volatile environment," she adds.

Sustainability

WTW believes that thoughtful and intentional management of each environmental, social, and governance (ESG) pillar enhances success. The firm has therefore identified focus areas in each pillar that define how they do business.

For the environment, the company is committed to stewardship of natural resources evidenced in its waste and recycling policy, business continuity, and data recovery.

WTW prides itself in effectively managing relationships across clients, suppliers, and communities.

"Our relationships have grown over the years but each is guaranteed personal attention at all times from any of the colleagues," we remain committed to social responsibility," she says.

She has unlocked our potential - employees

Ms Ritah Mutesi Kabayiza is a beacon of effective leadership with unwavering commitment to the organisation's success. Her work ethic sets a standard that motivates us, demonstrating that success is born of diligence and determination.

She is visionary, painting a vivid picture of our shared goals. This vision provides a sense of purpose that invigorates the team to reach for greatness.

Her boundless empathy and decisiveness enables her lead



with a compassionate heart, understanding the needs and aspirations of each team member. It also fosters a harmonious work environment where every voice is valued.

She leads with integ-

ity as her actions consistently align with her principles, creating an atmosphere of trust and transparency. Her supportiveness and empowerment are invaluable, encouraging us to excel, offering guidance and trust in our abilities. That has ignited my growth and confidence.

She has a motto, "if it's not right, my hands cannot be in it," which embodies her commitment to excellence.

Mr Kiarie Ngong'u, deputy client director, WTW

Ms Ritah Mutesi Kabayiza's unique leadership style is both people and goal-oriented.

Being a people oriented leader, she has created a friendly working environment and resources to empower colleagues in their smooth career trajectory.

She continuously derives her joy from the success and growth of each team member which has kept us highly motivated and resilient.

I joined her team



as an administrator but since then, I have grown through roles to Head of health and benefits department.

Being goal/results oriented, Ritah is a hardworking and de-

termined leader who achieves anything she sets her mind to do effortlessly, while demonstrating her values and ethics.

We actually call her a 'magician' because she always has a solution for everything. These values have gradually trickled down to the rest of the members leading to an efficient and effective team.

Ms Phiona Namutebi, head of health and benefits, WTW

Concern. Overconfidence can often lead to a disconnect between belief and actual knowledge, causing individuals to make decisions that disregard scientific facts and data.

BY SCOTT BELLOWES

In a bustling agricultural export office in Kakamega, Kenya, Wafula sat behind his desk, convinced that he held all the answers. He felt confident that maize prices would soon skyrocket, even though market data suggested otherwise. Wafula rarely consulted reports or spreadsheets, relying instead on his own intuition.

"You see, I have been in this industry for 15 years, I know the trends like the back of my hand," he would often declare. In stark contrast to Wafula, Nekesa, the data analyst, often cautioned against making decisions without proper data analysis. Despite having key market indicators at her fingertips, Nekesa felt like she merely spoke to a wall whenever she approached Wafula.

Wafula's overconfidence led to a series of poor decisions that eventually had an adverse impact on the company's revenues. As an example, several years ago, the company invested heavily in maize, ignoring Nekesa's market data that warned of an oversupply. By the end of that season, maize prices had plummeted, just as the data had predicted. Wafula shrugged it off as a one-time event, refusing to acknowledge that his decision-making process proved heavily

Why overconfidence in managers is a red flag



STRATEGY

Managers and organisations on the other hand, dealing with overconfident employees requires a multi-pronged strategy. First, it may prove beneficial to introduce mandatory training programmes that highlight the importance of data-driven decision-making. Furthermore, organisations can implement systems that require employees to provide empirical evidence for their decisions.

By being aware of the dangers of overconfidence it can foster a more enlightened, evidence-based approach to decision-making. PHOTO/ SHUTTERSTOCK

flawed. Meanwhile, Nekesa and other colleagues grew increasingly frustrated with Wafula's refusal to consider data-driven approaches.

Continuing in Business Talk's

miniseries on overconfidence and the negative consequences on business, recent cutting-edge research by Simone Lackner, Frederico Francisco, Cristina Mendonça, An-

dré Mata, and Joana Gonçalves-Sá shows that overconfidence often correlates with a dismissive attitude toward scientific data and evidence. The study suggests that individuals with intermediate rather than advanced levels of scientific knowledge tend to exhibit overconfidence, which subsequently results in a negative view towards science and data. Essentially, individuals think they know enough to make decisions without further investigation, thereby sidelining crucial empirical evidence.

The researchers conducted the study by examining four large surveys, spanning three decades and covering Europe and the United States. They introduced a new confidence metric instead of relying on participants to self-report or compare themselves or compare others, which arguably has skewed previous studies on overconfidence.

The metric gauges overconfidence based on the frequency of incorrect answers to questions on scientific facts as opposed to 'don't know' responses on assessments, thus hoping to get a purer gauge on someone's abilities. The study showed that the highest levels of confidence were with those with

meager intermediate knowledge of scientific facts and figures, thereby making them overconfident when they really knew quite little.

Psychologist Jay Bavel interprets these findings as a warning against people who claim that they do their own research. He points out that such overconfidence can be a significant hurdle, especially in the workplace. People who think they know enough often disregard the limitations of their own knowledge and overlook the importance of empirical evidence. This can be especially detrimental in an organisational setting, where data-driven decisions are crucial.

What about overconfidence in different industries? How about a lecturer who strongly believes in grade deflation by issuing higher proportions of failing grades as a way of motivating students rather than issuing higher proportions of top A-level grades, despite the evidence.

Working with such an overconfident person, such a lecturer would often proclaim "well, the research is wrong" or "the evidence data was collected incorrectly", all without actually reading the studies, research, and evidence, similar to Wafula, but in a different industry. On a marketing and sales team, a manager may berate and blame staff over why sales have not increased despite dire macroeconomic condition data impacting consumer purchasing behaviour.

The writer is Assistant Professor of Management, Incubation and Innovation Centre Chair

Forget the strategic planning sing-song, think analytically

BY DAVID J. ABBOTT

"A plan is not a strategy," says Roger Martin, former dean of the Rotman Business School at the University of Toronto.

While the words 'strategic planning' are usually put together, they mean two different things, resulting in confusion.

Done with a lot of noisy song and dance, this is why your plan called 'strategic', just sits on the shelf gathering dust.

For Martin, a strategic plan is, "An integrative set of choices that position you on the playing field of your choice, in a way that you win." Strategy is tricky, demanding an injection of a MRI like revealing diagnosis. In comparison, planning is easy. Anyone can do it.

Art of strategy has a theory asking, for instance: a) Why, which playing field do you choose? and b) How are you going to serve customers? In essence: the unique strategy needs to be coherent and be do able.

Planning is like a warm bath

In contrast, planning is comforting, it does not need to be coherent. Typically, planning is done in

the domain of the 'known' on the cost side of the organisation.

The ambitious CEO will want to open a new office in Kigali, and the marketing and sales director aims to launch a new product. Finance folks will stress cost accounting and need a new enterprise resource planning software.

Not to be left behind, the human resource manager will want to launch a trendy mental health 'wellness' initiative and address the decision making 'organisational silos', going into the realm of culture change. And, the 'to do list' of planning activities will go on and on. These are all inward things the company can pretty much control, as they are the equivalent of an internal customer.

Outward and unpredictable

Strategy has an outward focus on the often unpredictable customer, who the company cannot control. Creating angst, strategy is uncomfortable.

Good strategy applies a variant of the centuries old scientific method and is based on a hypothesis, 'a best guess'. Hopefully, based on analysis, one is saying; 'Here is what we think will happen'. It is im-

possible to prove the strategy will work in advance, in the domain of the unknown.

Coherence is an absolute requirement, nothing can be contradictory. Senior managers supported by the board of directors, have to lay out a transparent logic of what has to be true for the strategy to succeed, taking into account, for instance, customer preferences, unmet needs, likely competitor behaviours and broader fast moving industry trends. Here, one is thinking a few steps ahead like a chess master.

Not knowing requires leadership

"In strategy, not knowing isn't

DEFINITION

Analytical thinking involves being able to identify and define problems, extract key information from data and develop workable solutions for the problems identified in order to test and verify the cause of the problem and develop solutions to resolve the problems identified.

bad management, it's great leadership" says Martin. For the professor emeritus, strategy is about choosing where to play, how to win and then creating the management systems, the infrastructure that supports that happening. Easier said than done.

In practice, strategy is like driving down a mountainous narrow winding road in the thick fog. So forget the five-year plan, escape the illusion of the crystal clear view long-term planning, in a deceptive hazy cloudy reality.

Only way for the management team to succeed is to be agile, constantly adapting. In operationalising the strategy, closely monitoring it, seeing what is working, and what is not.

Why is this so hard to do?

Part of the problem is not understanding the fundamental distinction between planning and strategy. Don't worry, even the MBA graduates have a problem with this peculiarity.

After all, a four-year old child can plan. It's easy to make long lists of a jumble of wide ranging good intentions, all pretty much within the managers control and label it with

the high sounding, exotic word: strategic.

To set an imaginative strategy, based on hard analysis and dash of 'out of the box' creative thinking, that captures the market, meeting customers' needs, perhaps even addressing needs they did not even realise that they had, now that is tough, but do able.

Forget doing age old worn out SWOT exercise, focus on being [numbers and facts] analytical, using inductive logic, setting a hypothesis of what one thinks is happening, then doing the objective research to prove, or disprove what you think may be true.

Don't try and be all things, to all people. Strategy is about making trade-offs, creating value, along a chain of activities.

What is the unique value proposition for the customers, and how does one price the offering? It is about choosing what not to do, as much what to focus on.

This is not easy, it forces managers to question fundamental assumptions, and conventional wisdom.

The writer is a director at a Catalyst Consulting



“Mediocrity is something I have no room for because it is very costly both in the short and long run. From the onset, particularly during orientation, we ensure we take you through UWEC’s vision, mission, and culture including team building and core values so you are abreast with the realities from day one,”

Dr James Musinguzi, Executive Director, Uganda Wildlife Conservation Education Center

Committed. Dr James Musinguzi is meticulous at his job, leaving no room for error while grooming teams to drive Uganda Wildlife Conservation Education Center.

BY ISMAIL MUSA LADU
iladu@ug.nationmedia.com

Dr James Musinguzi’s contempt for mediocrity is telling. That is why on the tolerance list of the executive director of Uganda Wildlife Conservation Education Center (UWEC), mediocrity does not feature anywhere, not even as a footnote.

“Mediocrity is something I have no room for because it is very costly both in the short and long run,” he says.

From his observation, the younger generation, particularly the Millennials and Generation Z are more susceptible to mediocre-like performance, advising these two generations to rise above this negative trait before it becomes part of their culture and identity.

“From the onset, particularly during orientation, we ensure we take you through UWEC’s vision, mission, and culture including team building and core values so you are abreast with the realities from day one,” Dr Musinguzi says.

No tolerance for fraud

And should you want to dare Dr Musinguzi’s patience, then engage in fraud. You will be dealt with accordingly. The riot act will be read to you before being subjected to the full force of the law. And be-

fore that, you will have to contend with administrative action which in itself, especially if you happen to be on the wrong side of the law, is uncomfortable to take.

“I don’t tolerate mediocrity and fraud. Why should someone else do your job, this is not acceptable. We have also dismissed people who have engaged in what could be considered as simplest of fraud. So there are things that are no go-go area for me and these two perfectly tick the boxes.”

The nature of the job, Dr Musinguzi presides over, is very risky, going by his description. This is because by just forgetting or missing to close a door where the animals are kept, you could have potentially introduced another bigger problem.

Remember UWEC is keeping wild animals and could endanger or be endangered once they cross paths with humans, resulting in loss of lives.

And for that, you have to make sure everybody is following Standard Operating Procedures and protocols required “for you to have a safe environment for the staff, animals and the visitors”.

Leadership style

Dr Musinguzi always finds time for consultation because that is what his leadership model is about.

“My leadership style is democratic,” he told Daily Monitor in an interview, adding: “I love consulting my colleagues on several plans, activities, and strategies before implementation because you cannot know it all,” he adds.

The reason behind his model of

UWEC boss on leadership and war against mediocrity

leadership is simple; it generates not just interests, but collective ownership as well.

“In my position, I have to ensure we are looking out for each other, talking to each other, understanding each other, sieving our ideas together, and making sure we are a family and a strong team,” he says.

But, that shouldn’t mean, Dr Musinguzi cannot be firm.

“Some situations require different approaches, including carrot and stick. When things go wrong, solutions must be sought and people should take responsibility. I have to be strong in communicating issues related to change in operations and management in particular aspects. I have to be firm when sanctioning, especially if one goes against the Human Resources manual, protocols, and procedures that are in place for a good cause. I will always do my best in addressing situations without mixing issues,” he says.

Market share

Besides tourism attractions services that UWEC renders, many other things are seeking the attention of the category of people the centre is trying to lure. That, according to Dr Musinguzi, is not a problem that should result into causing sleepless nights.

“It is about the quality of service we render that matters. And it is what will unlock the door for us,” he says.

According to Dr Musinguzi, an average Ugandan yearns for affordable quality services, something UWEC has in abundance.

There is a diverse product and service range, including catching glimpses of wild animals, and refreshing, and a beautiful beach; all perfect match for a family.

This is in addition to affordable accommodation, guaranteed security, good music, and warm hospitality, all corroborated by the survey we have conducted.

Achievements

UWEC has tried to promote equity and team work, cascading it down to the lowest person. Everyone can have a chance to innovate, succeed and an opportunity to be considered for training.

The institution has a functioning five-year period strategic plan

which was approved by the UWEC Board and National Planning Authority. “This plan will help us carry out conservation education, rescue and rehabilitation of wildlife, captive breeding of endangered wildlife species as well and edutainment. Currently, we are setting up regional centers and zoos in Mbale, Gulu, Mbarara, and Kyenjojo so somebody doesn’t have to travel that long to enjoy these services,” he revealed.

Conservation Education must be spread across Uganda in order to change peoples’ attitude and behavior towards environmental conservation.

Further, he says: “We have also been able to improve and diversify our products and services. We have got tigers from South Africa after exchanging with them some of our monkeys. We have recreated Uganda’s eco-systems such as the lake, the savannah, the wetland, beaches, good restaurants, good cottages, and apartments.”

We have the best children play area in Entebbe, great cottages, longest beach line, good restaurant, floating restaurant, wedding and birthday venues

Uganda has the best zoo in East, West, and Central Africa, according to the Pan African Association of Zoos and Aquaria. Entebbe Zoo is also the training Centre for all zoos and aquaria in the East, West and Central African regions.

As a result, Dr Musinguzi who is the Board Chairman of the Chimpanzee Sanctuary and Wildlife Conservation Trust was elected as the chairman of the Pan African

Association of Zoos and Aquaria (PAAZA), catering for all zoos and aquaria in Africa.

This is another platform for him to showcase his brand of leadership while at the same time showcasing Uganda’s human resource strong leadership skills and ability.

Additionally, Uganda is also a member of the World Association of Zoos and Aquaria in the world..

These are prestigious institutions that are joined by invitation only after being audited.

There is now a virtual reality in the zoo using 3D view- technology. To Dr Musinguzi, technology is not per se a disruption but an enabler which he has embraced, using it to digitise operations, including online ticketing and booking.

As regards training, he is not only passionate about it but sees to it that all staff are trained, resulting in another Pandora’s box.

“We have become a poaching ground. Most of our staff are being poached by zoos in UAE, North America and South Africa because they are well-trained and top professionals,” he quipped.

Challenges

Despite government efforts to continually fund the centre, funding continues to be one of the challenges. This has affected mobility and conservation education.

Poaching of staff continues to be an issue since we have trained our staff locally and internationally so they’re very good at what they do.

As the PAAZA chairman, he feels there is a need to continually improve animal standards and welfare in zoos. Some zoos are still in cages yet, according to Dr Musinguzi the animals should be in an expansive ecosystem for adequate husbandry and welfare.



A giraffe at UWEC receives a treat from a zoo tourist. PHOTO/FILE

70 YRS
SINCE THE
ESTABLISHMENT
OF UWEC

Kainobwisho champions transformation at URSB

Formalisation. The Uganda Registration Services Bureau has been focusing on helping businesses in the informal sector to formalise their operations.

BY JOAN SALMON
jsalmon@ug.nationmedia.com

The informal sector accounts for a large proportion of Uganda's economy in terms of jobs.

According to EPRC, more than 60 percent of the workforce, and nearly 90 percent of small and medium-sized enterprises operate in the informal sector.

Despite its importance in economic progress and livelihood, informality imposes significant costs on the economy.

Uganda envisages reducing the size of the informal sector from 51 percent to 45 percent by 2025, according to the Private Sector Development programme of the National Development Plan III.

Over the years, the Uganda Registration Services Bureau (URSB) has been focusing on helping businesses in the informal sector to formalise their operations. This, according to URSB, the agency entrusted with business registration is starting to yield positive results.

Ms Mercy K. Kainobwisho, the Registrar General of URSB, attributes this to strategic interventions that are enhancing formalisation while supporting citizen livelihoods and national economic growth.

"Previously, negative trends hampered formalisation. The bureau's commitment to easing registration processes for

all services while prioritising support to the private sector through valuable services reversed that hence the impressive performance," she says.

Delivering mandate

URSB continues to deliver on its mandate and services namely; company and business name registration, intellectual property rights registration, and handling insolvency matters. It also registers marriages and propelled the use of movable property as collateral to access affordable credit through the maintenance of the Security Interest in the Movable Property Registry System (SIMPO).

To carve out a clear direction in which to operate, Ms Kainobwisho says the bureau adopted its Strategic Development Plan (SDP) III, which is aligned with the National Development Plan (NDP) III.

"It helped to support services delivery, increase uptake of registration services, innovation and technology development. All these combined offered new options for supporting service delivery while enhancing efficiency across all operations. URSB remains committed to the pursuit of socio-economic transformation as envisioned in the country's long-term aspirations," she says.

The strategic objectives driving URSB's growth plan include

strengthening the legal and institutional framework to promote competitiveness, simplifying processes to ease registration, enhancing communication and awareness about URSB services, and strengthening research and advisory services.

Key milestones

Notable non-tax revenue (NTR) collections

At the close of FY 2022/2023, there was an upsurge in non-tax revenue collections from Shs57.04b last year to Shs77.14b over a set target of Shs69.6b (35 percent above target growth).

The growth in collections is attributed to strategic concentration on delivering quality services through the all-digital, all-online strategy.

"It allowed clients to easily access responsive services from the comfort of their homes and offices, unveiling client-friendly systems like the Online Business Registration Service (OBRS) that allows a multiplicity of submissions from searches to annual returns and document certifications, decentralisation of services with the addition of new areas of operation as well as targeted awareness, sensitisation, and communications campaigns," she says.

Formalisation of economy

URSB registered 23,789 companies a 28 percent increment from 2021/22, 27,104 business names, 86,375 legal documents, and 1,483 debentures.

Ms Kainobwisho accredits this to increased awareness and simplification of the registration process.

"These registrations are a strong indicator of the economy's steady recovery from the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic which is enabling private sector growth and economic competitiveness. About 56,308 legal documents were also registered showing heightened commercial activities in the economy," she says.

Supporting innovation growth

Uganda's creative industry is growing owing to its citizens' entrepreneurial nature, constantly looking for solutions to imminent challenges. That led to the growth of intellectual property innovations which is in line with URSB's mandate to protect, promote, and commercialise these inventions while

REGISTRAR GENERAL'S PROFILE

Ms Mercy Kainobwisho is the registrar general of the Uganda Registration Services Bureau (URSB). She is qualified, competent, and experienced female advocate of the High Court of Uganda with 18 years of experience specialising in Intellectual Property Law, Business Law, Project Management, Oil and Gas law, Leadership, and General Management. At URSB, Kainobwisho has risen through the ranks having joined as Manager, Directorate of Intellectual Property. She went on to become Director of Business Registration, and later appointed Director Intellectual Property. Before joining URSB, she served as State Attorney at the department of the registrar

general at the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs. She joined the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs from Shonubi Musoke & Co Advocates where she was a legal assistant.



supporting groups such as artists, book writers, and inventors through trademark, utility models, and patent registrations. Local and foreign trademark registrations rose to 1,360 and 2,105 respectively. In regards to trademark renewals, 336 were local while 2,228 were foreign. Additionally, 80 copyrights and 43 industrial designs were registered. Innovation in tertiary institutions is growing and in line with that, URSB presently has 32 Technology and Innovation Support Centres (TISC) to improve the quality of research in universities and other research institutions.

"We do that by providing access to up-to-date patent and non-patent databases. Additionally, under the Bilateral Project on Appropriate Technology in partnership with the World Intellectual Property Organisation, two technologies were developed to address the negative impact of climate change on local communities. These are rainwater harvesting and filtration; and alternative technology to brick firing," Ms Kainobwisho says.

Enhancing access to credit for small business

Through SIMPO, more than 14,000 borrowers, and small business owners especially from vulnerable groups have accessed financing using their movable properties as collateral. The SIMPO registry was launched in 2019, to support the use of assets such as cars, electronics, farm and livestock, and machinery as collateral to access credit, especially for micro small, and micro enterprises that lack fixed assets like land.

In FY 2022/23, 6,179 loans were extended to borrowers by financial institutions under SIMPO. That was a 36 percent growth compared to FY2021/22.

Decentralisation of services

For easy access to services,

URSB maintains branch offices in Mbarara, Masaka, Mbale, Arua, and Gulu in addition to two branch offices to support the central region. Another branch was opened up in Hoima City to allow service to reach the now flourishing Albertine region.

"URSB continued to participate in major engagements across the country using mobile service vans that have the capability of operating as mobile offices, especially in the hard-to-reach areas," she says.

Leveraging technology and organisational talent

Technology has facilitated the transition from manual to online systems at URSB. As the bureau's size and scale continues to grow, emphasis was placed on recruiting and training staff to support the vision.

"These interventions are fruitful with the realisation of the strategy and high-impact goals. About 90 percent of URSB services can now be accessed from the comfort of one's home or office," Ms Kainobwisho says.

Stabilising the family union

Ms Kainobwisho says URSB is committed to ensuring all marriages are formalised and registered.

"Formalisation of family structures through marriage registration strengthens government's strategy of citizen inclusion in the money economy such as disbursement of funds under the Parish Development Model," she says.

"Through continuous engagement of duty bearers, there has been an improvement in the registration of marriages with a 50 percent increase in registration of customary marriages, 59 percent increase in marriages celebrated by the Registrar of Marriages, and growth in compliance by churches filing returns of marriages conducted," she says.

WELFARE

Team leaders play a pivotal role in fostering a positive and supportive work environment. By prioritising staff welfare, the Registrar General has enhanced the overall URSB employee experience which has contributed to the long-term success and sustainability of the organisation. She has unveiled staff welfare through various strategies and initiatives. Employee welfare is crucial for enhancing morale, productivity, and retention.



Ms Mercy Kainobwisho (centre), the URSB Registrar General with graduates from the young leaders mentorship programme (under 35 years) trained by senior staff members. PHOTO/COURTESY



“We need to wake up to the green building realities and consider low-hanging fruit aspects like ventilation in existing buildings. Then there is the issue of solar energy. If we address these, with regards to commercial buildings, we can reduce their pressure on renewable energy. New build properties should adopt these principles without exception. For instance, all new commercial buildings should consider utilising natural ventilation as opposed to air conditioning. The inclusion of intelligent building management systems should also be a must. Property owners ought to take sustainability seriously and adapt accordingly as it is inevitably going to become law,”

Mr Shem Sabiti Bageine, Managing Director, Bageine & Company Limited

PHOTO/MICHAEL KAKUMIRIZI

Professionalism is Sabiti's most powerful weapon

Exemplary. Mr Shem Bajura Bageine's leadership skills, professionalism, and work ethic, coupled with humility took Bageine & Company Limited to greater heights.

BY JOAN SALMON
jsalmon@ug.nationmedia.com

The journey of Bageine & Company Limited in the real estate sector started with Mr Shem Bajura Bageine in Kenya where he obtained his qualifications, was initially employed by Tysons Limited where he rose to the rank of a Managing Director. He later started his own firm, Bageine Karanja, which later became Bageine Karanja Mbuu which still provides the same professional services in Kenya today.

On his return to Uganda in 1987, he formed Bageine & Company, Valuation Surveyors and subsequently Bageine & Company Limited, Real Estate Investment Consultants in 1992, the latter which offers commercialised services

such as property management, estate agency, site acquisition, development consultancy, facilities management, etc.

He served at the helm of both firms, inculcating the work ethos he had adopted into the entire workforce, until 2010 when his son, Mr Shem Sabiti Bageine was appointed Managing Director of the company and who has been at this position to date. Mr Bageine remains the Principal Partner in Bageine & Company and the Chairman Board of Directors of Bageine & Company Limited, where he continues to provide guidance and consultancy to the teams in both companies.

"It is my father's leadership skills, professionalism, work ethic and above all, humility that got us here. He taught us, more so myself, that real estate consultancy services only thrive and survive on professional ethics which births reputation," Mr Sabiti Bageine says.

Mr Sabiti believes an exceptional leader stands in front of the team and presents them with the courage to keep going forward. That person must have a vision, how to achieve it, and communicate the same to the team.

"An exceptional leader is a decisive,

courageous, no-nonsense person. When it is time to do something, do it. Instead of looking around to others to decide for you. The icing on that 'cake' is consistency regardless of the situation," he says.

Leadership assets

Mr Sabiti says one of his assets is the desire to learn and is guided by his adapted adage, 'every cloud has a silver lining and every silver lining has a cloud assigned to it'.

"We must learn from our mistakes and implement those lessons going forward. Mr Bageine inculcated in us a sense of soberness which enables us to remain level-headed at all times," he says. "That is, of course, coupled with management skills."

Leadership style

Mr Sabiti says he leads by example doing what he needs his team to do as a specimen for them to adopt.

"Though there are hierarchies in the company, I'm not a boss but a team player," he reveals.

Mr Sabiti operates on an open-door policy and believes in hard yet smart work, adopting the Pareto Principle that states that 20 percent of your time determines 80 percent of your production.

"So, I dedicate the first two hours of the morning to dealing with any urgent/difficult/crucial tasks before handling anything else. That feeds into valuing my time. I also value work-life balance without which I cannot lead my teams effectively," he says.

Triumph

Mr Sabiti says they celebrate every single win but one that comes to the forefront was when the company was named one of the biggest property management firms in the country.

"That was a moment of triumph that showed that the business had matured. I believe that was achieved due to our principles of which professionalism is at the forefront. This has enabled us to gain trust and attract more customers," he says.

Growing a work ethic that encourages the team to work with alacrity is also a win. "When I see staff zealously looking for me to sign off a file, I'm eager and encouraged to aid the process. That helps us all win," he says.

Adopting the principle of knowing their clients, their needs, and expectations and working to satisfy them is another major win for the company.

"As we show our clients how we can work together, we strive to understand them and ultimately deliver their needs. That calls for reinventing our business processes in a manner they understand as long as it is professional. That speaks to client retention and growth," Mr Sabiti says.

Team building

To Mr Sabiti, teamwork is crucial to business. He thus freely passes information to his staff through the open-door policy, trainings and team building sessions. The latter two he thanks his wife Angela, a management and skills training wizard, for supporting.

"I develop a friendship with every staff member as it is crucial, especially during tough times," he says.

Feedback is also crucial as you don't know whether you are doing it right or wrong unless you get feedback.

"I make it a point to receive, but also give as much feedback as possible. This enables people own what they are doing and go beyond the limits," he says.

Innovations

Bageine and Company Ltd has adopted IT measures, especially with respect to key lines of service to aid delivery of these to clients without affecting professionalism and technical competence.

"This direction is crucial to better serve our clients and obtain the highest possible turnaround times in service delivery while maintaining quality of service and client confidentiality," he says.

Customer-centric initiatives

The company understands that the customer is key and they should get top-notch services.

"That has birthed the idea, that we are in the process of turning into reality, of bringing together our clients in a one-day gathering in order to obtain and give feedback, looking at ways that we can enhance better working relationships to ultimately better serve them," he says.

Sustainability

The conversation around the urgent need to obtain a sustainable built environment is yet to be fully appreciated by many people in Uganda.

Mr Sabiti says one of the issues is the cost implication of turning old buildings into green buildings.

"We however need to wake up to the realities and consider low-hanging fruit aspects like ventilation in existing buildings. Then there is the issue of solar energy. If we address these with regards to commercial buildings we can reduce their pressure on renewable energy," he says.

2010

**MR SHEMA SABITI
BAGEINE WAS
APPOINTED
MANAGING
DIRECTOR**

The role of data literacy in corporate success

BY RAYMOND KIYEGGA
editorial@ug.nationmedia.com

Data literacy is one of the most fundamental topics in today's technology transformation world. For any organisation aspiring to be data driven, understanding the underlying principles of data literacy is critical.

Gartner defines data literacy as "having the ability to understand, share common knowledge of and have meaningful conversations about data"

In recent years, there has been a notable trend of data being elevated to a highly valuable resource, with various monikers such as the 'new oil' and 'new gold' being attributed to it.

Every day, we consume and produce data at home, on the move or at our workplaces. Yet many organisations lack the necessary resources and skills to convert data into value.

These resources extend beyond tools; to include the need to foster awareness on the need for data literacy. Ultimately, this will unlock vast opportunities to those ready to walk this journey of data literacy.

People ask themselves questions about what the future of data will

be like. Shall I retain my job? Will human interaction cease to exist? Will robots take over business processes? All these are valid questions to ask.

It is true, that there will be an evolution of jobs that we have never imagined. Despite all these uncertainties, evolution must prevail, and more jobs shall be created.

In a 2021 article "Impact of data and analytics on the future", KPMG examined how changes in data and analytics impacts the way corporate services operate. The article showed the need for good data governance and mastery of data management to be a key part of any organisational structure to empower corporate services tackle the challenges they face.

It also argued that good investment in analytics' tools is a good

DATA ANALYTICS

With the emerging necessity for organisations to incorporate tools to empower their workforce, it is equally crucial for the workforce to possess the skills and readiness to utilise data analytics tools for better output.



Data analytics is a key component of most business operations, from marketing to supply chain. PHOTO/COURTESY

place to start. However, without good understanding of the different levels of analytics, such heavy investments might end up in a pitfall.

The world of analytics has its foundation on four levels: descriptive, diagnostic, predictive and prescriptive.

To appreciate this, there is a need to have clarity how an organisation has viewed data and analytics historically. This vision will empower organisations to explore these four levels efficiently to be ahead of the pack.

Embarking on a journey to harness the full potential of your data may raise fundamental questions such as: 'How do you get started as an organisation? How can you get the best out of your data?' A deep understanding of tools, technologies and the data held by organisations is necessary for the journey towards data literacy.

With the emerging necessity for organisations to incorporate tools to empower their workforce, it is equally crucial for the workforce to possess the skills and readiness to utilise these tools for better output.

To this end, it is important to engage collaboratively with organisation data custodians, assisting them to effectively unleash the power of these tools.

In addition, to position your organisation as one that is data driven, the foundation of the journey is in developing a data governance strategy.

The strategy development process starts from defining clear roles and responsibilities for data management, to setting guidelines for data quality, security, and privacy.

It is also critical to align this strategy with the overall business goals and to foster a culture that values data as a key asset.

An organisation that successfully embraces and implements this approach, ensuring its data governance strategy is responsive to changing business needs and technology trends, is bound to secure a competitive advantage, making it well-prepared for future challenges and opportunities.

The author is a senior data and analytics consultant with KPMG Advisory Services. (The views and opinions are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the views and opinions of KPMG).

UETCL embarks on bold transformation journey

Growth. UETCL is taking bold steps of positive change to improve power transmission in Uganda and beyond.

BY JOAN SALMON
jsalmon@ug.nationmedia.com

Uganda Electricity Transmission Company Limited (UETCL) is a public utility with the mandate to own, develop and operate the High Voltage Transmission Grid (HVTG) above 33kV.

According to Joshua Karamagi, CFA, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), UETCL's mandate is derived from various annual licences. These are the license for systems operator; license for operation of high voltage transmission grid; license for power export and import; and license for bulk power supply.

"As we undertake these bold steps towards UETCL's transformation, our efforts are geared towards fulfilling our mandate in line with the government's Vision 2040 and the recently launched Energy Policy 2023," he says.

UETCL's transformation journey can be broken down into;

Project implementation and grid expansion



Ms Ruth Nankabirwa (3rd left), Minister of Energy unveils the UETCL ISO Certificate flanked by Mr Kwame Ejalu - board chairman and Mr Joshua Karamagi, CFA - CEO, UETCL (3rd right). PHOTO/COURTESY

UETCL is currently implementing several projects under the Grid Infrastructural Development:

- Commencement of power exports to Rwanda – On June 16, 2023, the Uganda and Rwandan grids were synchronised to allow for the export. Uganda currently exports power worth \$1.8m per month to Rwanda.
- Evacuation of Achwa plant – The much-awaited

**\$1.8M
PER MONTH IN
POWER EXPORTS
TO RWANDA**

Gulu-Agago 132kV transmission will be completed by October 2023. This line evacuates power from the

Agago Agago/Achwa 88MW Hydropower Plant and will save the government an estimated \$2.5m per month of energy costs.

- The Great Kampala Metropolitan project – This project is worth \$77m. It will upgrade transmission line capacity while building

new ones to cater to the growing population in the area.

- Kabaale Substation – UETCL has so far secured USD50b to construct the Kabaale substation which will supply power to the Kabaale Industrial Park, EACOP oil pipeline and the oil wells at Kingfisher and Tirenga.

- Karuma – Olwiyo 400kV transmission line - Recently commissioned, it will improve power reliability in West Nile and Northern Uganda.

- Masaka-Mbarara 400kV, 135km transmission line and associated substations – Though delayed, it is currently fast tracked as procurement process is soon complete.

ISO 9001:2015 Certification

In UETCL's Corporate Business Plan 2018-2023 that was approved by the Board of Directors, ISO certification was one of the set strategic deliverables. "The certification was attained and the achievement is a testament to UETCL's unwavering commitment to quality, innovation, and the pursuit of operational excellence," Mr Karamagi says.

UETCL also plans to acquire and obtain other ISO certifications in occupational safety and health, environment management system and, energy management system.

Corporate strategy

UETCL is still implementing the Corporate Business Plan (2018-2023). The UETCL Board of Directors approved the roadmap for the preparation of the 2024-2029 Corporate Strategic Plan which will

be launched in June 2024 and its implementation to commence in July FY2024/2025.

The strategy will be tailored to the recently launched Energy Policy 2023, National Development Plan III and Vision 2040 in accordance with the Amended Electricity Act 2022.

EAST AFRICAN POWER POOL

EAPP has 13 member countries and 14 utilities that signed the Inter-Utility Memorandum of Understanding (IUMOU) where UETCL is a member utility. The initial electricity trading activities through the EAPP will commence before the end of 2024.

Eastern Africa Power Pool (EAPP)

The EAPP convened the 29th Steering Committee meeting on July 20, 2023 chaired by Mr Karamagi in Kampala and proposed addendum to the Inter-Governmental Memorandum of Understanding (IGMOU). The committee also approved the steering committee's recommendation to introduce an independent market operator. EAPP has 13 member countries and 14 utilities that signed the Inter-Utility Memorandum of Understanding (IUMOU) where UETCL is a member utility. The initial electricity trading activities through the EAPP will commence before the end of 2024.

CEOs with the

midas Touch

Daily Monitor
www.monitor.co.ug

It is always about teamwork – Mafabi

Committed. Britam Insurance Company has a team of experienced executives and directors committed to guiding the company towards long-term growth and success.

BY RACHEAL NABISUBI
editorial@ug.nationmedia.com

Mr Allan Mafabi the chief executive officer of Britam Insurance Company (Uganda) Ltd is a visionary and transformational leader who believes in teamwork. Using his position as a CEO, he has played a pivotal role in the growth of the insurance sector.

As an outstanding leader, Mr Mafabi doesn't believe in titles. For the 10 years he has served so far, he has been able to lift Britam from the 17th position to one of the top insurance players. This is something that can only be achieved as a team.

"Everyone here belongs to the company team. This helps them to associate with the company and feel at home because they spend most of their time at work and therefore cannot afford to spend their time sad. Our industry is about service.

It is about the actual service that drives growth. From a leadership approach, it is about inspiring the team you work with. This is something that moves the company," he says.

The job of a leader is to nurture better leaders. A leader should be able to empower leaders. In the pro-

cess of taming leaders, they should not ask what should I do? Leaders make decisions if they cannot, they should consult their peers. When Mr Mafabi retires, he wants to look at all the leaders that he nurtured into their CEO roles.

He says if someone wants to become an outstanding leader, they must be more than ready to challenge their brains. Transformational leadership, he says, involves changing people to do the right thing starting with the mindset change.

This, according to him, all starts with the thoughts, words, actions, habits, character, and destiny.

The quality of your thoughts and how you change yourself are important factors. The growth mindset you need is to be thinking. When you are a transformational leader, sometimes you need a servant leader.

"I am nothing without my team. I serve everyday. At Britam, we are culture driven. Citing an example of Formula 1 where car tyres are changed within 1.8 seconds," he says.

Before having principles at an organisation, start by understanding culture. Cul-

ture is an umbrella term that encompasses the social behavior, institutions, and norms found in human societies, as well as the knowledge, beliefs, arts, laws, customs, capabilities, and habits of the individuals in these groups. If your culture is excellent management, you shift execution.

"Britam is the first growing company in the insurance sector because we have a culture of people who are result-oriented and quick thinkers. I keep challenging them that every claim below Shs20 million should be done within 24 hours," Mr Mafabi adds.

Recently, Britam Holdings was named among the top East African superbrands which means a company is doing something very well and fast. To Mr Mafabi, it means you can trust the brand.

"If you have so many dis-jointed people you can never work or grow. Therefore, the team should be ready to challenge each other," he says.

Technology is currently refining how businesses are done and Britam under the stewardship of Mr Mafabi is not left behind.

Britam Holdings' recent accolade as a top East African superbrand is an endorsement of the company's commitment to excellence. For Mafabi, such recognition signifies the trust that customers place in the Britam brand.

Furthermore, Mr Mafabi recognizes the transformative role of technology in shaping business landscapes. Under his stewardship, Britam remained resilient even during the Covid-19 pandemic, thanks to their forward-thinking business continuity plans that harnessed technology.

Britam is not just focused on profits; sustainability is at its core. With the upcoming attendance of Britam's Group CEO at COOP23, the company is poised to further its sustainable business strategies.

Mr Mafabi's ultimate vision is clear; to revolutionize the insurance industry with the customer at its heart. He believes that a satisfied customer is the best brand ambassador.

"In times of adversity, our clients know they can count on us. We're not just an insurance company, we're a trusted ally in challenging times," he says.

10
YEARS THAT MR
ALLAN MAFABI HAS
SO FAR SERVED AS
BRITAM CEO

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Through education, community development projects, and partnerships, Britam strives to create a positive and lasting impact on the communities in which they operate. The company operations are continuously evaluated and improved to ensure that we are doing our part in creating a better future for generations to come.

Mr Allan Mafabi, Chief Executive Officer of Britam Insurance Company (Uganda) Ltd.

PHOTO/RACHEAL NABISUBI



L-R:
Superbrands East Africa Program Director, Mr Jawad Jaffer, Britam Holdings Director of Customer Experience, Brand and Marketing Ms Diane Korir, and Britam Holdings Group Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer Tom Gitogo pose for a photo with the award.

PHOTO/COURTESY

How overconfidence gives rise to wild ideas

BY SCOTT BELLOWES

In a bustling Mombasa office of a renowned shipping company, a mid-level executive named Ahmed frequently discusses his theories that the company's top management is out to get everyone.

He is confident, almost too confident, and never hesitates to share his intricate theories with colleagues. But he also demonstrates his confidence during meetings about work matters even in areas where he is not an expert.

He thinks he knows everything all the time. In terms of company conspiracies, he believes that the higher-ups have a secret plan to cut jobs massively and redirect all funds to an undisclosed project, and he claims to have pieces of elusive evidence to back it up but never shares his purported evidence with anyone else.

His colleagues, wary but intrigued, listen but also maintain a layer of scepticism.

Ahmed's beliefs, although unfounded, might find an explanation in interesting new research by Gordon Pennycook, Jabin Binnendyk, and David Rand.

Their study suggests that overconfidence serves as a significant predictor for belief in conspiracy theories. According to the researchers, people who overestimate their cognitive abilities tend to be more susceptible to such unfounded beliefs.

The research involved eight studies with 4,181 United States-based adults and examined various factors

such as intuition, overconfidence, and performance in numeracy and perception tests.

The study found that individuals who overestimated their performance on these tests also had a higher tendency to believe in conspiracy theories. This relationship remained robust and constant even when accounting for variables like analytic thinking, the need for uniqueness, and narcissism.

Meaning, other more obvious causes were statistically ruled out and overconfidence remained a key component.

So, what can be done in a work environment to address the overconfidence issue and stymie organisational conspiracy theories? Colleagues must exercise vigilance and engage in open, honest dialogue when they notice someone leaning toward conspiracy theories.

Offering alternative perspectives or verified information can sometimes be enough to make the individual question their own beliefs, although approaching the topic

INTEGRAL ROLES

Both colleagues and organisations have integral roles to play in mitigating the spread of such ideas and fostering an environment where evidence and reason guide beliefs and actions. This will not just make for a more harmonious workspace, it will likely lead to better decision-making across the board.



Overconfidence serves as a significant predictor for belief in conspiracy theories. PHOTO/SHUTTERSTOCK

delicately remains crucial.

On the other hand, with managers and organisations, the issue demands a much more intentional and integrated approach.

Workshops focusing on critical thinking skills, the value of evidence-based decision-making, and the pitfalls of cognitive biases can be part of the solution.

A confidential reporting system could also be beneficial for employees to report concerns about colleagues who may be propagating false or harmful information.

Further, employers can focus on organisational internal communications so that staff stay regularly informed instead of leaving gaps where rumours and conspiracy theories thrive. Executives should incorporate a zero-tolerance policy for conspiracy theories and rumours spread by employees.

The writer is the Assistant Professor of Management and Chair of the Incubation and Innovation Center at the United States International University – Africa

Universities should be key drivers of innovation

Teaching. Cavendish University Uganda's student-centric academic model deploys global best practices in teaching and learning.

BY JOAN SALMON

jsalmon@ug.nationmedia.com

In the ever-evolving landscape of higher education, the role of a university's leadership is more critical than ever before.

Universities serve as beacons of knowledge, innovation, and societal progress, and the individual at the helm plays a pivotal role in steering the institution toward excellence and relevance.

One such enabler is Prof John Mugisha, the Vice Chancellor of Cavendish University Uganda. He says the vice chancellor's role today has changed drastically both in terms of its scope and the skill set required to do the expanded roles.

Universities today admit diverse students from different cultures and backgrounds in education systems. They are required to start at the same level but are not at the same level.

"As the chief academic officer, the vice chancellor has to ensure there is a system in place to identify individual differences and provide academic support to ensure that all students can learn," he says.

Universities have to respond to the ever-changing needs of soci-



"As a leader, I have propagated the gospel of student-centricity. What this means is that whatever we plan or do revolves around the learning, success, and comfort of our students. Student-centricity is the Least Common Multiple (LCM) for all our partners. I keep emphasizing that a university is a place of transformation and our primary target is the student."

Prof John Mugisha, Vice Chancellor of Cavendish University Uganda.

ety by going beyond the technical curricula to ensure all systems, processes, and cultures within the university can transform students into responsible, employable, entrepreneurial, and ethical citizens.

"Today, universities should transform students not only in terms of knowledge and skills but also attitude, passion, thinking, interests, values, behaviours, and mindset. These cannot be achieved automatically. They are deliberately and carefully planned for. The vice chancellor must be at the centre of this planning," Prof Mugisha says.

The vice chancellor, he says, needs to acquire a sufficient level of digital skills, communication skills, ideation and innovation skills, and problem-solving skills.

With the increasing integration

of technology and digital learning platforms, universities need to be places of innovation, research, and continuous learning. Technology makes it possible for learning to occur at a distance, anytime, and from multiple sources.

According to Prof Mugisha, there are concerns about quality but these can be controlled through monitoring learner participation using intuitive and intelligent learning platforms, monitoring students' progress, and use of assessment that requires demonstration of higher-order thinking skills instead of simply recalling and regurgitating what the teacher taught in class. Technology, he says, makes it possible to run synchronous classes, and administer online invigilated examinations and virtual seminars

where students can make presentations with their videos on.

These measures can ensure quality while promoting accessibility since learners who are not able to come to campus for physical classes are also given a chance to study.

Covid-19 pandemic significantly impacted universities and Cavendish University Uganda wasn't spared either. Under the leadership of Prof Mugisha, the university had long installed a modern learning platform to which it had already switched all Distance Learning students.

"When we faced a shutdown because of COVID-19, we opened platform accounts for all contact students and continued teaching them online via our learning platform to a result that our students never missed any semester because of the physical shutdown of education institutions," he reveals.

He added; "We were among the first universities to get NCHE approval for Open, Distance and e-Learning (ODEL), and the first university in Uganda to conduct Virtual Graduation. We paid attention to change management procedures preparing the contact learners and the teachers to conduct teaching and learning but also undertake assessments online. We also negotiated with regulators and the government because initially, they thought that teaching online would not be effective. Actually,

as a university, our reputation as a technology-enabled institution was recognised during the Covid-19 shutdown. For us, it was both a challenge and an opportunity."

Among the tough decisions that Prof Mugisha has ever made as a vice chancellor was to combine classes that were taught differently under different programmes but which had similar learning outcomes. These include communication skills, introduction to Information Technology, and Introduction to Research Methods. This was after noticing a lot of duplication with attendant unnecessary expenditure on teaching costs.

"For a private university, this undermines the financial ability to pay salaries, buy teaching aids, make statutory remittances to URA, and NSSF among others. Of course, this was a difficult decision because it impacted staff headcount. I was guided by principles of efficiency in operations and sustainability of the university without which all of us would lose our jobs. Deciding on whom to retain and who to release depended on performance appraisal reports and students' lecturer evaluations. This made the exercise very objective," he says.

Effective leadership always thrives through collaboration and one important vehicle through which collaboration is achieved through organisational culture which should bind all stakeholders to the institution's mission.

Business. Kansai Plascon provides quality paint products and colours that meet the needs of all its customers.

BY JOAN SALMON
jsalmon@ug.nationmedia.com

Innovation drives Plascon to become top coatings company

Mr Santosh Narayan Gumte is known as a result-driven managing director with over 20 years of experience in operations, managerial accounting, and finance management.

He is an accomplished Chartered Accountant with a passion for organisational systems development. He is also a Certified Public Accountant and has a postgraduate degree in Computer Science.

Before being appointed as the managing director in February 2019, Santosh was Kansai Plascon Uganda Ltd's commercial director, a position he had served for almost 12 years and was responsible for the commercial footprint in the region.

He played a key role in the business transition from 2017 and has been pivotal in market stabilisation and growth.

In a fast-changing world, to achieve such a market presence, phenomenal leadership is crucial.

Mr Gumte understands the essence of proper leadership in driving organisational growth, saying the leader's fundamental role is guiding the team.

"A leader should ably listen to team members, building upon each one's strengths and guiding them to ensure that the collective effort focuses on the organisation's goals," he says.

Beyond courage and commitment, he says a leader must have the emotional intelligence to deal with the diversities in an organisation.

Kansai Plascon Uganda's mission is to achieve the company's strategic goal; to become the leading coatings company in Africa and a drive to inspire innovation, confidence and enabling possibility.

In the MD's capacity, the principles he engineers to lead the team are a commitment to honesty, integrity, respect, teamwork, and hard work.

He also strives to develop and maintain the trust of Plascon's stakeholders including staff, customers, community leaders, and government regulatory bodies.

"This helps to reaffirm the message of Plascon as a trusted brand and market leader," he says.

Fostering teamwork

Teamwork is the grease for continuous success and at Kansai Plascon, Mr Gumte says they respect diversity and embrace the cultures of their staff, customers, and communities, showing empathy and understanding through learning and collaboration.

"Staff are empowered to be problem solvers, building upon innovative and entrepreneurial ideas that have a long-term perspective and provide sustainable value to all stakeholders," he says.

Mr Gumte says they encourage cross-functional meetings and engagements, understanding the different inter-

nal customer needs and fostering information sharing.

They also endeavor to build an environment of quick conflict resolution, driving employees to take ownership and responsibility for processes and projects for continuous growth and improvement.

Institutional culture

Culture informs how things are done and it is crucial for unified organisational growth.

At Kansai Plascon, the internal culture is built around six core values of integrity, customer focus, accountability, respect, entrepreneurship, and innovation.

"Our staff are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions and decisions, showing commitment to our stakeholders. I encourage open communication, honesty, and positive criticism to ensure continuous growth and improvement of all staff members," he says.

Optimising technology

Kansai Plascon's strategy is to consolidate its position as the number-one coatings company in Africa. To achieve that, they have invested in research, design, and collaboration with the group partners both in Japan and South Africa.

These develop, test and improve products, product formulations, colours and application processes through basic research, coating development, application development and colour design.

"One recent fruit is the anti-mosquito paint which keeps the family safe while beautifying walls. Another is our waterproofing range that deals with unwanted dampness, mold, and algae growth on walls," he says.

The company has embraced digital technology through the introduction of an online colour wheel to ease colour selection. From the website, one can upload a picture of their room and the Plascon team will give colour suggestions.

Kansai Plascon also introduced a colour matching device; Nix Colour Sensor, which gives colour accurate references from any sample shared. This is especially important for architects, contractors, hardware store owners, and painters that guide home and project owners with colour selection.

Customer-centric

Kansai Plascon professional team strives to meet every client's need through the unique 360 partnership pledge. It is a comprehensive, tailored service solution offering coating specifications, application monitoring, and maintenance service coordination for property investment



Kansai Plascon Managing Director Mr Santosh Narayan Gumte hands over paint to a police officer at Jinja Road Police Station last month.
PHOTO/JOAN SALMON

portfolio.

"Kansai Plascon has built a network of more than 500 dealers and more than 1,000 sub-dealers across Uganda. These form a partnership and Kansai Plascon engages them daily through our robust sales team and call centres to ensure our products reach far and wide," he says.

Sustainability

Environment, sustainability and governance are crucial agendas today. Kansai Plascon's policies institute strict internal controls to meet or exceed existing local and international regulations. The company also vested in research and design to establish and retain industry leadership along with environmental sustainability.

"Through annual internal policy and performance review, we actively seek to instill a culture of in-

novation and conservation in every employee. To achieve our goals concerning the protection of our people, customers, and the global environment, our company and all its employees cooperatively promote responsible care. Plascon is also a member of the Institute of Corporate Governance of Uganda," Mr Gumte says.

The company has a modern water treatment plant, regularly inspected by National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) and other regulatory bodies. The company also ensures proper waste disposal, using approved agents and methods.

"The cherry on the cake is that Kansai Plascon's laboratory is ISO-recognised and UNBS-certified ensuring that a rigorous quality control process is followed. All quality control processes at our manufacturing sites are controlled and monitored as per ISO 9001:2015 (quality), ISO 14001:2015 (environment), and ISO 45001:2018 (health and safety) ISO 17025: 2017 (laboratory)," he says.

Corporate social responsibility

Under its corporate social responsibility budget, Plascon sponsors The She Cranes, National Cricket team, Vipers SC, Arua Hills FC, Entebbe Mongers Rugby Club, Buddu FC, Acholi Regional football team, Masaza tournament, Mafu Mafu Rally team, and Uganda Cup.

Kansai Plascon is the official paint partners of Buganda, Bunyoro and Toro Kingdoms. The firm has also conducted blood donation drives and supported various hospitals, schools, orphanages, and religious institutions.



Mr Santosh Narayan Gumte, Kansai Plascon Uganda Managing Director. PHOTO COURTESY

FOOTPRINT

Through its focus on global development and by strengthening coordination between all companies in the Kansai Paint Group, the company is working to promote technological development to meet the needs and standards of countries around the world, as well as building a talent pool capable of collaborating on a global scale.

In the East African region, the company's footprint extends to Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Zanzibar, South Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, and Burundi.

Being the 'chief everything officer'



Growth. Mr Anthony Kituuka was appointed as Equity Bank Uganda's managing director in 2022, and under his stewardship, the bank is registering tremendous growth.

BY ISMAIL MUSA LADU
iladu@ug.nationmedia.com

Mr Anthony Kituuka's concept and practice of leadership are simple yet exemplary.

The managing director of Equity Bank Uganda Ltd believes leadership should be about achieving a set vision which he refers to as the "bigger picture".

Once the vision is clear, just like the Equity's Bank vision is aiming at championing the socio-economic prosperity of the people of the continent, then the responsibility of the person charged with executing the mandate should be geared towards contributing to the overall, bigger picture of the company's vision.

"As far as I'm concerned it is not about the CEO's position, but the cause," says Mr Kituuka.

"It is about the positive impact we create on the life and livelihood of our people that concerns me most," says the financial industry captain.

His professional colleagues describe him as selfless, passionate, and self-motivated. All that put together, he uses it to drive his team towards contributing to the bigger picture of creating value on the life and livelihood of the people they touch every single day.

"A CEO must be passionate about the cause and objectives that the organisation is pursuing, you cannot be like a headless chicken you must aim at something impactful

and that is the stage at which I'm at; causing positive change on livelihood."

Mr Kituuka is an endearing person. His appealing personality and inbuilt tactical nous and professional competence set him apart.

If you bring his professional experience into the mix coupled with his leadership abilities, you will understand why he believes loyalty to the cause shouldn't be in grey area.

Cultivating loyalty to the cause is high on his agenda, saying: "You must be able to ensure that people who work with you are loyal to each other, loyal to the cause, loyal to the objectives, and loyal to our big dream."

Fanaticism

Striving for excellence, according to Mr Kituuka, is a one-way street. This is because he

was mentored by people he describes as "fanatics about execution".

This means in some instances, there will be some impatience that will be exhibited for the sake of proper solutions. This kind of fanaticism is aimed at creating innovative solutions to address livelihood challenges.

As a leader working to solve challenges and looking to impact livelihood, collaborations, and partnerships are tools that come in handy in attaining the overall goals. Therefore, working with governments, religious/faith-based organisations, NGOs, international bodies, and anybody who is aligned with "our cause" isn't a matter of debate but principle if not necessity.

He says; "As a group, we have a plan to attain 100 million customers by 2025/26. In Uganda, we should have about nine million customers. This means we may have to work with many partners to

EQUITY LEADERS PROGRAM

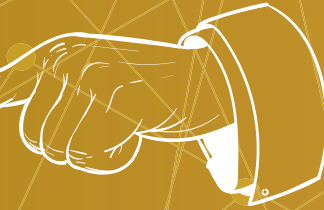
The Equity Leaders Program, a mentorship and leadership development programme was founded in 1998 and plays a significant role in extending Equity Bank Uganda's social impact contribution through the scaling up of various programs that are already under implementation through Equity Group Foundation (EGF), the Group's social impact engine.

Equity Leaders Program expanded from Kenya to Uganda, Rwanda and DR Congo last year, making it a regional program that plays an important role in integrating the East African region through the sharing of ideas and resources, building a network of young professionals and creating an alumni network of young and budding innovators who are likely to solve the region's socio-economic challenges. The paid internship component of the programme admits the top performing boy and girl in the secondary level final exams from each district in Uganda where Equity Bank has a branch.



Equity Bank Managing Director Anthony Kituuka addresses customers at the Launch of Eazzy Stock Financing product, in June 2023. PHOTO/MICHAEL KAKUMIRIZI

First Lady Janet Kataha Museveni (right), receives a gift from Mr Anthony Kituuka during the launch of Equi-mama product, in March 2023. PHOTO/COURTESY



slows down business – Equity MD

achieve that and the role of the CEO is to ensure efforts are aligned towards attaining those targets."

He continued: "In the last two years, we have moved from 400,000 customers to over 2.5 million customers. We are still heavily under-banked. So we are looking at empowering lives by supporting economic sector players to thrive."

"This is because we believe the multiplier effect in terms of jobs across various sectors will be immense. And that is the kind of comfort we take when we take the opportunity and deliver on our mandate."

Pulling in one direction

According to Mr Kituuka, there is no specific formula to motivate the team you lead or work with. Speaking about motivation, Mr Kituuka says it is one of the simplest things to identify but can prove complex to handle.

Dishing out bonus and shares are one way to motivate your team. Additionally making available training opportunities to all your team members is the other way to offer motivation to them.

Then there is the issue of money as one of the sweetest form of motivation. Although there is some truth to that, ultimately, Mr Kituuka is of the view that it is the social contract that you have with people that counts most.

Continually enhancing the skills of your team, inspiring them to greater heights, and exposing them to as many personal and professional opportunities and growth is what tops on the list of motivation.

Customer service

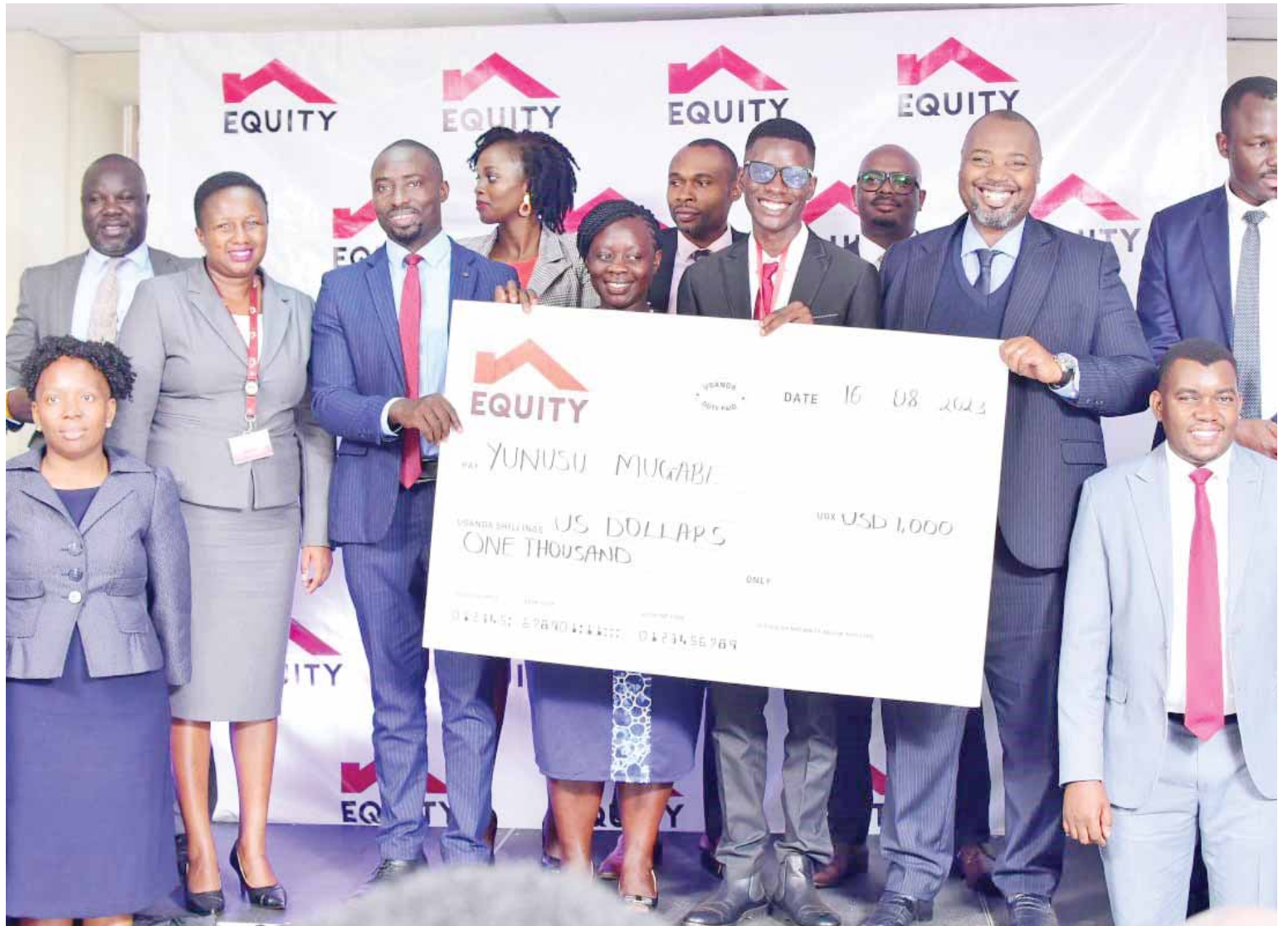
Impatience with poor customer service is something Mr Kituuka does not relate to. And top on his list of "must-do things" is an uncompromising approach to poor customer service and lack of dignity for customers.

The bank's core values have an acronym called 'P.I.C.T.U.R.E' standing for professionalism, integrity, creativity and innovation, teamwork, unity of purpose, respect, and dignity for customers, then, and effective corporate governance.

"This is important because 95 percent of our transactions are done outside the branches with merchants, agent points also known as Equity Duukas, and digital platforms. So we must ensure our customers feel valued. We have a huge customer experience department where we measure customer experience and satisfaction on every product, and we are fanatic about it. We want to be given the best experience and my work is to ensure that happens," he says.

"I keep telling my team, there are key things I'll fire you for without question once you disrespect our integrity, our customers, colleagues, and our business objectives," Mr Kituuka says while seemingly clenching his fist as if to drive the important point home in no uncertain terms.

He continues: "If it is the system that fails you, then we will understand, but if it is a matter of you just being disrespectful



Equity Bank Uganda Managing Director Anthony Kituuka (2nd right), in a group photo with staff and Equity Leaders Program beneficiary Yunus Mugabe and his guardian. PHOTO/MICHAEL KAKUMIRIZI

to our customer, we will be very ruthless about it."

Dealing with disruption

We have come to terms with the fact that there will always be disruptions. And one of the biggest disruptions is the evolving technology.

With the leadership of Mr Kituuka, alignment with AI, and the likes of Fintech is almost like a natural order of things. "Instead of fighting with technology and those in the tech space, we decided to partner with them."

"Beyond financial satisfaction, we are passionate about the sustainability of the environment, and we take issues of Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) seriously. As a bank our license to operate comes from the Central Bank of Uganda, however, our license to operate from the society comes from the community – so why shouldn't we care about the environment we operate from?" he says.

Mr Kituuka's philosophy is that nothing great can be achieved without passion and enthusiasm.

He believes that the role of the

chief executive officer is not to be the 'chief everything officer' but to be the spark and catalyst of staff passion towards the cause as a 'chief enthusiasm officer'.



Equity Bank Managing Director Anthony Kituuka.
PHOTO/MICHAEL KAKUMIRIZI

UNCOMPROMISING

Impatience with poor customer service is something Mr Kituuka does not relate to. And top on his list of "must-do things" is an uncompromising approach to poor customer service and lack of dignity for customers. The bank's core values have an acronym called 'P.I.C.T.U.R.E' standing for professionalism, integrity, creativity and innovation, teamwork, unity of purpose, respect, and dignity for customers, then, and effective corporate governance.

94%
EQUITY BANK
UGANDA
TRANSACTIONS
ARE CONDUCTED
ONLINE

Learning. A mentorship programme is a company-led initiative to help employees that want to learn more.

BY LILLIAN MWAI-NDEGWA

When I completed my university education, I wanted to be an entrepreneur.

I didn't see my future in my actuarial science degree. I admired entrepreneurs and I wanted to be one of them.

While my peers were busy sending out job applications, I spent my days weighing different hustles in agri-business and art and craft and reading about successful business leaders and entrepreneurs.

One of the people I admired most was Laila Macharia, then one of the new breed of thought leaders and change-makers on the continent.

Laila was friends with my uncle and I asked him to introduce me to her. I wanted to share my big dreams with her and to ask her to walk with me on my entrepreneurial journey.

We met for coffee, and I made my finest pitch for enterprise. She listened to me intently, asking a few probing questions. I expected her to give me a thumbs-up.

She told me to build a career first and then go into business. I was crestfallen. I left the discussion feeling disheartened. But upon much reflection, I chose to pursue a career instead and I have never regretted it.

That single coffee moment was a game changer and it has enabled me to grow professionally and personally, gaining a broader perspective on life.

Mentorship has served as a guiding light for me. Unfortunately, mentorship is not discussed as often as it should be.

My discussion with Laila emphasized three critical points; First

What right leadership mentoring looks like



A mentorship programme is designed to standardise the process, give mentors and mentees valuable tools, and schedule time for the process. PHOTO/INTERNET

was appreciating the benefits of acquiring professional experience through employment before venturing into entrepreneurship. Such professional experience sharpens skills and provides valuable insights.

Second was adopting a big-picture mindset, which allowed me to consider long-term goals and visualise where I saw myself in a decade. Third was recognising the opportunities that arise from pursuing a career. Many people only highlight the perks of self-employment without acknowledging the advantages of a traditional career.

At the point of completing my university degree, unbeknown to me, I was very rough around the edges. Although I had started small ventures, I lacked discipline, structure, and consistency.

Truth be told I also lacked the ability to structure my thoughts and business to enable me to provide a unique value proposition which would set me apart from other entrepreneurs.

After leaving the meeting, I was set on pursuing my path. But gradually, I realised that if I had stayed on the business path I would have done well eventually, but having

made a lot of mistakes and lost a lot of money. Over time, I have sought out other mentors who have helped me to overcome obstacles and grow. If you are lucky, you can have one mentor walk with you through your growth.

Generally, structured mentorship programmes follow four phases. They start with the purposive search for a role model or expert who can help the mentee with her career growth.

The candidate would need to be proactive and highly motivated and should be keen to learn. This phase ends when the mentee secures a mentor and begins to make progress on her goals.

Relationships are built during the second, engagement phase so that there is both rapport and trust. A good mentor-mentee relationship allows the pair to not only get to know each other but also to discuss goals, progress, and challenges.

Relationship building will doubt-

less, include setting boundaries around expectations, levels of commitment, and even the duration of the engagement.

The third phase, which is usually the longest, involves growth for both the mentor and the mentee. The mentor often offers constructive feedback and guidance as they continue to build trust and transfer skills. The mentee might shadow the mentor to learn from her.

The mentee will need to be transparent and humble as she opens up about the challenges she faces. Similarly, the mentor needs to have empathy, listen actively, and provide clear feedback to help the mentee grow.

Evaluation

Finally, at the completion phase, the goals of the mentorship are evaluated to see that they have been achieved and that the mentee feels confident enough to carry on without a mentor's guidance. The mentee can then pass on the skills and knowledge she has acquired.

Many workplaces offer loose mentorship programmes. However, there is a growing space for mentorship beyond the workplace.

On the website of Young Entrepreneurship and Leadership Development, more than 3,700 youths are waiting to join the mentorship programme.

The large number of youth who desire mentorship means that there is a growing need for individuals with extensive experience and expertise to transfer their skills to the next generation.

Mentors also learn new things from those they are mentoring, which keeps them sharp and on top of their game. Sometimes, a brief discussion can profoundly impact someone's life trajectory and help them to find the right path as well!

The writer is the country director Swisscontact

DEVELOP GOALS

Mentors can help develop goals for mentees. One of the most important things a mentor can do is start a discussion about the mentee's future, where they want to be, and what they want to be doing. Mentors tend to come from similar backgrounds or have experience in similar roles, so they are well-suited to help mentees make clear goals to reach their targets. Mentors can also suggest when a particular type of training or job path may not be as worthwhile.

Benefits of a mentoring programme at work

BY JOAN SALMON

jsalmon@ug.nationmedia.com

Some organisations may be hesitant about investing in a mentorship program because they may not be certain what benefits it will bring.

There are several advantages to mentoring, both the mentee, the mentor, and the company itself.

Mentors can help develop goals for mentees. According to *knowledgecity.com*, one of the most important things a mentor can do is start a discussion about the mentee's future, where they want to be, and what they want to be doing.

"Mentors tend to come from similar backgrounds or have experience in similar roles, so they are well-suited to help mentees make clear goals to reach their targets.

Mentors can also suggest when a particular type of training or job path may not be as worthwhile," the website reads in part.

Mentees get access to a bigger network. Mentors are often older and have been in the industry longer than mentees.

That usually means they have access to a larger network. Mentees who want to invest more in networking can access many important contacts through their mentor's networks.

Direct advice on job performance. Mentees just starting a new job may not have all the experience and skills they need to do the best job that they can.

Mentors can work with them on the job to provide direct guidance

on what to do, what mistakes to correct, and how to quickly improve to meet the demands of the position.

Developing important leadership skills. Mentoring tends to teach the mentor a lot about guiding and teaching someone else. They can quickly pick up important leadership skills that are applicable in many other areas. This can also help mentors qualify for a higher leadership or management position, and signal that they are ready for more responsibilities. It also helps improve important emotional skills like self-awareness.

Better retention rates. Companies that put mentoring plans into practice typically see better retention and lower rates of turnover.

That can be particularly important for entry-level employees that can use guidance and support during their initial training. This kind of entry-level mentorship can be an effective solution in industries that traditionally struggle with high turnover.

Effective talent growth. Mentoring is one of the best methods for growing employee talent, and helping employees develop skills that make them better at their jobs. This type of one-on-one training is especially effective at helping employees gain more complex skills. It can prepare them effectively for a future with the company, and help them seek higher positions over time. The business as a whole benefits from this kind of talent investment.

Overall continuity and culture.

Mentoring programs can help improve and share a company's culture. They make it easier for the company to pass along shared values and attitudes that have made the organization successful in the past, while also allowing new ideas and technology to have an influence on company leadership.

Mentors can stay current with their industry.

Mentors learn a lot too especially when paired with younger, newer employees, mentorship programs give mentors an opportunity to learn about the latest trends and tools. In some cases, mentors may not have taken such a close look at the nuts and bolts of their organisation for years.

Church Commissioners Holding Company thrives on visionary leadership

Appointed. Rev. Jasper Tumuhimbise was appointed the Group CEO of the Church Commissioners Holding Company Ltd in June 2022.

BY JOY AHEEBWA
editorial@ug.nationmedia.com

Rev. Jasper Tumuhimbise has for many years remained committed to protecting the Church of Uganda investments.

The Group Chief Executive Officer of Church Commissioners Holding Company Ltd, an investment arm of the Church of Uganda, says whatever he does with his team is Christian culture based that follows in the footsteps of Jesus Christ.

In his view, Rev Tumuhimbise defines an effective leader as someone who makes things happen within a specific time and uses the least value without violating quality.

Effectiveness, he says, is how well the vision is being achieved. In the Church, business ventures are part of the core values because godliness means exactly that.

In addition, an efficient and effective leader possesses a combination of personal qualities, skills, and approaches that enable them to guide their team or organisation towards its goals.

He explains some of the essential qualities and principles that make a leader efficient and effective:

Vision: A leader should have a clear and inspiring vision for the future. This vision provides direction and purpose, motivating the team to work towards a common goal.

Communication: Effective communication is crucial. Leaders need to articulate their vision, expectations, and goals clearly to their team. They should also be good listeners, open to feedback, and able to adapt their communication style to different situations and audiences.

Decisiveness: Leaders must make timely and well-informed decisions. While it is important to gather input from team members, leaders should be able to make tough calls when necessary.

Adaptability: The business environment is constantly changing. Effective leaders are flexible and adaptable, willing to adjust their strategies and



Rev. Jasper Tumuhimbise, Group Chief Executive Officer of Church Commissioners Holding Company Ltd. PHOTO/COURTESY

plans as circumstances evolve.

Empathy: Empathy is essential for understanding the needs, concerns, and motivations of team members.

Delegation: Leaders should trust their team members and delegate responsibilities appropriately. This not only empowers team members but also frees up the leader's time to focus on higher-level tasks.

Accountability: Effective leaders take responsibility for their actions and decisions. They also hold themselves and their team members accountable for their performance and outcomes.

Team building: Building a cohesive and high-performing team is a critical aspect of leadership. Leaders should foster a sense of unity, collaboration, and shared purpose among team members.

Time management: Efficient leaders manage their time effectively, prioritising tasks and avoiding distractions. They set clear goals and use time-management techniques to stay organised.

Problem solving: Leaders encounter challenges and obstacles regularly. Being an effective problem solver involves analyzing issues, seeking input

from others, and finding creative solutions.

Continuous learning: Great leaders are committed to personal and professional development. They stay up-to-date with industry trends, seek growth opportunities, and encourage their team members to do the same.

Integrity: Leaders should lead by example and demonstrate honesty and ethical behavior. Trust is essential in leadership, and maintaining a strong moral compass is crucial.

Resilience: Leaders must be able to handle setbacks and adversity with resilience. They remain composed under pressure and inspire confidence in their team.

Results-oriented: Ultimately, leaders are judged by the results they achieve. They set high standards for performance and are focused on achieving measurable outcomes.

Empowerment: Effective leaders empower their team members by providing them with the resources, support, and autonomy they need to excel in their roles.

Leadership style

Every Tuesday, Rev. Tu-

humbise and his management team hold strategic meetings to nurture others through sharing chairing.

"We have deliberately introduced talks to do with various aspects of modern leadership. We have had talks ranging from marketing to customer care; digitisation and website management; insurance and brokerage; business development and management among others. Some have visited sister companies in Kenya and two managers were trained in CORAT Africa," he says.

Lead by example: Demonstrate the behaviors and work ethic you expect from your team members. Your actions set the tone for the workplace culture.

Clear Communication: Foster open and honest communication. Encourage team members to express their ideas, concerns, and feedback. Be a good listener and provide constructive feedback.

Shared vision and goals: Ensure that your team understands and buys into the organisation's vision and goals. Help them see how their contributions align with the bigger picture.

Empowerment: Give team members autonomy and trust them to make decisions within their areas of responsibility. Empowered employees are more engaged and motivated.

Recognition and appreciation: Acknowledge and celebrate achievements, both big and small. Recognizing hard work and contributions boosts morale and encourages continued excellence.

Conflict resolution: Address conflicts promptly and fairly. Encourage open dialogue to resolve issues and promote a harmonious work environment.

Team building activities: Organise team-building activities and events to strengthen interpersonal relationships, build trust, and improve collaboration among team members.

Diversity and inclusion: Promote diversity and inclusion within the team. Encourage different perspectives and create an inclusive environment where all team members feel valued and respected.

Training and development: Invest in the professional development of your team members. Provide opportunities for training and growth to help them advance in their careers.

Feedback and growth: Provide regular feedback and coaching to help team members improve their skills and performance. Create individual development plans to support their career progression.

Lead with empathy: Understand the personal and professional needs of your team members. Show empathy and support during challenging

times, such as personal crises or work-related stress.

Trust and accountability: Trust your team to deliver on their commitments, and hold them accountable for their work. When team members feel trusted, they are more likely to meet expectations.

Transparency: Be transparent about decisions, changes, and the state of the organization. Transparency builds trust and helps team members feel more connected to the company's mission.

Conflict resolution: Address conflicts and disagreements within the team in a fair and timely manner. Encourage open and respectful communication to resolve issues.

Lead for the long term: Focus on long-term team development and success, not just short-term results. Invest time and effort into creating a sustainable and positive team culture.

Flexibility: Be adaptable and open to change. A flexible leader can respond to shifting priorities and adapt to new circumstances, helping the team navigate challenges effectively.

Lead with Integrity: Maintain high ethical standards in your leadership. Uphold honesty, fairness, and ethical behavior, setting a positive example for your team.

Investment is crucial for the institute's growth and his leadership has enabled the marriage between church and business to grow by using all management principles that do not violate the Church Mission.

"While the focus is finances we are sure that the main purpose is economic self-sustainability that enhances the great commission. The way we deal with people should and ought to be different," he says.

Under his leadership, the company is on a journey to fully embrace digitisation, which he says, will help to streamline operations.

Achievements

Increasing productivity. The company has been accountable for ensuring that the team stays efficient and productive through strategies to improve time management, minimize employee stress, and increase quality deliverables.

Better decision-making through leadership training. He says they train the team in various leadership skills to gain emotional intelligence, a perspective that allows well-informed business decisions.

Morale building has been a priority area of concern. The firm has inspired the team from time to time by recognizing their efforts, comprehending complex situations, and acting appropriately toward creating a contented workforce.

PROFILE

Church Commissioners Holding Company Limited is the investment arm of the Church of Uganda and oversees the Church House building as well as the operations of subsidiaries namely Uganda Bookshop (which is the oldest bookshop in Uganda), Centenary Publishing House (which publishes and prints Church of Uganda prayer and hymn books) as well as Namirembe Guest House and Nabugabo Holiday Center. (which are hospitality centers in Namirembe and Masaka respectively).

It also advises on the land management processes in the Church of Uganda.

Corporate wellness market surges as workers change with the times



People participate in aerobics after the NSSF 7 Hills run. Incorporating health amenities such as gyms, in workplaces, corporate companies realise that healthy workforce means better productivity. PHOTO/COURTESY

Responsive. Corporates, startled by emboldened employees and the general push to look beyond profits, have seen them respond through wellness programmes that are also receiving the backing of shareholders.

BY PATRICK ALUSHULA
palushula@ke.nationmedia.com

Robert Bosch, German industrialist, surprised the market when he rolled out employee benefits including health insurance, pension, vacation and an eight-hour working day and round the clock factory nurses in the 1930s.

Bosch's famous remark, "I don't pay good wages because I have a lot of money; I have a lot of money because I pay good wages," capped it all when he needed to explain to his competitors why he was succeeding in business.

Kenya's corporates are now witnessing a rise in the Bosch's culture by rolling out a buffet of wellness programmes in reaction to demanding jobs and near stagnant wages that have led to morale slump.

Corporates, startled by emboldened employees and the general push to look beyond profits, have seen them respond through wellness programmes that are also receiving the backing of shareholders.

Firms such as East African Breweries PLC (EABL), Safaricom, Unilever and British American Tobacco (BAT) Kenya as well as State enti-

ties including Central Bank of Kenya (CBK) and National Treasury are all paying increased attention to employee wellness.

Safaricom, which was among the firms that pioneered nursing stations for lactating staff, has taken wellness to another level by allowing staff to plan their leave days in advance to spend time with their families.

"We introduced company scheduled leave to enable employees to take advantage of days preceding or following public holidays and the Christmas break so they could reconnect with their families and communities," says Safaricom.

The telco has also expanded its toll-free access to dedicated psychologists from two to six as part of improving its employee assistance counselling programme.

EABL has awed the market by classifying pregnancy loss as bereavement and introduced up to 26-week paid leave for the affected

female employees to grieve, setting a new bar for Kenya's employee wellness.

The brewer is giving female employees or spouses up to 10 working days of paid leave if the pregnancy loss occurs before 20 weeks. For a pregnancy loss occurring after 20 weeks, one will be given 26 week paid leave.

EABL says employee well-being is of utmost priority and the firm continues to update its policies to allow workers to enjoy life at work and at home.

"We have created an environment and culture where all our people can thrive at work and at home. With our culture top of mind, we have embraced flexible working and continued to drive mental, physical, financial and social well-being amongst our employees," says EABL.

It is now considering introducing a 10-day compassionate leave for employees who lose a child, spouse, partner or parent. There will be five days for the loss of another family member and one day for a close friend or non-family member.

EABL's pregnancy loss leave is above the one month leave provided for in the Employment (Amendment) Act for female employees who suffer a stillbirth.

The same Act, which was passed in April last year, gives a one-month leave to an employee who is an adoptive parent of a child who is below the age of two, pointing to

the place of law in furthering employee welfare.

Employers are worried about the well-being of workers, without which, commitment to work is falling and hurting productivity as turnover rises.

**17%
ENGAGEMENT
LEVELS AMONG
WORKERS IN
KENYA**

Gallup, an American analytics and advisory company based in Washington, says in the 'State of the Global Workplace 2023' report that engagement levels among workers in Kenya is at 17 percent, with 83 percent classified as either quiet quitting" (not engaged) or "loud quitting" (actively disengaged).

The study classified quiet quitters as employees who are psychologically disconnected from their employer but are "filling a seat and watching the clock" by simply putting in the minimum effort required.

Gallup classifies loud quitters as employees that "take actions that directly harm the organisation" including undercutting goals and opposing leaders at the workplace.

About 31 percent of Kenya's workers surveyed by Gallup said they experienced stress daily while 25 percent said they experienced

LEADING

Safaricom, which was among the firms that pioneered nursing stations for lactating staff, has taken wellness to another level by allowing staff to plan their leave days in advance to spend time with their families. The telco has also expanded its toll-free access to dedicated psychologists from two to six as part of improving its employee assistance counselling programme.

daily anger.

Gallup says engagement has 3.8 times as much influence on employee stress as work location.

"In other words, what people experience in their everyday work — their feelings of involvement and enthusiasm — matters more in reducing stress than where they are sitting," says the research.

Other workplaces are trying to promote mental fitness, relieve stress and encourage bonding by going big on fitness by setting up gyms for staff, for free or subsidized access costs.

The National Treasury in March announced it had set up a gym for its staff, targeting to help them keep fit and improve bonding and team building.

The charge-free welfare facility is located within Bima House, Nairobi, and is equipped with modern training equipment and can accommodate 250-300 users daily at different intervals. It is operated 5am to 9pm daily during week days and 8am to 3pm during weekends and holidays.

"It is a welfare facility and will therefore be free of charge. The Health Club is fully equipped with modern equipment for training and is intended to operate daily" Treasury said when it opened a search for gym operators.

Kenya Civil Aviation Authority (KCAA) and CBK are also following in the footsteps of the Treasury. KCAA is for instance currently refurbishing and converting the mezzanine floor at JKIA Tower Building into a gym.

Other firms have reinforced wellness programmes with gender inclusion programmes that addresses challenges such as gender pay gap. Firms such as BAT Kenya pioneered gender pay gap disclosures and have been followed by other firms like Centum Investments and Equity Group.

"We believe that diversity is central to our culture and business sustainability: creating a respectful and inclusive environment where people can thrive - and build talented and diverse teams to drive business results," says BAT.

CEOs with the

midas touch

Daily Monitor
www.monitor.co.ug

Rugasira builds Knight Frank on trust and integrity

Services. Knight Frank Uganda offers property valuation and consultancy residential and commercial agency, and property management.

BY JOAN SALMON

jsalmon@ug.nationmedia.com

Ms Judy Rugasira Kyanda is one of the foremost property management professionals in Uganda.

She has been at the helm of Knight Frank as the managing director for over 20 years and her exceptional governance has enabled the company to excel in the real estate industry.

She says the most gratifying aspect of her leadership journey at Knight Frank, is their role in growing and developing the property market of Uganda through consistent reliance on best practice procedures as well as professional and ethical standards across all sectors of the property market.

Such wins and growth are premised on hard work, consistency and good leadership, which Ms Kyanda sets is less about power and self seeking agendas, and more about serving.

"Leadership is more experiential than theoretical. Effective leadership according to Ms Rugasira, is when those you are leading have confidence in what you are doing, believe in you, and trust you because you are competent, authentic, and consistent," she says. One must also be empathetic with their team.

To remain Uganda's trusted property advisory company, Ms Rugasira's leadership style is firm yet caring, interactive, and instructive but also strives to understand her team.

"Empathy enables me to know how best I can complement their weaknesses and support them to be the best version of themselves by pushing boundaries, making mistakes, but most importantly learning from them. I practice leading with integrity and by example, never



Ms Judy Rugasira Kyanda, Knight Frank Managing Director. PHOTO/JOAN SALMON

asking anybody to do something I don't or can't do myself," she says.

Ultimately, this has fostered trust from her clients because her team appreciates why clients choose Knight Frank, and therefore focuses on what values and objectives are important to their clients.

"There is a genuine commitment to partnership from Knight Frank, and we are intentional about collaborating to succeed in order to make a difference in our service delivery to our clients," Ms Rugasira says.

"Our relationships with clients transcend transactional encounters and grow into solid partnerships, which we have maintained over the last 23 years," she says.

Keeping on top

Knight Frank's commitment and dedication to being "Best in Class" is why its clients get trusted and market-leading advice putting

the company ahead of the curve with regards to their competition.

For instance, Knight Frank valuations have adhered to international valuation standards over the last 20 years. Similarly, concepts like turnover rents in retail were introduced to this market by Knight Frank against vehement objection.

However, turnover rentals are now synonymous with successful retailer performance, and is being widely adopted by the more sophisticated tenant.

"Though there was vicious pushback and rejection, it is now a widely accepted practice, often preferred by our retail tenants occupying the prime retail malls. Among other benefits, turnover rent enables data-backed research which can be used to improve retailers' business performance and in turn returns from the landlord's asset," Ms Rugasira says.

Additionally, the com-

pany's research and consultancy department shares market information and intelligence through its Bi-annual market performance publications. "These are free, and a testament to Knight Frank's commitment and dedication to the growth and development of our property market. We believe that for accelerated growth and development, information is power and shouldn't be monopolised," she adds.

Organisation culture

Knight Frank Uganda's culture recognises the importance of inspired teams in delivering excellent customer service.

To foster this, Ms Rugasira says they have created a workplace environment that values and respects opinions, encourages contribution to the business's success, and rewards excellence.

"This approach strengthens engagement from our employees, and ensures that our clients receive the best possible experience with us," she says.

Their culture is guided by the group's compelling strategic vision for their Desired Future, based on their purposes and values, with people at the core.

Ms Rugasira says the ultimate objective is to transform Knight Frank into a business that values collaboration and welcomes innovative ideas.

This is premised on unlocking employees' full potential, prioritising client centricity through building deep and strong client relations, and a commitment to creating a future by envisioning their strategic plan.

Covid effects

Covid-19 pandemic affected the real estate sector immensely but being part of a truly global network meant Knight Frank Uganda leveraged off the contingency plans being implemented in other offices that had experienced the pandemic earlier than Uganda.

"That way, we succeeded in keeping the business going through lockdown, ensuring our clients' property and occupiers' premises remained functional and safe," she says.

It was a challenging time that tested her mettle, and whilst she wasn't to show her team vulnerability at times,

she led with empathy, grit, tenacity, and optimism amidst prevalent doom and gloom.

"The response from the team was unbelievable. They rallied around me and committed to staying the course and navigating the storm with me until the coast was clear. I will forever be grateful to them.

My actions and decisions were anchored on my faith. The pandemic taught and showed us the real meaning of collaboration to succeed," she says.

Teamwork

Strong teams are crucial for success, and diverse teams especially can bring fresh perspectives and enhance collaborative problem-solving abilities.

"Growing and nurturing high-performing teams is an ongoing process requiring consistent effort and attention. At Knight Frank, we nurture a high-performing team by setting a clear vision and goals, ensuring every team member understands and aligns with them," she reveals.

Additionally, trust and psychological safety are prioritised to create a safe environment where employees can express their thoughts and concerns.

Collaboration in decision-making and brainstorming is encouraged, and clear responsibilities are given for improved efficiency and accountability.

There are also effective communication channels, both digital (various platforms, Yammer, Teams,) and in-person. The company offers continuous, and well-structured learning and development opportunities for growth, coupled with regular feedback to track and drive their performance.

Growth is crucial for any business and is achieved through building enduring relationships with clients by meeting their needs promptly and efficiently.

With the increasing adoption of digital solutions in the real estate industry, investing in innovative technologies is crucial. Therefore, the company is embracing and increasing investment in technology.

"This includes utilising Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR) to enhance property viewings, implementing smart building automation systems, and harnessing the power of data analytics for market-leading insights and data-backed research publications," she says.

Sustainability

Knight Frank is also dedicated and committed to its proactive contribution towards the net zero challenge.

"We strive to minimise waste and our impact on the environment by implementing more sustainable office operations (e.g practicing energy conservation, reducing paper usage, and minimising resource consumption). This is driven by engagement with our staff and clients, comparing our performance with industry benchmarks, and effectively communicating our achievements," she says. Adding, "We invite all stakeholders to actively participate in discussions on how nature-related risks and opportunities can be integrated into responsible property development and management business and investment decision-making."

For occupiers seeking to incorporate Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) strategies into their projects, Knight Frank offers guidance on cost-effective and efficient initiatives in designing sustainable spaces while optimising resource utilisation.

FUTURE

Knight Frank remains committed to providing personalised, clear, and considered advice on all real estate aspects.

"In the competitive world of real estate, staying ahead of industry trends is vital for maintaining a strong position. We are continuing to invest heavily in our future to develop our digital capabilities, expand our local footprint, and improve the environmental and working efficiency for our people. The future looks bright and promising for us," Ms Rugasira says.

2000
KNIGHT FRANK
OPENED ITS
DOORS IN
UGANDA

Cultural thinking and art of business decision making



Ms Immaculate Nakyeyune (left), founder of Mkaziprenuer. Ugandans are more social and work best in communities. PHOTO/JOAN SALMON

Entrepreneurs. Take steps to expand your business with vigorous planning of possible outcomes and long-term strategies to engage your new workforce and tantalise new clients. One way is to assess Assessing culture.

BY SCOTT BELLOWES
editorial@ug.nationmedia.com

Achoki sits at the head of a fast-growing textile supplier based in Thika. From humble beginnings in 2014 and a slow start, his firm began to take off in 2016. Benefiting from the American law favouring imports from Africa, the Africa Growth and Opportunities Act (Agoa), he distributes clothing mainly to America and then other markets.

As the Thika textile trade declined, Achoki moved his manufacturing operations to Cameroon and expanded exports to the Euro zone.

Achoki now desires to grow sales, distribution, and manufacturing to new countries with a particular eye towards Kazakhstan in Central Asia.

First, coming from a different cultural community than the largest ethnic group in Thika, he underwent his first exposure to different culture dynamics back in 2014 and how different societies react to stimuli.

Inasmuch, Achoki pondered how do manifestations of thinking impact business actions and decisions?

How do a society's values impact busi-

ness decisions? How should business men and women assess cultural values in new regions so as to expand their businesses?

Findings

The best known researcher in the field of cultural thinking and values involves Dutch intellectual Dr Geert Hofstede. In 1973, he concluded a landmark study investigating national culture differences based on four dimensions.

Later researchers added two additional dimensions and the dozens of additional studies tweaked the researched angles of culture, including Robert House and team's landmark GLOBE Framework.

First, a culture may view life and others individually or collectively. Global commentators often lump all of Africa into the collectivist category without fully appreciating our diversity and how our more collectivist tendencies differ from East Asian collectivism. But in East Africa, how Pokots prefer collectivism differs from Meru collectivism which certainly differs from Yoruba collectivism in Nigeria.

A society that prefers to take care of themselves primarily and their immediate family only and live within loosely-knit social frameworks refers to individualistic societies.

On the flip side of the coin, collectivism societies desire closely intertwined group thinking and group care for each other with unflinching loyalty to each other. So in Kenya, we prefer collectivist thinking nationally, but more individualistic in Nairobi.

Societal effects

While interesting for intellectual

stimulation, how does such knowledge impact your business? If you want to expand manufacturing operations into a new country, like Achoki described above, then how would individualism vs. collectivism affect your business decisions?

Since Achoki expanded his manufacturing operations to Cameroon, then he would likely tailor his compensation schemes around collectivist principles for group-based reward incentives rather than individualistic as if the operations took place in Europe.

Further, Cameroonians might prefer expanded healthcare insurance to cover extended family members rather than higher bonuses as a tradeoff because of their collectivist nature.

Second, a culture handles power distance differently. How acceptable do less fortunate citizens in a culture find it that power in society is distributed unequally? Does the society widely tolerate inequalities among people?

A culture with large power distance actually accepts hierarchical order where everyone has a place in society and that reality need not disturb the citizens to demand justification.

On the other hand, if a society demands to equalise the distribution of power and clamors for justification for inequality, then the culture possess low power distance.

So if a company like Achoki's strives to expand into Kazakhstan, then ascertaining that nation's power distance proves vital. In Kazakhstan, could Achoki pay his Country Director 50 times the salary of the lowest-level employee?

If Kazakhs live apathetically about power distance, then he could pay employees very differently. If, on the other hand, such a pay difference would arise in Norway, employees would likely not tolerate such differences and, therefore, companies must change their financial projections accordingly.

Further, if Achoki researches Kazakhstan and realises that the World Bank ranks the country's Gini Coefficient as high, a quantitative picture of inequality, and the people in interviews do not tolerate power distance, then Achoki must remain concerned about possible political unrest. Therefore, Achoki may choose to invest elsewhere or reduce his existing holdings.

Third, a nation's ability to deal with uncertainty should feature highly in business expansion decisions. Uncertainty avoidance often shocks Africans when they travel to the United States, Europe, or China.

Such societies strive to eliminate any uncertainty in their culture. Uncertainty avoidance expresses the extent to which members of the society handles the fact that the future can never be known.

So, should the society take measures to try and control the future or just let it unfold as it happens.

Societies that tolerate uncertainty operate more relaxed attitudes about principles and laws. Cultures that desire to

forecast the future end up developing rigid codes of belief and behaviour and do not tolerant uncommon ideas.

Bringing it home

In Kenya, we tolerate uncertainty remarkably well. In the lead-up to our last general elections in 2022, business transactions decreased, but did not fall off completely.

If such an uncertain election with uncertain possible outcomes took place in East Asia or Europe, GDP growth would likely have ground to a halt nearly a year before the elections over fear for what may occur.

Consumers would have stopped spending and started saving more in preparation. However, in Kenya, we robustly moved into the election season with relatively less fear than other societies might have done.

Inasmuch, investors looking at investment in Kenya should consider our tolerance for uncertainty and the strength it brings to our continued economic growth.

Likewise, Kenyan firms growing outside our borders must investigate uncertainty avoidance in a culture as a gauge for how consumers may react in crises or whether rules in the new country might become too stringent to functionally accomplish business.

Fourth, a nation's obsession with short-term or long-term orientation would impact how Achoki would compensate employees with long-term schemes or incentivise clients with short or long-term benefits.

Fifth, how much a society indulges itself on instant gratification might reflect on sales techniques and methods in a new country. Sixth and finally, the masculinity orientation of a culture determines how assertive citizens in the country portray themselves.

Russia versus Ireland would yield stark contrasts. Masculinity orientation would determine how to manage employees in a new nation.

Wrapping up...

In summary, ask questions. Understand culture. Business does not revolve solely around financial projections and prospective demand.

Take steps to expand your business with vigorous planning of possible outcomes and long-term strategies to engage your new workforce and tantalise new clients. Assessing culture provides you with competitive advantages over your competitors.

scott@ScottProfessor.com

CULTURE EFFECTS

A culture handles power distance differently. How acceptable do less fortunate citizens in a culture find it that power in society is distributed unequally? Does the society widely tolerate inequalities among people?

A culture with large power distance actually accepts hierarchical order where everyone has a place in society and that reality need not disturb the citizens to demand justification.

On the other hand, if a society demands to equalise the distribution of power and clamors for justification for inequality, then the culture possess low power distance.

2022
KENYAN ELECTIONS
WERE HELD. THESE
CAN CHANGE
THE BUSINESS
SPECTRUM



Arodi steering Uganda Baati to greater heights

Leader. Founded in 1964, Uganda Baati Ltd is a member of the Safal Group of Companies. Owing to the able leadership of its Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Mr George Arodi, the company has re-established itself as the market leader in providing building solutions. *Daily Monitor's Joyce Aheebwa*, spoke to the CEO who has grown threefold on key parameters over the last six years.

What defines an effective CEO?

The main attribute of a CEO is effective leadership. Organisations run business through people which makes them pivotal assets of any company. Making the team rally behind the vision of the company remains the key responsibility of a CEO. Uganda Baati has created a clear structure with delegation and an authority matrix that comes with accountability.

Effective delegation releases a CEO's time for key responsibility of strategic thinking which involves making decisions with a long-term view of the business environment.

A CEO must understand the business environment in which they operate, and the environment is not restricted to the country or the sector but the global perspective. You must know what is happening around the globe because the world economies are interlinked and the actions in one economy can have impact in other economies.

The various trading blocs like East African Community (EAC) and emerging African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCTA) have impact in our business environment in Uganda.

Effective communication is key. It involves cascading the company's vision and values. It is important to create a culture which instills teamwork and good communication. Uganda Baati has effective channels for people to bond at all levels which creates vents for information flow across teams. All employees should know the company direction and their individual contribution.

The delivery on the mandate of most businesses is manifested in profitability and business growth. A CEO provides leadership on customer related matters. We must work to deliver on our promise to the customers and it is crucial to know customer behaviors and infuse this into the company culture and processes.

What is the most outstanding transformation Uganda Baati has undergone as a result of effective leadership?

Our most successful initiatives have been those directly touching on people to create comfort and motivation for the team.

We have an effective team which helps deliver on the company vision. We have a pool of local talent that has taken up key positions within the organization.

Our team undergoes personal development programs for performance improvement and growth which is guided by annual

talent assessments. We conduct annual employee engagement surveys through Gallup Inc. and incorporate the insights into our improvement programs.

There is need for convenience from customers and we have redefined our route to market. This gave birth to innovation around showrooms and e-commerce. Much as traditional routes to market for our products are still relevant, the demand for convenience required consideration of channels that relieve the customer of stress through convenient order processing and product delivery at the doorstep.

We have introduced several products into our basket as we have transitioned from a predominant roofing company to a complete building solutions provider. We have transformed our business to look at everything that is required in building a home and rallied our team to look at ourselves in that light. The focus on value-add products has seen a triple growth in volumes and profitability.

What does it take to put together a winning team given that individuals come from different backgrounds with different motivations and beliefs?

The only thing you can do to bring consistency as a CEO is to create a winning culture and ensure it is embedded in the organisation's DNA. That way, whoever joins the company will have to align to the company way of doing things.

It must be transformative and fair to everyone. This way you elude the situation where the culture changes with a transition in leadership. Even if one comes with a hard-lined stance, the culture tames them..

SUSTAINABILITY

CEOs can make environmental, social, and governance (ESG) issues real by integrating them into the core of their business strategies and operations. ESG considerations should not be viewed as separate from the company's mission but rather as integral components of long-term success.

Uganda Baati has four core pillars; environment, education, health and shelter which provide direction for our sustainable initiatives. We have partnered with the National Forest Authority to replant 40 hectares in four central forest reserves in Uganda, a project costing about Shs140m, so far 20 hectares have been replanted and aside the benefits towards the eco-system, locals in these areas are also gaining income through the hired labour.

We have two clinics; in Kampala and Tororo that provide quality health care services at greatly subsidised costs and some services like HIV and Hep B testing and vaccinations, immunisations, malaria tests, among others are free of charge to the communities.



“We are currently running a campaign called ‘Safal Eye in the Wild’ aimed at bringing together the power of photography and conservation to ignite conversations, foster resilience, and drive climate action in our communities and beyond. Overall, Uganda Baati fairing on well on the ESG agenda and will continue to identify opportunities where we can make great impact,”

Mr George Arodi,
Chief Executive
Officer of Uganda
Baati Ltd.

What is the outlook for the Ugandan economy, your industry, and Uganda Baati five years from now?

We have to look beyond Uganda as we are deeper into various economic integrations - EAC, Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), and the AfCTA. Under these trade blocs, the borders are collapsed and a manufacturer in any EAC member states meeting the value addition criteria can access our markets.

The Ugandan economy will continue to be propelled by the oil and gas sector while being supplemented by sectors with comparative advantages like agriculture, especially in the light of the growing population.

On steel sector, we project serious production overcapacity as many new investments are being set up within the EAC without commensurate market growth. Many companies which are averse to change may be forced out of the market.

How can CEOs make Environmental, So-

cial, and Governance (ESG) issues real and how is Uganda Baati fairing?

CEOs can make environmental, social, and governance (ESG) issues real by integrating them into the core of their business strategies and operations. ESG considerations should not be viewed as separate from the company's mission but rather as integral components of long-term success.

Uganda Baati has four core pillars; Environment, education, health and shelter which provide direction for our sustainable initiatives. We have partnered with the National Forest Authority to replant 40 hectares in four central forest reserves in Uganda.

We have two clinics; in Kampala and Tororo that provide quality health care services at greatly subsidized costs. We aim to partake in sustainable project that will ensure long term benefits for the beneficiaries.

Overall Uganda Baati fairing on well on the ESG agenda and will continue to identify opportunities where we can make a great impact.

Business. Q-Sourcing Limited provides client responsive management solutions in human resources.

BY JOAN SALMON
jsalmon@ug.nationmedia.com

Mr Patrick Mbonye, the Chief Executive Officer of Q-Sourcing Servtec Group, says effective leadership is about having the ability to inspire, influence, and guide a team or individuals to achieve business goals and objectives.

At Q-Sourcing Ltd (QSL) Uganda, he says, they communicate the company's vision and strategy to all staff, making communication part of the rewarded behavior and has become a core attribute of their culture.

"We allow our team to take 'calculated' risks hence continuous learning for the team. The nature of our business requires adaptability to the ever-changing environment hence this attribute is key for leadership. We also emphasize empathy in what we do for all staff," he says.

Different situations require different approaches to leadership, and this has seen an emphasis on alignment, agility, and, adaptability as core tenets of QSL management and leadership style.

Nurturing teams is crucial for organisational growth and according to Mr Mbonye, QSL has put in place strategies to foster a collaborative workforce. Some of these strategies include having clear communication channels where

Q-Sourcing equips job seekers with skills that employers need



"The company consistently rewards excellence as well as ensuring that those who are not performing, are given feedback, there is a clear career progression path for all staff and each individual is given a timeline to learn and develop. Employees are given the leeway to make decisions hence encouraging ownership and accountability,"

**Mr Patrick Mbonye,
Chief Executive Officer
Q-Sourcing Servtec
Group.**

every department continuously relays progress on their goals and highlights critical bottlenecks to every member regularly which keeps everyone engaged.

"We started wellness programmes; team-building activities and 'snack and learn' sessions to keep everyone focused on the growth mindset. We have also started in-house learning and development programs, which should produce our future leadership

teams as the company grows," he says. QSL having started as a recruitment firm, was able to identify a gap in the skilling field in its earlier years. This prompted them to start a training institution (Q-Training/TASC) that helps prospective candidates reskill and upskill.

"At Q-Sourcing, we have a broad and deep database of both locals and expat candidates and hence can identify strong candidates by taking the prospective candidates

through rigorous assessments to confirm their competencies," he says.

"We only recommend candidates after our assessments irrespective of whether the job is technical or administrative. We do this because the current candidate pool knows how to write good CVs which may not be consistent with their true skillset, and hence if you only hire based on candidate paperwork, you may find a challenge in getting the right job fit," he adds.

He says firm always ensure that the team has a clear understanding of the client's needs so that we get the person that will fit in with their culture as an organisation.

"Understanding the requirements/responsibilities, reporting lines, and any reservations the client might have regarding the expected personnel, is also critical to finding the right job fit," Mr Mbonye adds.

To expand its services, QSL has partnered with Servtec International Group (SIG) and Worldwide Recruitment Solutions (WRS), which are manpower entities based out of Europe and the United Kingdom.

These partnerships have helped the firm to grow its capacity as a business. The company has also

collaborated on aspects of technology, product range, and various additional services that have enabled us to expand its local, regional, and international market relevance.

On the training and skilling front, the company has established partnerships with various institutions such as our own local Directorate of Industrial Training (DIT) as well as international accrediting bodies such as The British Engineering, Construction and Industry Training Board (ECITB), Highfield, Egyptian Welding Academy (EWA), The American Welding Society (AWS), National Examination Board in Occupational Safety and Health (NEBOSH), and Professional Evaluation and Certification Board (PECB).

In the next five years, Mr. Mbonye says QSL will be a multi-million-dollar group generating over US \$100 million in turnover, and be Africa's leading human resource, recruitment, skilling, assessment, and Certification Company.

The company will also be a fully automated in-service offering to ensure more reach and efficiency in client engagement and be the leading reference of HR performance drivers for the people management space on the African continent.

Active listening: Soft skill that makes great leaders

BY RICHARD MAGOMA

Active listening is part of effective communication. If we prudently study why communication flops in most instances we will discover it is because of a lack of the essential soft skill of active listening.

Most relationships hit the titanic iceberg because our egocentric blocks the capacity to listen.

Great leaders are not the ones that talk monotonously and monotonously to their teammates, they are those that have cultivated active listening competency.

These days active listening is so critical that it is treated as a separate competency.

Deep listening as the name suggests is when the listener understands the message from the recipient in a holistic manner.

It is quite emphatic in the sense you get into the shoes of the person talking so that you gain their standpoint.

This means removing the communication noise so that speaker is not judged by any preconceived notions. It is establishing a deeper connection.

It is a trust-building form of communication. Deep listening can

be used in resolving deep-seated problems, generating beneficial synergies and also inspire feedback.

We can achieve deep listening by avoiding incessant interruptions. However, ask well-aimed questions for purpose clarity.

We ought to maintain eye contact. This means we eliminate or minimise distractions that can impair the attraction of valuable outcomes.

Critical listening is more analytical as the concept denotes. Here we listen while evaluating and synthesising. It has a more logical and evidence orientation.

Selective listening is filter or biased listening. There is also partial listening. In the end, of course, these selective listening subsets lead to communication.

One can listen selectively because they are distracted or biased. Selective listening has many variations. Therapeutic listening is the kind that is used by counsellors and therapists.

It is the listening that is aimed at understanding deep psychological challenges. Therapeutic listening implies care and empathy.

It is very much client-centred communication. This form of listen-



Great leaders are those that have cultivated active listening competency. FILE PHOTO | SHUTTERSTOCK.

ing helps a person generate solutions to deeply personal issues.

What are the best strategies for boosting active listening? The easiest way of enhancing effective communication through active lis-

tening is by paying attention.

If the listener is managing very many activities it means that some aspects of the conversation will be missed. Which portends danger to communication excellence.

According to body language researcher Albert Mehrabian, when we communicate 55 percent is body language, then 38 percent is vocal, and a paltry seven percent is words.

This means that when listening we should tune and adapt favourable body language. We have to use our postures to indicate authentic interest.

The icing on the cake about active listening is that countless benefits are gained. Good listening skills and attitudes promote collaboration, courtesy, and respect.

LISTENING

Critical listening is more analytical as the concept denotes. Here we listen while evaluating and synthesising. It has a more logical and evidence orientation.

Selective listening is filter or biased listening. There is also partial listening. In the end, of course, these selective listening subsets lead to communication.

The writer is a HR specialist and trainer

Critical thinkers are drivers of corporate success - Kaddunabbi

Leadership. The insurance industry calls for a unique type of leadership, especially in an environment that somewhat appears to struggle to fully appreciate the importance of insurance in economic growth and development.

BY ISMAIL MUSA LADU
editorial@ug.nationmedia.com

Alhaj Ibrahim Kaddunabbi Lubega is an engaging character. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Insurance Regulatory Authority of Uganda (IRA) has a natural ability to hold other people's attention for as long as he sees fit.

This is solely down to his engaging intellectual capabilities comprising of sincerity, genuine curiosity, warmth, and empathy with the people with whom he interacts.

A Fellow and Certified Insurance Professional (CIP) of the Australian and New Zealand Institute of Insurance and Finance (ANZIIF) with more than 30 years of hands-on experience in finance operations, regulation, and supervision, there are not many professionals in this field that can rival Alhaj Kaddunabbi's leadership capabilities and abilities.

In addition to being at the helm of IRA, he is also the Chairman of the East African Insurance Supervisors Association (EAISA).

For a man who sits on several boards of both private and public entities, intellectual capital is a prime requirement, explaining his passion for critical thinking as a requirement for a CEO who is looking to set up governance systems that would outlive him.

Tenets of an exceptional leader

"An effective CEO should be a critical thinker," says Alhaj Kaddunabbi.

He continues: "Should be able to think strategically and look beyond the current situation to plan for the future. The CEO should be able to identify and capitalise on opportunities while also being able to mitigate risks. This is because the business landscape is constantly changing, and therefore, an effective CEO should be adaptable and open to new ideas and approaches."

Alhaj Kaddunabbi says an effective CEO should pivot strategies when necessary and navigate through disruptions and challenges. This means that the CEO should be able to make key decisions that steer the organisation in



IMPROVEMENTS

IRA's Complaints Bureau to receive and handle insurance-related complaints to enhance confidence in the insurance sector was established. To ease this process, an online complaints management system was put in place to allow people file complaints online. There is a noted increase in public confidence in complaints redress mechanisms as seen from a yearly increase in the number of complaints handled from 46 reported in 2011 to 233 in 2022.

Alhaj Ibrahim Kaddunabbi Lubega, chief executive officer, Insurance Regulatory Authority.
PHOTOS/COURTESY

pable of making informed choices even when faced with incomplete information," he says, adding: "A CEO should be able to communicate effectively with a range of stakeholders, including employees, investors, and customers."

Sector gains

The insurance industry calls for a unique type of leadership, especially in an environment that somewhat appears to struggle to fully appreciate the importance of insurance in economic growth and development.

With proper leadership at the sector level, several milestones have been achieved over the past 12 years, according to Alhaj Kaddunabbi. For instance, the industry's Gross Written Premiums have grown from Shs240b in 2010 to Shs1.4 trillion in 2022. Insurance density has increased from Shs7,278 in 2010 to Shs31,663 in 2022 while the number of insurance policies increased from 240,528 in 2010 to 543,534 in 2022.

Net assets for the industry increased from Shs160b in 2010 to Shs823.24b. Agricultural insurance to take care of agriculture-related

risks to enable farmers to do their trade profitably was introduced.

Government put in place an agriculture insurance subsidy of Shs5b per year to enable farmers to access agriculture insurance at subsidised premium rates. Since 2017, more than 361,496 farmers have benefited from the scheme.

Demerged composite companies with the net effect being more focused on life business which has been evidenced by growth averaging 30 percent over the last 10 years. Expansion of distribution channels by bringing on board bancassurance to leverage the distribution networks and customer base of the banking institutions has also been undertaken.

In 2021, IRA started a process of accreditation to have oversight of foreign reinsurers and reinsurance brokers. This was to ensure that risks are placed, majorly within Uganda and those placed outside, insurance companies are well capitalised.

Insurance school

Under the watch of Alhaj Kaddunabbi, the Insurance Training College (ITC) was created to among others, professionalise the industry and ensure that anyone selling insurance has the right knowledge and skills to do so.

For instance, no one is allowed to sell insurance without a Certificate of Proficiency. The institute also offers Certificate in Insurance, Diploma in Insurance and Advanced Diploma in Insurance courses.

More local solutions

Additionally, the first ever local re-insurer – Uganda Re, was established, to provide re-insurance risks locally and put an end to donating premiums to foreign reinsurers.

In the same spirit, effective October 1, 2023, all goods imported into the country must buy marine insurance from insurers licensed to operate in Uganda. This will put an end to the millions of dollars Uganda has been losing annually

to overseas insurance companies.

Statistics from the Intergovernmental Standing Committee on Shipment (ISCOS) show the country has been losing about \$150m annually to foreign insurance firms.

Besides the complexity associated with terms and conditions of foreign language policies, lodging a claim in a foreign country in case of loss is very inconveniencing and costly to importers.

National Health Insurance Scheme

Under Alhaj Kaddunabbi's leadership, IRA is playing a critical role in the establishment of the National Health Insurance Scheme, which is designed to pool funds to provide access to quality and affordable health care services for all residents in Uganda. This is expected to protect residents in Uganda from unexpected and high medical costs by allowing them an opportunity to pay affordable premiums and get treatment when and where they need it without financial hardships.

Disruptions, deepening uptake

While the sector had originally been labeled as slow in adapting to the digital revolution, which caused great disruption across many sectors of the economy, in the past 10 years, Alhaj Kaddunabbi notes that great strides have been made in adapting technology to deliver satisfying customer experiences.

Now applying technology across different spheres of insurance including customer service, claim management, underwriting, and products is the order of the day.

Under his leadership, IRA has always thought it important to introduce the Insurance Industry Innovation Awards to act as a catalyst for innovation in the industry by rewarding the best innovative solutions that are transforming the industry. Significant progress has been registered in deepening uptake. More than five million Ugandans are currently covered.



The Insurance Tower located on Plot 6, Lumumba Avenue, Kampala.

Learn to capitalise on virtual workers for growth



A woman works from home. The pandemic reshaped how people work globally. Many Ugandans continue to work remotely. PHOTO/COURTESY

1980
VIRTUAL WORK BECAME MORE WIDELY ACCEPTED

Wave three: Virtual co-workers

As the second wave gained momentum, organisations began to realise that virtualisation meant less natural collaboration. Anxious for innovation, they missed the kind of ideation that results from serendipitous encounters and hallway conversations.

Somewhat paradoxically, then, a new wave of complex, global virtualised work has surged, as many workers physically reunite and retether to specific spaces. A major focus of the third wave's new technology is to give workers the feeling of being in a shared environment.

For employers today, the imperative is to learn how to capitalise on all three waves in the virtualisation of work. Here are five pieces of advice on how to:

1. Focus on collaboration

Any strategic plan must begin with clear goals. In the 21st century, a new approach to work in a large organisation must be aimed at supporting greater collaboration — the heart of an enterprise's ability to innovate better and faster.

With this business outcome in mind, design decisions can be made about the right culture, talent sources and leadership to cultivate. Having a clear statement of purpose is instrumental in addressing

ADVICE

While virtual work is becoming more common, employers need to get value for money. Therefore, it imperative that every employer with virtual labour force learns how to capitalise on virtual freelancers, virtual corporate colleges and virtual co-workers.

One way is to focus on collaboration because any strategic plan must begin with clear goals. In the 21st century, a new approach to work in a large organisation must be aimed at supporting greater collaboration — the heart of an enterprise's ability to innovate better and faster. With this business outcome in mind, design decisions can be made about the right culture, talent sources and leadership to cultivate. Having a clear statement of purpose is instrumental in addressing conflict and changing mindsets.

Virtual. Individuals work from home offices using modern technology to get things done. Both traditional, office-based companies, and virtual companies hire individuals to work 100 percent of the time from home using the Internet.

BY TAMMY JOHN
AND LYNDA GRATTON
editorial@ug.nationmedia.com

If you wanted to find three decades of the evolution of knowledge work encapsulated in a single career, Heidi McCulloch's would be a good one to consider.

As a liberal arts graduate, McCulloch started out working in corporate marketing departments and then moved to an advertising agency.

After starting her family, she stepped away from that world and took on an entrepreneurial challenge: restoring and selling a historic inn. She came back to agency work a few years later and rose to vice president by playing specialised roles on global project teams. And now? She's on to new ventures.

She is an independent consultant; in July 2012 she created a "boutique collaborative workspace" in downtown Toronto for

people like her.

It's an oasis for mobile knowledge workers, who can do their jobs from anywhere but who gravitate to where they can do them best — in the company of other creative people engaged in work that matters to them.

To a career planner, McCulloch's might seem like an erratic path. For us, as long-time observers of workers and their relationship to workplaces, it reflects a progression.

In studying the dramatic changes that have taken place since the 1980s, we have discerned three major waves in the 'virtualisation' of knowledge work.

Wave one: Virtual freelancers

Untethered work on a large scale began in the early 1980s, when a 'freelance nation' of virtual workers using nascent email networks emerged. The new connectivity allowed an individual who might otherwise have worked inside a company to set up a one-person shop instead.

For many workers, the option to be hired as an independent contractor was a godsend — it meant they no longer had to compromise every other demand of their daytime existence in order to do skilled, well-compensated work.

Managers were happy as well, because this new freelance pool

gave them the flexibility to contract for more or less labour as business conditions warranted.

Wave two: Virtual corporate colleagues

Despite its benefits, the first wave required compromises. For workers, the big one was that in embracing the freedom of contributing remotely, they had to give up formal connection to a company and all that went with it — from health and retirement benefits to leadership development and tech support.

Organisations, too, missed that engagement on the part of virtual freelancers. But they also came to appreciate a work approach that enabled operations to proceed across different time zones and through emergencies.

Initially people doubted that full-time employees who worked remotely would be as engaged and productive as their office-bound colleagues.

Indeed, a company's early forays into untethered work often go through an initial rough patch, but as interoffice communication has shifted from face-to-face conversations and paper memos to voice mail and then email, it matters less and less whether colleagues are on the same wing or even the same continent.

conflict and changing mindsets.

2. Reconceive physical workspaces

Previously, work spaces were designed to house the expensive technology and tools that workers needed for output, to support efficient processes and maximum productivity, and to reinforce the hierarchy of management.

Unintended side benefits that arose from colocation were cultural alignment, idea generation and fellowship that led to greater trust, teamwork and quality.

Now, in the realm of knowledge work, those extras are the whole point of colocation, and physical space should be optimised to deliver them. Thus private offices and cubicles are being replaced by more flexible, communal and transparent workspaces.

Companies even use physical space redesign as an opportunity to rethink work processes and organisational design.

3. Reconstruct workflows to tap remote talent

Efficiently combining the contributions of highly specialised people to produce a valuable outcome is always a complex challenge. It is especially tricky when collaboration is required and the people are working virtually and independently.

Telus, a leading telecommunications provider in Canada, now brings together its teams around a purpose rather than a function or a department such as sales or finance. So, for example, people who serve the same client can sit together, regardless of their functional expertise.

4. Invest in intuitive technology

Too often, attempts to support remote work and encourage collaboration are dominated — sometimes crushed — by an obsession with sophisticated technology.

It is important to avoid that by keeping the focus on desired business outcomes. At the same time, those who succeed do rely on a fast-evolving information technology tool kit. Invest in intuitive collaboration technology that becomes part of the regular flow of work.

5. Recognise idiosyncrasy

Success in the new wave of work will also require that employers encourage and support individual work preferences and customise approaches to engaging and motivating differing work personalities.

This will entail a delicate balance between best practices and flexible accommodations. As the impact and importance of features such as flexible hours, relocation and travel wax and wane, the ability to adapt to life's changes is vital to workers and a significant value proposition for an employer to offer.

Tammy John is the CEO of Strategy and Talent Corporation. Lynda Gratton is a professor of management practice at London Business School.



Mr Stephen Asiimwe CEO of Private Sector Foundation Uganda. PHOTO/JOYCE AHEEBWA

Human capital crucial for institutional growth - PSFU CEO

Performance. PSFU is intentional about mentorship, training, capacity building, and development programmes to enhance employee performance and productivity, reduce employee turnover, and improve company culture.

BY JOYCE AHEEBWA
editorial@ug.nationmedia.com

// No individual has any right to come into the world and go out of it without leaving behind distinct and legitimate reasons for having passed through it," George Washington Carver.

Carver reminds us that each person is unique and blessed with a distinct set of gifts, skills, and natural talents, something Mr Stephen Asiimwe, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Private Sector Foundation Uganda (PSFU) identifies with.

Mr Asiimwe seems to draw this inspiration from a quote hanging - conspicuously on his WhatsApp display picture.

"I am very big on human capital. Each one of us has something very special and unique to add to

the table. That is why we subject our people to vigorous interview processes before hiring them," he says.

Moreover, PSFU is intentional about mentorship, training, capacity building, and development programs to enhance employee performance and productivity, reduce employee turnover, and improve company culture.

"My philosophy is training, capacity building, and exposure. My teams travel across the world and this exposes them to different ideas, learnings, and capacity building.

Additionally, we have country-wide membership outreaches," he says. His unconventional approach to life has made him such a trusted leader, ably putting together a winning team regardless of their different backgrounds and diverse motivations and belief systems.

"I do not micro-manage as delegation is essential to building a self-motivated team. I habitually go down to our canteen in the afternoons, order something and just sit there with my people. You can be amazed how much information

and learning you can get in a short time," Mr Asiimwe says, adding that he does not relegate while delegating.

As such, he assesses communication comprehension across all PSFU levels. Walking around refers to a business management style that involves managers, in an unstructured manner, walking through the workplace, to check with employees, equipment, or on the status of ongoing work.

This is a model that sets Mr Asiimwe apart as CEO.

"As a matter of principle, I am in the office by 6 am every working day and often leave last. Staff know that between 6:00 am to 8:30 am, that time is open for staff and the businesspeople to see me about anything and everything.

In fact, I hold client meetings at that time. That way only the most serious will show up. But over time, this has set a standard in that while 8:30am is the official reporting time, the team is here much earlier," he elaborates.

He describes leadership as an unwritten management system based on the ability to be trusted

and counted on for support.

"It is in the way you talk to inspire people to do things, the way you work with a team and make sure it translates the ethos of the company and the leader's vision downwards.

It is the empathetic side of a leader striking a balance with being strict."

Power of succession

Mr Asiimwe who has been CEO of the PSFU for nearly two years, attributed some of the great milestones attained under his leadership to well-prescribed structures by his predecessors on the high end. They each left behind distinct and legitimate footprints, setting the pace for the actualisation of PSFU's vision to be the apex body championing inclusive and sustainable private sector development.

"I am climbing on the shoulders of previous executive directors, specifically the fallen hero, Mr Gideon Badagawa. He is credited for having put a lot of work and energy to front the PSFU agenda," says Mr Asiimwe who was elected as ED for a year before the restructuring that saw the top management position morph into the office of CEO, bringing his tenure to nearly three years.

This speaks to a very systemic succession process that is a critical component of ensuring sustainability, longevity of an entity, and preservation of its brand integrity and reputation.

PSFU has steadily kept on an upward growth trajectory since its inception in 1995 through the various leaderships, owing to good governance that focuses on human capital. "We are very strong on governance and are instilling the same ethos in all of the consumers of our services," he says.

Outstanding transformation

The Covid-19 scourge was hard-hitting to the extent of crippling operations. As such, PSFU was not able to meet its strategy.

In search of a remedy, the body outsourced an independent company to do an Organisational Capacity Assessment (OCA) both internally and in the entire echo system where businesses were struggling with no money and market.

Results showed that PSFU had little National footprint, calling for

capacity bolstering.

This resulted in an organisational capacity development plan to implement the findings.

Resultantly, Mr. Asiimwe says: "One of my most fulfilling achievements is the restructuring that made PSFU have an outreach growing from being largely Kampala-based to a countrywide footprint."

That accessibility made PSFU become an effective private sector leader, the go-to body for businesses seeking to grow. PSFU enables them to achieve their strategic objectives by advocating for a business environment that is conducive to sustainable enterprise growth.

Under the leadership of the charismatic CEO, PSFU has entered into 20 new markets at high levels.

"We have been able to influence the national budget through dialogue, engaging the private sector, and creating a reasonable impact on the youth. This rose from 74 percent to 78 percent this year."

Perils

No major success story is without its challenges, the PSFU is not an exception.

"Whereas the markets are increasing, we are now faced with a new challenge of quality. There are times I get phone calls about the quality of some goods and am embarrassed," he says adding that there are deliberate efforts to continue educating the business community on markets for market.

Access and cost of finance remain a menace.

"Access to financing is hampered by several aspects such as security, high-interest rates, and almost unattainable credit requirements," he says.

CRIPPLING OPERATIONS

The Covid-19 scourge was hard-hitting to the extent of crippling operations. As such, PSFU was not able to meet its strategy. In search of a remedy, the body outsourced an independent company to do an organisational capacity assessment both internally and in the entire echo system where businesses were struggling with no money and market. Results showed that PSFU had little national footprint, calling for capacity bolstering.



L-R: PSFU Chairman Mr Humphrey Nzeyi, Vice Chairperson Ms Sarah Kagingo, and the Chief Executive Officer Mr Stephen Asiimwe. PHOTO/JOAN AHEEBWA

Job-hopping. Career exploration both at the executive and lower levels is a nightmare for company executives and human resource directors. Perks are no longer an assurance of retaining talent.

BY MATHANGANI MUYA
editorial@ug.nationmedia.com

Corporate leaders are facing intense pressure to balance between attaining the bottom line, attracting and retaining talent. Employees are increasingly seeking workplaces where they feel treated as partners and cared for.

Job-hopping both at the executive and lower levels is a nightmare for company executives and human resource directors. Perks are no longer an assurance of retaining talent.

Employees are increasingly expressing concerns about toxic workplaces, working under extreme pressures without expressing care for their well-being. There is a notable increase and concern about mental health arising from the workplace.

Some of these challenges stem from business performance demands in a highly competitive and volatile environment, a changing workforce spanning almost five generations—baby boomers, Gen X, Y, millennials and Gen Z. Each comes with a value system and expectations.

For instance, managers were previously concerned about monitoring performance, while focus now is on how to get people to achieve results and reward the results.

To thrive in the modern and future workplace, a leader must focus on employees' needs, besides the

Dear CEO, perks alone won't keep top talent



For optimal productivity, managers need to respond to their employees needs and provide the skills and resources needed. PHOTO/FILE

shareholders. This means responding to their needs and providing the skills and resources necessary to achieve results.

A McKinsey survey indicated that 85 percent of employees considered their relationships with management as the most important workplace factor in their employment.

What do leaders need to do to make employees stay and feel loved?

First, build trust, champion diver-

sity, equality, and inclusion, and be examples of integrity.

Second, employees are seeking leaders who inspire them to grow by creating a continuous learning culture, who are open to change and can provide opportunities and challenges.

A leader must understand the business and its technical operations, the people, mix with the people at all levels, and break the ceilings of 'us versus them.'

Third, leaders must broaden their

knowledge, by not over-specialising.

Fourth, as employees look for love, a leader should show love by responding to the employees' well-being, and demonstrates care for their personal growth and career.

A leader should not be afraid to love and should be fun-loving. A coffee, random getaway lunch, or hike can be achieved at minimal cost with huge value additions.

Fifth, a leader must also balance

85%
EMPLOYEES
HIGHLY VALUE
RELATIONSHIP WITH
MANAGEMENT

between being 'nice' and getting results by clearly communicating the business mission, values and expectations with measurable performance indicators, having a recognition and reward system, and providing support to close performance gaps.

Sixth, the success of future leaders will be pegged on how they combine business and soft skills. Business skills cover operations, technology, innovation, digital space, operations, and financial prudence, among others. Soft skills like listening, psychology of success, self-care, coaching, empathy and compassion are also instrumental.

As a leader, one must reinvent themselves, re-skill, and upskill to survive the onslaught of leadership in the coming decade..

Mr Muya is a human resources strategist and executive leadership coach

BY SCOTT BELLOWS
editorial@ug.nationmedia.com

People crave the power to make decisions about their own lives. From political democracy to estate committees to family meetings, humans prefer not to give up control and instead have a say in decisions that affect their well-being.

Employees within organisations feel the same way. No one wants a boss who makes all the choices without involving them.

Business Talk discussed the impact that participative leaders have on their employees. Interestingly, do leaders that involve their subordinates in verdicts also function the same way within member-based organisations?

In Kenya, in years past,, the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Cooperatives stated that the country hosted 2,996 co-operatives where citizens come together to form legal entities that support them in some sort of specific industry. The sectors that co-operatives operate in range from bee keeping, tobacco farmers, dairy producers, coffee growers, housing co-operatives, and SACCOs, etc.

The United States International University of Africa in collaboration

Dear CEO, employees want you to consult



Interactions between managers and team leaders boost team work. PHOTO/FILE

that the individual holds some amount of initial trust in the other person.

In terms of co-operatives, the recently conducted research shows that when members trust the co-operative, the board (called the management committee in co-operatives), and the senior managers hired by the co-operative, then the members were also more satisfied with their co-operative. They are also more committed, and feel that they can share their opinions and be heard within the co-operative.

When the members felt less trust, then the relationship between these three positive organisational outcomes were lower.

Trust also held strong direct relationships with how involved members were in their communities. When a member trusted the co-operative and its leaders, then they were more likely to feel politically empowered, socially empowered, and psychologically empowered in their local communities.

However, participative leadership levels within the co-operatives had

no significant impact at all on community involvement by itself. But participative leadership did relate positively to members trusting their leaders more.

Then, when participative leaders had members who also trust the co-operative and the leaders, the impact of allowing members to participate in decision making was even more powerful than trust alone.

The researchers hypothesised that when co-operative members trust their leaders, then they spend less time and stress trying to watch them and make sure they do not get cheated. The members then have energy and motivation to engage in other organisational and community actions.

In summary, sometimes leaders must take multiple steps to energize their followers and get desired attitudes, involvement, and behaviours out of them. Sometimes one action alone does not suffice.

Dr Scott may be reached on scott@ScottProfessor.com or on @ScottProfessor



Making innovation a predictable driver of growth

Empowering. Innovation Village is intentional about changing the dire SME longevity statistics by giving them an incubation platform and tools to help grow and thrive.

BY JOAN SALMON
jsalmon@ug.nationmedia.com

Founded in 2016, Innovation Village is one of Africa's leading ecosystem builders for entrepreneurs and innovators working to solve communities most

pressing challenges using technology. The centre fosters an enabling environment for entrepreneurs to thrive, supporting them with tools, expertise, capital, and community to build world-class technology products and ventures.

Through its various ventures and spaces located in Kampala, Gulu, Jinja and Mbarara, the Innovation Village supports innovators, corporates, start-ups, and entrepreneurs build and scale their solutions by creating pathways that give them opportunities to create resilient

enterprises and unlock new marketplaces to sustain their growth and scale their solution in Uganda and beyond.

Working to lead Uganda and the region into Industry 4.0, the hub is well-positioned as a leading innovation cradle. With additional space at MoTIV, a creative maker space, the centre creates sustainable indigenous opportunities in the creative and cultural industry.

Some of the entrepreneurs building alongside Innovation Village include:

Meet Mr Paul Kirungi, a zealous entrepreneur changing lives through Zofi-Cash. Paul started his journey in 2021 alongside Mr Gordon Turibamwe with the end goal of propelling Africa's financial muscle to new heights.

The entity challenges the traditional 30-day wage cycle by offering early wages advance at low interest rates thus addressing the immediate financial needs of the employees without waiting for payday.

The firm's primary goal is to



Mr Paul Karungi, founder of Zofi Cash.

redefine financial inclusion by making every day a payday. In its two years of existence, the firm has processed more than Shs3b, partnered with nearly 2,000 employers and availed more than 21,000 employees with salary advances. To scale its growth, Zofi-cash has raised more than \$1m in seed funding from investors in Europe and West Africa.

An integral part of Zofi Cash's strategy is its commitment to stellar customer service. That is achieved with a proficient team and online Chabot support.

Ms Bernadette Ojao started Wabibi Pads Limited in 2020, a washable and reusable sanitary towels enterprise. This was made possible after securing the Covid-19 Resilience Fund of \$12,000 from the NextWave Programme implemented by Innovation Village in partnership with Mastercard Foundation under the Young Africa Works Strategy. These funds enabled her to secure a workspace, buy raw materials, hire staff, legalise the

Ms Bernadette Ojao, founder of Wabibi Pads Ltd.



business as well as produce and sell the pads.

Working with women and girls, Ms. Ojao and her team have skilled more than 3,500 on how to make sanitary towels. 250 of these were supported with start-up kits by Mercy corps in the GIRL-H programme within the five districts of the Karamoja sub-region.

As part of transforming lives, Wabibi pads has trained over 10,000 school-going girls in Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM), distributed more than 51,000 packs of pads to women and girls in remote communities.

The teams has also organised massive awareness campaigns on puberty, menstruation and other Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR).

Due to such initiatives, the company was voted winners of Uganda Needs More of You challenge (second edition) by Airtel.

They were also selected as part of the Youth Advisory Council for Mastercard Foundation in Uganda hence building a household name. All this is on the bedrock of having a diligent and supportive team.

Recently, she attended the Change-makerXchange for the planet in Rwanda and it made her realise that creating an environmentally sustainable product greatly contributes to the Climate Action call. She is thankful to the Innovation Village for enabling her be a contributor to reducing the effects of climate change and thus save the planet.



Mr Geoffrey Mutabazi, founder of Karaa.

Mr Geoffrey Mutabazi started Karaa Africa to revolutionize the last-mile delivery through electric bicycles. Through Karaa Africa, he has built eco-friendly bicycles focused on sustainability and efficiency set to transform the delivery industry in Africa.

With the support of MoTIV, Geoffrey has built over 20 bicycles managing deliveries within Kampala through Glovo and Jumia Apps.

These electric bicycles are less manual and faster than the ordinary bicycle, almost like a motorcycle which helps riders cover longer distances without tiring faster.

Karaa has also taken part in the agri-solar product accelerator where they are working to optimise the product for agricultural value chains.



Mr Michael Kazoora, founder of Xazu Technologies.

Safeguarding pocket money is a headache for both parents and students. That is why Mr Michael Kazoora started Xazu Technologies to help students and parents deposit, save, and monitor pocket money transactions in schools through the Omni Student Card, Wristband, and Point of Sale devices.

The idea, though seemingly simple makes Mr Kazoora proud. He is also thankful for the wealth of knowledge that Mr Isaac Okumu-Ringa, the talented technical co-founder, eased the start-up journey.

Some of their triumphs include product innovation, and strategic collaborations hence with market expansion as Xazu Technologies serves a growing user base of more than 20,000 parents and 12,000 students in 11 schools.

Ms Belinda Esaete's began the Bel Deluxe journey in 2020 after enduring countless nights due to uncomfortable sleepwear. Suffering from sleep deprivation, she discovered that lightweight, breathable, and comfortable nightwear is essential for better sleep. After thorough research, she explored various materials and designs that could provide the perfect night's sleep.

The prolonged Covid-19 lockdown gave her all the time she needed to grow her idea. When lockdown eased, she secured a \$200 loan from her aunt to kick-start her venture. After securing a carefully picked set of employees, they worked to ensure consistently high standard output.

Her turning point was during the 2021 Black Friday, when she collaborated with MoTIV to sell her products at a percentage sale.

The partnership catapulted her into the spotlight and sold 50 nightwear sets through Instagram and MoTIV website. This pivot marked the brand's ascent

of Bel Deluxe. She soon opened a physical store at MoTIV, which grew and doubled her production and sales through various marketplace access and business training programmes.



Ms Belinda Esaete, founder of Bel Deluxe.



Leading by example is the real deal – KCB MD

Consistent. Mr Edgar Byamah is a man of his word, leading his team by being exemplary, and humble. That endears him to the various bank stakeholders.

BY JOAN SALMON
jsalmon@ug.nationmedia.com

Mr Edgar Byamah's show of modesty and humility is admirable. Given his skillful leadership abilities, vast professional experience, and evident intellectual prowess, Mr Byamah is humble, an uncommon trait. Being at the helm of one of the leading financial institutions in the country, the Managing Director of KCB Bank Uganda, he chooses to walk the talk, saying: "Leaders have a responsibility to lead by example." Resultantly, over the years, he has earned the respect of his team, organisation, and industry players across the board. By all accounts, Mr Byamah is known for being inspiring, moderate, and thoughtful. Perhaps this explains why he is such a perfect fit for the institution whose regional presence and appeal continue to exponentially grow. Leaders at KCB are expected to cross board and hold all the aforementioned values which through their leadership and expertise instilled throughout the organisation.

Leadership Mr Byamah believes there is no "one shoe fits all" leadership model. He says: "Going by my experience, I believe you must listen to your team and understand them." He continues: "Always look at the customer and try to walk in his shoes because it is not about you. As the chief executive, your role is to serve the customers and not yourself." According to the KCB CEO, a person in a position of his responsibility, should be concerned about empowering the people they work with. "You must be able to give

them confidence to do their work diligently." This, he says, includes arming them with initiatives and required skills that will see them drive the overall business objectives of the entity to the best of their knowledge and effort. For this to succeed, a leader of a vibrant organisation such as KCB must learn to distinguish between what is important, critical, and strategic. So far, Mr Byamah seems to be excelling in this front, a skill he is passing over to his team. And this he demonstrates by leading by example. "You have to lead from the front. Reward good behaviour, especially those in line with your values. Be true to your word and this is very critical," he says, adding, "This can help you set the tone that can then be anchored on to drive the culture."

4 YEARS
SINCE KCB
BEGAN ITS
TRANSFORMATION
JOURNEY

Transformation With a culture which leaves no room for lackluster performance, coupled with the hands-on, prudent leadership anchored by Mr Byamah, it is easy to notice the results of being ambitious, confident, and collaborative. As a result, KCB Uganda has pushed up its customer numbers, grown the business, and doubled its balance sheet as it continues to drive its digital transformation, migrating services to online where the future of banking is beckoning, if not already there. "You have to accept that the landscape is constantly changing. Customers' demands and preferences are also changing," says Mr Byamah. He continues: "You must focus on the customer because they drive the business. Therefore, all your strategies should be linked to addressing the customers' experiences." KCB Uganda is rolling out a consumer app and also reviving its Internet banking. This is in addition to establishing partnerships with fintechs and telecoms.

"We are ensuring that we are closer and connected to the people and are deliberate about it. We will focus on understanding our customers because they are our biggest asset," he says. According to Mr Byamah, reliance on technology to achieve the organisation's objectives and mission is something the institution is not shy about as digital operation is the future. With it comes convenience, simplicity, and swiftness all things that customers demand.

Winning team Building a team requires an eye and a skill that might not be in abundance. Here, though, is a way to go around it. "Start with the team you have, and progressively keep strengthening it in terms of character," reveals Mr Byamah. "Perpetually instill humility, boldness, drive, and collaboration until it is clear for everybody. Appreciate that you don't have all the answers. This means you must build synergies that pave way for back and forth learning from one another. While doing all that, the team must know their roles, meaning I have to continuously emphasise their purpose in the organisation."

Outlook Even amidst the resultant Covid-19 lockdown measures and the current associated global disruptions emanating from the Russian-Ukraine war, affecting local enterprises and resulting in some defaulting, Mr Byamah believes the economy has shown resilience. For that, the economy is slowly, but steadily beginning to capitalise on emerging upswings, particularly in the education and manufacturing sub-sectors. However, trade continues to suffer and so is real estate. Mr Byamah says macroeconomic factors have been generally stable, citing the stability of exchange rates as well as the interest rates. He is optimistic that the current headwinds will gradually normalise, "unless we get another shock". Worth noting is that the non-performing loan ratio, according to the Bank of Uganda, remains at 6 percent, a massive improvement in a year. All that is needed now is government's progressive initiatives aimed at steering economic recovery to the pre-pandemic times if not better.

Achievements Over the last four years, KCB Uganda has embarked on a transformation journey hence breaking into the top 10 commercial banks in the country. There has also been a significant improvement in the institution's digital offering and an increase in customer numbers and workforce. KCB Uganda doubled its performance and impact with the economy being the ultimate beneficiary. Efforts to drive regional integration are one that KCB utterly believes in because it renders fertile ground for financial institutions.

Going by my experience, I believe you must listen to your team and understand them." He continues: "Always look at the customer and try to walk in his shoes because it is not about you. As the chief executive, your role is to serve the customers and not yourself. You have to lead from the front. Reward good behaviour, especially those in line with your values. Be true to your word and this is very critical," he says, adding, "This can help you set the tone that can then be anchored on to drive the culture. You must be able to give them confidence to do their work diligently."

Mr Edgar Byamah, Managing Director, KCB Uganda
PHOTO/JOAN SALMON



turnaround

The factory also assembles the cooking stoves on site. The overall goal is promoting green energy which is key under the SDGs, saving our environment while impacting lives.

Under different government programmes tea seedlings were provided to tea farmers across the country to boost tea farming, however, existing factories such as Mpanga, Mabale, Kigezi, and Kayonza tea factories were either in need of revamping or enlarging production capacity to better serve the people.

UDC intervention in this sector was through equity investments and lease financing. These factories have transformed the livelihoods of the community members through employment, raw material off-take, and thus income generation. The same is planned to be done in Zombo District.

Before UDC put ferries in Bukakata under KIS, transportation of heavy-duty vehicles and materials was almost impossible.

However, all that has changed through KIS, Dr Birungi says. UDC also provides Kalangala District with electricity through a solar grid system complementing the generators that were unable to serve the whole island.

"For better impact assessment, we are undertaking baseline studies across all our interventions because our interest is to change lives. That will be followed by mid-line assessments and end-of-project assessments," he says.

Leveraging partnerships

Partnerships and collaborations



UDC Executive Director Dr Patrick Birungi.

often drive transformative growth and while most of UDC's investee companies and partnerships are still young, they are not holding back.

"We are intentional about creating the right partnerships, at home and abroad. Internationally, we have a partnership with the Industrial Development Corporation of South Africa (IDC)," he says.

Locally, UDC has signed a Mem-

orandum of Understanding (MoU) with the National Planning Authority to develop projects together while harnessing the capacity to do feasibility studies.

UDC has also formed partnerships with financial institutions to finance some of its initiatives. That is not forgetting the current discussion with the Private Sector Foundation of Uganda (PSFU) for joint project identification, execution,

and support.

Organisational culture

A leader sets the tone for the entire organisation. Therefore, Dr Birungi reminds aspiring leaders, especially those looking to drive change, promote innovation, and lead effectively that strong leadership is the ability to make decisions and stand by them.

"You must also be knowledgeable and keep the focus lest you are diverted from the core objectives of the organisations vision. It is also crucial to create winning teams focused on attaining the organisations overall vision and mission, because you can never achieve anything alone," he says.

Promoting sustainability

In a bid to promote and facilitate industrial and economic development in Uganda, Dr Birungi says UDC is committed to ensuring economic, social and environmental sustainability.

"Change is premised with leadership which prompted our board to attend an international training on ESG. They came to appreciate that an ESG policy is crucial for our operations when conducting assessments and appraisals. Drafting of the ESG policy is underway," he says.

UDC is also integrating environmental concerns into its appraisal system to guide the decision-making process. "Additionally, for every investment we are going to make, part of our evaluation criteria will be ESG compliance," he says.

Lessons from the past

Dr Birungi says while we still look to the consolidated fund, we are working to mobilise more resources that are not tied to the government purse. We are also working to ensure that our investments develop

to a level that they can attract external funding.

UDC's role in Uganda's future

Dr Birungi says UDC is going to be the engine of growth in Uganda hence a key player in all investment discussions.

"We will play a key role in promoting the industrialisation agenda, improved service sector, and ensure that the private sector flies solo on the premise that it has been well nurtured under the stewardship of UDC," he says.

Adding that he sees UDC investing in transformative areas such as animal feeds as that will support many households.

"I hope UDC will engage in big data trading like Google does because it is critical for security, and trading among others," Dr Birungi says.

ESTABLISHED

Uganda Development Corporation (UDC) was initially established in June 1952 by an Act of Parliament Cap. 326 of the laws of Uganda to facilitate the industrial and economic development of Uganda. This was done by promoting and assisting in the financing, management or establishment of: new undertakings; schemes for the better organization, modernization or/and the more efficient carrying out of any undertaking; and conducting research into the industrial and mineral potentialities of Uganda. However, the political, social and economic upheavals that afflicted the country in the 1970s to mid-1980s did not spare the Corporation and its investments.

Looking at the history of UDC and its successes in driving Uganda's industrial agenda, this enriched the debate and arguments for its revitalisation.



Farmers harvest tea leaves at Mpanga Tea Farm in Kabarole District.



Bukona Agro Processors Ltd denatured ethanol, a green cooking fuel being loaded on a truck for export to Kenya. ALL PHOTOS/MICHAEL KAKUMIRIZI

CEOs with the

midas touch

Daily Monitor
www.monitor.co.ug

Put your hands together for people, culture managers



When deciding the company one will work for, the most important aspect is the culture within the organisation. PHOTO/COURTESY

Culture. As organisations slowly depart from policy to culture, there is more emphasis on the people and their needs. This has created the need for people and culture managers in organisations.

BY JAMES KAHONGEH
editorial@ug.nationmedia.com

Today's employee is the most empowered in many generations. This employee has a big say in the development of guidelines that apply to them.

As organisations slowly depart from policy to culture, there is more emphasis on the people and their needs. This has created the need for people and culture managers in organisations.

Role of people and culture managers

Paul Ngugi is the people and culture director at Greenpeace Africa, an international non-governmental organisation that campaigns against climate injustices.

"The responsibility is to design, develop and implement strategies that attract, engage and improve employee experience. They are also responsible for developing and enhancing a high-performance culture within an organisation," he explains.

"Without culture, there is no strategy and there is no organisation. Understanding employees' culture helps in putting people at the centre of the organisation," he explains.

Jane Mbatia, the people and culture manager at Zamara Group, a financial services company, regards it as an element of compliance. "We provide strategic advice that improves business performance by ensuring policies and strategies are up to date with regulations and legislation," she says.



"Culture is an invisible element within an organisation that guides how things are done, how people relate, and what drives performance. To achieve a productive culture, we have to be intentional about creating a good culture. We create what we want. People want to work with the best organisations that align with their values and expectations. A people and culture manager is to help the organisation to attract the best talent, to maintain and manage it for this,"

Ms Jane Mbatia, people and culture manager, Zamara Group

Culture, she adds, is an invisible element within an organisation that guides how things are done, how people relate, and what drives performance. "To achieve a productive culture, we have to be intentional about creating a good culture. We create what we want," she says.

Mr Ngugi says that more than ever before, people are keener to know about



"Without culture, there is no strategy and there is no organisation. Understanding employees' culture helps in putting people at the centre of the organisation. The responsibility of people and culture managers is to design, develop and implement strategies that attract, engage and improve employee experience. They are also responsible for developing and enhancing a high-performance culture within an organisation,"

Mr Paul Ngugi, people and culture director, Greenpeace Africa

the reputation of a company before coming on board. "Culture is now being used to brand organisations. People also want to be sure about career mobility in that organisation, both within a role and in other units. This is a more progressive and proactive [approach] than having to wait for policies to be developed."

Wellness of employees, he says, is also

driven by its culture. "People need to be happy so that they are eager to come to work and engage with others in the organisation. You can feel the warmth when you visit such an organisation."

Do HR and people and culture overlap?

Ms Mbatia says they are not very different, noting that while HR was more focused on procedure and policies before, people and culture is more holistic.

"It is about working more with people and giving them a productive environment to work in and thrive. It is also about teamwork and making sure the employees are happy and meaningfully impacted. People are people. They are not resources to be used," she explains.

But does one need to be a human resource practitioner to play this role? Mr Ngugi says HR qualifications are key, although not mandatory. Some professionals in this role have backgrounds in engineering and finance.

"What matters is the passion for people and culture. This is what drives this role. Some individuals start from any direction and acquire the salient qualifications," he says.

These salient qualifications include social and emotional intelligence "to understand the behaviour of people" according to Mr Ngugi.

On why it is necessary for the modern organisation to engage the services of a people and culture manager, Mr Ngugi notes that growing consciousness around equity, diversity, and inclusion are compelling businesses to approach their human resource differently.

"The type of talent you bring in and retain must meet the threshold of diversity and inclusion," he says.

For Ms Mbatia, people and culture managers serve the needs of both the internal and external environments. "People want to do business with the best organisations that align with their values and expectations. The work of a people and culture manager is to help the organisation to attract the best talent, to maintain and manage it for this."

Is people and culture simply renaming of HR?

Ms Mbatia does not think so. "It is a new way of managing people in an organisation. People and culture is where the discipline comes in. We need structures, standards and agreed behaviour, but we also need strategies, which did not gain a lot of attention before. We are not kicking out HR."

The era of HR being an administrative role "and pushing papers" has been overtaken by time, and as both professionals agree, people and culture is now the centre of strategic thinking and the enabler.

"For many years, organisations have spent time and money on conferences to design strategy only to realise that things were not moving. This is because there was no culture to anchor the strategy in. Peter Drucker says culture will eat strategy for breakfast," says Mr Ngugi.

There has been an evolution in the last four years in terms of how organisations view their personnel and their needs. "My role before was human resource director. Today, most organisations while recruiting are calling the role people and culture," he says.

Jkgitau@ke.nationmedia.com

NATION 
→ ePaper



Enter **promo code: DM23** and get

20% OFF
Annual subscription

1. Browse to epaper.nation.africa/ug
2. Select login and enter your email address and password.
3. Go for the Annual subscription plan and enter the **promo code "DM23"** for discounted offers
4. Select your payment method and follow prompts to access the epaper.

Offer lasts: 7th Sept 2023 to 31st Dec 2023

*Terms and conditions apply



DOWNLOAD
The Nation ePaper APP now



OR SCAN QR CODE
to access epaper.nation.africa/ug

DAILY MONITOR TRUTH EVERY DAY
by NATION

For inquiries, please contact us on: +256 312301100 or whatsapp +256 782 819 017
Or email us at customercareug@ug.nationmedia.com

CEOs with the

midas touch



Daily Monitor
www.monitor.co.ug

Excellent service is ATC Uganda's

Interview. In the effort to build a more connected Africa to make an impact. Ms Dorothy Kabagambe Ssemenda is leading the way. The Chief Executive Officer of ATC Uganda is in charge of ensuring that the company builds a better connected Uganda. She spoke to *Daily Monitor's* **Joyce Aheebwa**.

Briefly tell us about ATC Uganda and the tower business model.

ATC Uganda is a subsidiary of the American Tower Corporation that is listed on the New York Stock Exchange. Our global presence spans 25 countries across 6 continents, and we are a leading provider of telecommunications tower infrastructure in Uganda.

We commenced operations in Uganda in 2012 and are licensed and regulated by the Uganda Communications Commission as a National Public Infrastructure Provider.

Our business model focuses on the construction and operation of shareable telecommunications towers (commonly known as masts), offering rentable space for telecommunications companies, internet service providers, broadcasters, and other institutions.

We have a robust portfolio of towers consisting of rooftops, lattice towers, pine tree towers, monopole towers, and our latest addition smart poles. Furthermore, we have pioneered innovative solutions like indoor antennas to improve coverage in high-rise buildings such as the URA Tower in Nakawa, Rwenzori Towers, Kooki Towers, and Apoye Mall among others. ATC Uganda's long-term investments



Ms Dorothy Kabagambe Ssemenda, CEO ATC Uganda.

in critical telecommunication infrastructure therefore serve as a backbone for the industry.

With ATC's introduction in Uganda just over a decade ago, the mobile telecommunication landscape underwent a significant shift, especially with the innovative concept of shared tower infrastructure among competitors. Could you elaborate on the impact of this development?

The introduction of a shared

tower infrastructure concept in Uganda marked a revolutionary shift in the mobile telecommunications sector. Before this, telecom companies had to invest heavily in the construction and maintenance of single-tenant infrastructure, often leading to duplicated efforts and heightened operational costs.

As you drive along several highways in the country, you might have noticed the existence of three, sometimes four towers next to each other. Our model offers shared telecommunication infra-

structure and enables all sector players to make use of a single tower thereby facilitating more efficient use of resources, reducing the need for duplicate investments, and inadvertently reducing the use of carbon-emitting material.

This approach has had a tremendous positive impact. This model increased network coverage, particularly in rural and underserved areas, as the cost barrier for individual infrastructure development was substantially lowered and telecommunications companies could now focus their investments on expanding their respective networks.

It reduced the operational expenses for telecommunications companies since they no longer had to shoulder the entire cost of constructing and maintaining these towers. This has resulted in a reduction in the cost of telecommunications services to the benefit of the end-users.

On average the cost of voice and data services has come down tremendously and the end users can get more for less. It has also facilitated the entry of new telecom players since the initial infrastructure investment requirements have been catered for by ATC's shared infrastructure model.

You assumed leadership of ATC Uganda during its 10th-anniversary celebration. What are your strategic business objectives as the leader of Uganda's leading tower company?

My strategic business objectives are underpinned by the vision to enhance network connectivity across Uganda, and by doing so, significantly contribute to the nation's digital transformation journey.

JOINING ATC UGANDA

In 2012 Ms Dorothy Kabagambe Ssemenda joined ATC Uganda as finance operations manager and has held several roles, including supply chain manager, finance project advisor for a start up in Tanzania, regional treasury manager overseeing six countries in Europe, Middle East and Africa and was later promoted to chief finance officer. In 2022, she was promoted to CEO and is the first black female to be appointed in that position.

We are committed to supporting Uganda's wider digital transformation initiatives. This includes partnering with government, business, and community stakeholders to leverage our infrastructure for innovative digital services and applications that can drive economic growth and societal well-being.

ATC Uganda is committed to promoting sustainable business practices. This includes environmental responsibility through initiatives such as integrating renewable energy solutions in our operations, as well as fostering social responsibility by investing in our communities and workforce.

We strive to drive innovation in everything we do, from technological advancements to customer service strategies, to remain at the forefront of the industry. Establishing and maintaining strong, collaborative relationships with our customers and stakeholders is a key part of our strategy.

By providing reliable, high-quality infrastructure solutions and services, we aim to ensure that ATC Uganda continues to be the partner of choice in Uganda's telecommunications sector.

What in your view makes an effective CEO?

Speaking from my experience as the CEO of ATC Uganda, focusing on our customers is the cornerstone of effective leadership. Everyday, my team and I work passionately to exceed all customer expectations. We are guided by what is essential to our customers, facing each challenge with resilience and dedication to ensuring their success.

I believe in the power of a motivated and inspired team. As a CEO, the well-being of my team is paramount to me. I put substantial effort into ensuring we look after our people exceptionally well and prioritize their career growth.

We take pride in our strong and positive work culture, which I am personally committed to nurturing and strengthening.

Additionally, ensuring that clear strategy, robust execution, and excellent financial performance are consistently maintained. I believe that these elements are crucial in

ATC Uganda CEO Ms Dorothy Kabagambe Ssemenda takes Minister of ICT and National Guidance Ms Joyce Ssebugwayo through how a digital community works.

ALL PHOTOS/
MICHAEL
KAKUMIRIZI





main driver of growth

securing the sustained growth and success of ATC Uganda and all its stakeholders.

What does it take to put together a winning team given that individuals come from different backgrounds with different motivations and beliefs?

Building a winning team involves selecting individuals who resonate with our values and vision, complemented by their diverse skills and backgrounds. I prioritise personal and professional growth by providing robust mentoring and continuous learning opportunities for every team member.

Our culture is centered on high performance, continuous improvement, and mutual respect, supports our commitment to excellence and innovation. This environment promotes collaborative success, fostering the development of our team members into future business leaders, and ensuring that we consistently lead in our industry.

Many corporate institutions are allocating a significant amount of resources towards Environment, Social and Governance (ESG). How important is this model and how is ATC faring on this front?

In the past, telecommunications companies relied heavily on diesel to power tower infrastructure, which proved to be both costly and environmentally unsustainable. When ATC entered the Uganda market, we pioneered a shared tower infrastructure model and the adoption of renewable energy solutions like eco-friendly lithium-ion batteries and solar energy to power our sites.

To date, we have also built green sites which are run purely on renewable energy. As you might be aware, our national electricity grid coverage is still low and yet we have towers spread out across the country that must be powered sustainably. We are constantly innovating new ways to ensure the whole country is powered sustainably regardless of the grid coverage.

In 2021 and in line with the 2015 Paris Agreement, the ATC Group adopted science-based targets (SBTs) across our global operations and supply chains to reduce emissions by at least 40 percent by 2035 demonstrating our commitment to significantly decrease our carbon footprint.

Additionally, we have forged partnerships with key government agencies such as National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) and National Forestry Authority to support conservation efforts.

Through these collaborations, we have successfully planted over 30,000 trees throughout the country. One notable tree planting initiative took place in Mabira forest,



Members of the community receive free computer lessons at the Seeta Bukerere digital community.

ALL PHOTOS/MICHAEL KAKUMIRIZI

where we contributed 5,000 trees to promote reforestation and biodiversity conservation.

How has ATC Uganda contributed to the community development of the neighborhoods in which the towers are built?

Our community involvement extends beyond improving connectivity. We have supported various initiatives for our communities ranging from building classroom blocks for rural schools, the digital communities programme, the extension of grid and the construction of roads.

Our classroom block project focuses on supporting underprivileged communities that host our towers. We have constructed several classroom blocks and most recently constructed a classroom block and sanitary facilities at Kibanda Primary School in Kaliro district and provided school desks to be utilised by the students.

The impact has been remarkable. On a recent visit to the school, the Headteacher informed us that the school enrollment has increased from 300 to 900 students and at-

tendance has greatly improved especially of the female students due to the new sanitary facilities.

We are also constructing another classroom block for St. John Paul II Oriajini Primary School in Terego district, which has a school population of over 1,808 students, which we will be launching in September this year.

We have also invested in digital inclusion through construction of Digital Communities (DCs) in various locations across the country. We have partnered with Ndejje University, to offer free tutorials and training in computer literacy skills to members of the community, with the University awarding certificates on the conclusion of the one-month program.

We have so far constructed several digital communities, close to 4,000 people have graduated with a certificate in computer skills from these centers and some have successfully been placed in employment.

We have facilitated several thousand grid connections and constructed several thousand kilometers of roads leading to or within areas where our towers are located. Communities have therefore been facilitated to access grid power and have better road networks, all of which facilitate economic growth.

With the transition to 5G technology underway, could you discuss how ATC Uganda's initiatives are facilitating this advancement within the country's mobile telecom spectrum?

I am proud to say that we already have the infrastructure to facilitate the rollout of 5G. We have also been innovating in anticipation of the rollout of 5G. For instance,

we installed indoor distributed antenna solutions and smart poles in Kampala this year to support the 5G rollout and we are looking to roll these out across other cities nationwide. Our power systems also can handle the increased power usage associated with 5G.

We are collaborating with telecommunications companies and the government to facilitate a smooth transition to this next-generation technology. We recently conducted a telecommunications infrastructure needs study for Kampala and a nationwide study is also in the works.



Telecommunications tower.

ATC has significantly grown to become a leading tower construction company in Uganda. Could you provide insight into your investment to date and your future investment plans?

ATC Uganda continues to invest significantly in improving and expanding our infrastructure. We have invested significantly in Uganda to date, building the much-needed telecommunications infrastructure and continuously pay our taxes. Compliance is a top priority at ATC.

We employ more than 160 people directly and over 2,000 indirectly through our partners.

Our future investment plans are centered around supporting Uganda's digital transformation journey, fostering inclusive connectivity, and integrating more renewable energy solutions into our operations.

What challenges do you face as a business?

One of the challenges that people do not see, is that connectivity is anchored on the telecommunications infrastructure that we provide. For every tower we build, we require three separate permits from the government, Civil Aviation Authority permit, NEMA permit and a building permit from the local council authorities.

However, acquisition of these permits often takes longer than we expect (we have permits that have been delayed for close to 1 year) thus delaying deployment of capital and the much-needed infrastructure. This affects not only ATC but the mobile network operators and ultimately the end users of telecommunications services who are deprived of quality telecommunication services.

The government also loses a significant amount of tax revenue due to delayed deployment of telecommunications infrastructure and use of telecommunications services such as mobile money. We are engaging the government to consider setting up a one-stop permitting center for tower permits to address this challenge.

We are also experiencing increased acts of vandalism and theft at our tower sites. These incidents mainly target our essential assets such as batteries, cables, generators, and our customers' equipment which is affecting the quality of telecommunication services. We are engaging the Government and the relevant security agencies to support us in addressing this issue.

What is your outlook of the telecom sector in Uganda?

The telecom sector in Uganda continues to present promising prospects for growth and development. With the continuous increase in mobile and internet penetration as well as the Government of Uganda's favorable investment policies and progressive regulatory climate, we foresee further investment in the sector to meet the growing demand for high-speed, reliable connectivity.

Entrepreneurship.

Investors looking to support entrepreneurial ventures should pay heed to these findings. The pace of change within the industry of interest becomes a critical factor in deciding where to allocate funds.

BY SCOTT BELLOWES
editorial@ug.nationmedia.com

In Kisumu, Kenya, Sarah Omondi runs a tech startup that specialises in providing localised agricultural solutions. She holds a prestigious background in computer science, agronomy, and a bit of marketing.

Her diverse skill set made her new venture a talking point in local tech circles, but she since discovered that the pace of change within agri-tech proves slow like a glacier.

Thus, she can utilise her generalist expertise to solve a broad range of problems, making her startup attractive to various stakeholders, including farmers, suppliers, and even local government agencies interested in food security.

Contrast Sarah with Peter Ochieng, another Kisumu entrepreneur. Peter solely focuses on the fish farming industry, leveraging his specialised knowledge in aquaculture. The rapid technological advancements in his niche have positioned him as a key respected figure.

His specialised skills make it easier for him to quickly adapt to new methodologies and equipment, thus staying ahead of competitors who may not hold as deep an understanding of the field.

Findings

Research by Florenta Teodoridis, Michaël Bikard, and Keyvan Vakili offers valuable insights into the roles that generalists and specialists play in dynamic environments.

The study argues that generalists, like Sarah, tend to perform better when the pace of change in a knowledge domain is slow.

This allows them to utilise and incorporate their wide range of skills effectively. On the other hand, specialists, such as Peter, gain the upper hand when rapid changes occur in a specific field.

To invest in generalists or specialist entrepreneurs?



Generalists tend to perform better when the pace of change in a knowledge domain is slow. PHOTO/COURTESY

Their deep-rooted expertise enables them to swiftly understand and implement new knowledge, thus gaining a competitive edge.

The study used a surprising sample through the collapse of the Soviet Union as a natural experiment to analyse the performance of theoretical mathematicians. The historical event led to a sharp acceleration in the pace of change in the field of mathematics.

Inasmuch, it compared the performances of generalist and specialist mathematicians before and after this period, allowing them to tease out how changes in the pace of a knowledge domain could influence the relative success of special-

ists versus generalists.

They further delved into the roles of cognitive mechanisms and competition for scarce resources, using data to assess how desirable these mathematicians were as collaborators.

Investors looking to support entrepreneurial ventures should pay heed to these findings. The pace of change within the industry of interest becomes a critical factor in deciding where to allocate funds.

Solutions

In sectors experiencing slow transformations, backing a generalist entrepreneur may yield the most rewards, as their diverse skill

set allows them to navigate complex issues with a multi-disciplinary approach.

On the flip side, in fast-paced industries where innovation cycles prove shorter, investing in specialists could become more profitable. Their deep understanding of the subject matter can be crucial for keeping the venture at the forefront of the industry.

Such knowledge could redefine investment strategies, urging stakeholders to consider not only the skill set of the entrepreneurs but also the rate of change in the relevant industry.

Therefore, understanding whether the pace of change demands a generalist's broad view or a specialist's depth of knowledge could become the decisive factor in making a wise investment and warrant special due diligence.

In additional new interesting research by Florenta Teodoridis, along with Frank Nagle, the focus shifts to the role of individual-level diversification in research. They employed a matching procedure and exploited the unexpected adoption of Microsoft Kinect as a motion-sensing technology in research.

The study found that diversified researchers were more successful in exploring new areas than their more specialised peers.

The study also holds practical implications for entrepreneurship and investment strategies. Diversified researchers, analogous to

entrepreneurs with a broad skill set, were more adept at integrating new, unfamiliar technology into their repertoire.

Startups

In the context of startup environments, which thrive as inherently explorative, having a diversified team may enhance adaptability and innovation. Investors might benefit from funding teams that have diverse backgrounds, especially in industries where technological disruptions occur frequently.

Both studies highlight the intricate balance between specialisation and generalisation in the realms of entrepreneurship and business.

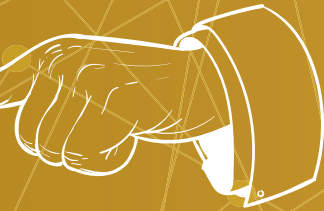
While the first research suggests that the industry's pace of change should guide whether specialists or generalists are more valuable, the second research extends our understanding by showing that diversification within a team or individual can result in better adaptability and successful exploration of new opportunities.

Businesses and investors can capitalise on the above insights and utilise a nuanced approach in selecting leaders, collaborators, or projects to invest in incorporating the current and projected pace of industry change, as well as the benefits of a diversified skill set for innovative performance.



Investment only bears fruits when one carefully studies the sector into which they are pouring their money. PHOTO/COURTESY

Reach Dr Scott on @
ScottProfessor.com



Emotional intelligence: Why it is the in-demand skill at most workplaces

Emotions. Emotional intelligence helps career people to use their emotions to achieve desired results through meaningful connections and collaborations.

BY WANGU KANUR

Ever sat in an interview and the interviewers questioned you on how you handled criticism, disputes, and complaints? Did they ask you to walk with them down memory lane when you had a conflict with your former employer or supervisor?

In such situations, the commonly asked question is, "What do you do when under pressure?" Employees often give responses such as, "I stay calm or I avoid pressure," to show they can work optimally in a powder keg situation.

However, contrary to the perception, such questions are aimed at gauging how one is aware of their own emotions and those of others, how one can recognise and regulate behaviour and manage their emotions to adapt to different environments.

Simply, interviewers seek to gauge the interviewee's emotional intelligence.

In today's high-pressure workplaces employees have had to take on an extra workload, especially after the last few years of cost-cutting.

Having an emotionally intelligent workforce minimises chances of conflict, and ultimately ensures that productivity is maintained, if



not enhanced.

At the crux of emotionally intelligent employees is self-awareness. They are alive to their moods, emotions, personalities, strengths, weaknesses, and reactions to the whole spectrum of triggers. They can perceive, interpret, demonstrate, control, and use emotions to communicate with and relate to others effectively and constructively.

Emotional intelligence helps career people to use their emotions to achieve desired results through meaningful connections and collaborations.

Irene Mugambi, a coach affiliated with US-based GiANT International shares that emotional intelligence can be gauged through individual assessment as well as how one is leading those around them.

"Triggers are your kryptonite

and it is not enough to be aware of them but also how to mitigate them," she explains.

For instance, she points out that laid-back people who are emotionally aware of themselves may slack at their duties and not get worried but this might not be the case with others.

With emotional intelligence tests being readily available on the internet, one can understand their personalities and work on how to better themselves and their relationships with colleagues.

However, while emotional intelligence is key, overuse or inappropriate application can deliver inconsistent outcomes with Ms Mugambi cautioning that not appreciating every person's unique personality can be detrimental.

"Ability to respect others despite differences in opinions is a

safeguard from going overboard or doing too little," she cautions.

An emotionally intelligent leader approaches every interaction with a measure of curiosity, a desire to learn, and to actively listen.

An organisation that encourages its staff to take emotional intelligence assessments stands to gain as employees first become self-aware of themselves and then of others.

With mental health being among the biggest challenges in today's workplaces, having emotionally intelligent workers also goes a long way toward promoting overall well-being. Cultures that generally train for, or equip their employees in the area of emotional intelligence also reap quite a lot of documented benefits.

"In such cultures, iteration of business ideas and innovation and business agility is higher. Employees are more engaged because as we know, people follow or engage because of their leaders. This is a big indicator of productivity," she

shares.

Can emotional intelligence be learned?

Ms Mugambi says that since emotional intelligence is an 'ability', there is room for development. "Everyone can interact and become more aware of it," she adds.

So where do we draw the line between being emotionally intelligent and vulnerable?

Though emotional intelligence employers dare to experience their emotions that leave them a bit more vulnerable in light of the skill, empathy is a key factor when it comes to connecting with employees.

This stems from allowing oneself to connect from vulnerability. However, this does not mean (over) sharing what you have been through rather opening up to experiencing emotions that will allow you to connect to the other person authentically and truly.

Be it as it may, vulnerability also calls for taking difficult stances, when need be, holding someone accountable or calling out inappropriate behaviour at work as well as having difficult conversations with employees.

Psychiatrist Carl Jung shared, 'Who looks outside, dreams; who looks inside, awakes' a clarion call to be emotional intelligent by understanding ourselves so as to be able to know what we need to do first to ourselves then like a mirror reflecting to others.

Extracted from Business Daily

DEVELOP GOALS

With mental health being among the biggest challenges in today's workplaces, having emotionally intelligent workers also goes a long way toward promoting overall well-being. Cultures that generally train for, or equip their employees in the area of emotional intelligence also reap quite a lot of documented benefits.

How managers can increase their business awareness

BY DAVID J. ABBOTT

What is the sound of one hand clapping? How do managers and organisations change for the better? "Those who never change their minds, never change anything," said Winston S. Churchill.

Just as there is no clever answer to the Zen koan, shifting performance in companies, NGOs and donors is equally perplexing. Both questions require a sense of stillness, an awareness, with the hope for a flash of enlightenment.

In management, awareness is everything. After all, if you are not aware of something, does it exist? Breakthrough products and services came about because their originator saw something different, they had an awareness of an unmet need, a customer's irritating problem, that others had not

noticed.

From the iPhone, M-Pesa to Chat GPT, they provided a simple solution to a problem that the competition ignored, or was not aware of. One of the operating principles of being human is: we think we are always right. This survival mechanism is quite useful, for instance, each time you sit on a chair in a conference room you believe it will support you, it won't fall apart.

All those almost unconscious actions we take based on [usually correct] assumptions allow us to go about our daily lives. But the breakthrough comes in business when we begin to question those fundamental assumptions. And, ask why does it have to be this way?

"The smartest people are constantly revising their understanding, reconsidering a problem they

thought they'd already solved. They're open to new points of view, new information, new ideas, contradictions and challenges to their own way of thinking," remarks Amazon's Jeff Bezos.

And science backs him up. A series of experiments published by the Harvard Business Review show that while changing your mind might make you seem less smart, changing your mind is actually smarter.

DEVELOP GOALS

Being in the present, we notice that our minds are like music blaring, loud hooting matatu, frantically lurching forward to escape the traffic jam. Or like a ravenous monkey in a fruit tree, constantly swinging from branch to branch. After 5, 10, 15 minutes eventually the mind calms down.

ally smarter.

Case in point is, that entrepreneurs who adapted, revised and changed their positions during a pitch competition were six times more likely to win the competition. In lean startup business lingo, this is the ability to pivot, to change direction.

Being right is tied up with our egos, our self-identity. The big boss, is always right, infallible. Yet it is that humility, that ability to say "I was wrong" that makes an effective manager. Paradoxically, it is in that moment of self-awareness, that they gain the respect of their staff.

To build the essentials of trust and rapport one must show vulnerability, and it is in that 'opening up', that showing weakness, that people begin to trust. The funny thing about trust is that it takes time to gradually accumulate,

but can be lost in an instant. Push pause to move forward

So how does one become aware? Imagine it is only the present moment that exists. For some, this will be tough to admit. We are all so tormented by past memories and experiences in business that drive us, yet do they exist?

Can you put your finger on them and hold them in your hand? Yet, strangely, for many they are very real, existing in one's mind, with those past corporate upsets pushing their way into the present.

For a moment, to move forward one has to stop. Simply close one's eyes and breathe in and out, and focus on one's breath, inhaling and exhaling.

David is a director at aCatalyst Consulting

Embrace, challenge, transform: The future of digital banking and transacting in Africa



Digital access to financial services in Africa is at a ripe stage. PHOTO/COURTESY

Digitalisation. Now more than ever before, digital access to financial services in Africa is at a ripe stage.

BY MPUMELELO MAKHUBU-MUKOGO
editorial@ug.nationmedia.com

Banking in Africa is on the brink of its next transformative era. Gone are the days of discussing the Fourth Industrial Revolution as a concept; we are already immersed in a world augmented and powered by artificial intelligence (AI), Big Data, and cloud computing.

Now, the next frontier beckons, with generative AI, secure online watermarked fingerprints and cryptocurrencies taking centre stage.

Africa has demonstrated its propensity for embracing technology, particularly in the financial services sector. With around 8 out of 10 people on the continent owning mobile phones and over 570 million people online in 2022, up 470 percent from 2010 (a significant contrast to the global increase of 159 percent), access to information and services has become easier.

Now more than ever before, digital access to financial services in Africa is at a ripe stage. However, to further and continue this digital transformation journey, we must solve the existing infrastructure challenges, collaborate more and strengthen institutional connections.

Embrace

To remain relevant, banks and central banks must evolve to embrace and adopt the opportunities presented by new technologies such as blockchain, mobile money and cloud technology.

However, new opportunities also come with risks, which require updated regulations that are effective but do not stunt innovation especially those that are being driven by fintechs. Fintechs should not be seen as threats, but as partners that could help established players in meeting the needs of customers.

On a continent where physical cash still accounts for more than 70 percent of transactions, there is a tremendous opportunity to apply lessons learned from Mobile Money adoption and get more people into the banking economy in a safe and accessible way.

Mobile Money solutions are among the fastest-growing payment methods on the continent, and we can make the next exponential step by leveraging these Mobile Money solutions beyond just payments or peer-to-peer transactions.

Africa has a young, digital-native and rapidly urbanising population, the continent is a hotbed of start-ups and fintechs helping solve financial challenges and many countries and territories are easing regulations to speed up technological adoption in banking.

We need to embrace technology as we always have, while learning from the other early adopters to produce the best new-age solutions for our customers.

Mobile Money solutions have vast potential to evolve into more complete banking products, including lending, saving and investing – and banks must lead in that charge.

Challenge

There is arguably no market in which the growth of – and demand for – more inclusive and accessible financial services is more prevalent than in Africa. Our rapid commercial growth and globalisation over the past decade have made more inclusive financial services even more critical.

The growth of Small to Medium Enterprises and entrepreneurship in

RELEVANCY

Digital Banking solutions which will matter now and, in the future, are those built by not only leveraging emerging technology but through collaboration between traditional incumbent banks, central bank regulators, and fintechs in solving the challenges which inhibit access to financial services in and outside of Africa at true scale.

570
MILLION
PEOPLE ONLINE
IN 2022

several African countries and accompanying innovation in fintech – particularly blockchain technology – has the potential to drive the improvement of financial infrastructure across the board.

As Standard Bank, we are no strangers to peer-to-peer (P2P) payments, which have been widely used to enable informal and small business ventures at the heart of many African economies by easing the logistics and cost of payments.

It is no wonder that Africa's cryptocurrency adoption rate was 1 200 percent between June 2020 and July 2021, with more than \$100bn worth of cryptocurrency payments made to Africans during that period – the bulk of which were remittances.

Another key area that needs development is efficient and lower-cost cross-border payments to facilitate Intra-Africa trade as well as trade outside of the continent.

One solution that seeks to address the Intra-Africa need is the Pan African Payment and Settlement System (PAPSS), which enables cross-border instant payments across African countries, without the complexity, time and money it takes to make these payments using traditional correspondent banking methods.

With PAPSS, participants do not need to first convert local currency to a hard currency like USD as an expensive, time-consuming intermediary step when making a payment to a participant in another African country.

Wide adoption of PAPSS across the continent will revolutionize payments on the continent and contribute towards economic growth. It is for this reason that we as Standard Bank South Africa, have signed a memorandum of understanding to be one of the banks providing settlement of these transactions. We also aim to be a participant bank in most of the markets we operate in.

Several African countries have seen a rapid uptake of cryptocurrencies as a means to access more efficient payment rails provided by blockchain networks and yield returns on income with assets like Bitcoin or Stablecoins, which are designed to maintain stable value through being pegged to an asset such as the US Dollar.

Because of the volatility of cryptocurrencies, the real potential for increased financial inclusion in Africa lies in the blockchain infrastructure that underpins them, rather than in the currencies themselves – Stablecoins aside.

The distributed ledger system can instantly eliminate fraud and human error in transactions and foster transparency in financial records, which can enable the creation of corruption-resistant and robust welfare systems.

It can also provide mechanisms for fair and transparent microfinance and increased purchasing power, to support the creation and growth of small enterprises that serve communities.

Blockchain technology can kickstart new trade opportunities between nation-states and give Africans the opportunity to take part in a technological revolution and form part of the decentralised economy.

At Standard Bank, we are starting to make significant progress in leveraging blockchain and smart contracts via our Aroko payment platform.

This end-to-end digital payment solution uses distributed ledger technology, with its smart contract capabilities, to enable businesses to have automatic foreign exchange (FX) payments and settlement.

We also provide FX and money markets products to innovators via our world-class application programming interfaces (APIs), where we are able to provide both indicative or executable FX and money market rates through direct integration with customers' systems.

Transform

Where, then, does that leave traditional banking? It's clear that the answer is not to compete with fintechs nor ignore these 4IR technologies, but rather to complement and use these technologies through participating in our own right, and via partnerships.

Digital Banking solutions which will matter now and, in the future, are those built by not only leveraging emerging technology but through collaboration between traditional incumbent banks, central bank regulators, and fintechs in solving the challenges which inhibit access to financial services in and outside of Africa at true scale.

Ultimately, the aim is to contribute towards sustained economic growth and development in Africa, and we are likely to move towards this faster through partnerships with these start-ups, MNOs and fintechs, which are often more innovative and agile in solution delivery.

By layering a culture that supports agility and measured risk-taking on top of a base of sound technologically innovative solutions, we can set alight the true potential of Africa.

Makhubu-Mukogo is the Head of Digital at Standard Bank Global Markets Digital Solutions.