Can Africa rise again?

THE FUTURE OF WORK
HOW TO USE TECHNOLOGY TO BUILD BETTER WORKPLACES

THE 4TH INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION
ASSESSING THE RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES
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JANE NOTTEN
Editor

There was a video doing the rounds on YouTube recently of a robot opening a door for another robot. It stirred a heated debate on social media and even made it onto the Trevor Noah show. Was this a totally creepy vision of a dystopian tomorrow or as Noah said, was it just a polite robot?

Regardless of what any of us think of it, Artificial Intelligence (AI) and the 4th Industrial Revolution are pretty much happening – and we need to be re-evaluating technological advances as both an opportunity and a risk, not only for society and for current and future leaders, but also for the GSB itself. As a leading business school in Africa, the school needs to not only keep abreast of developments but also prepare future leaders to operate in an unknowable future.

In February, golden alumni of the 1967 MBA Class specifically requested an update from the school on how it is approaching this challenge and Professor Ralph Hamann presented an overview of this, showing how the school is innovating what is taught to prepare students for risks and opportunities and how things are taught by expanding into blended learning with a mix of on-line and face-to-face offerings. You can read a summary of this event on page 4 of this issue.

Another important contribution that the school can make around this issue is through providing thought leadership to the public and private sectors. And in other articles, we showcase this at various faculty members give more deeply into the GSB’s response to the 4th Industrial revolution from Professor Kurt April’s piece on the Future of Work (page 20) and Associate Professor Mlenga Jere’s piece on marketing challenges in the age of technology (page 18) to Kumushile West’s view on how to future proof your organisation (page 14). Ralph Hamann’s piece (page 22) urging developing countries to wake up to the risks and opportunities of new technologies also provides a comprehensive overview.

We also bring you several stories of how GSB alumni are innovating in the world of work and capitalising on the opportunities that technological advances bring. From Pygmyio, an innovative online platform that seeks to “put EQ into everyone’s pocket”, to the WasteShark – a drone that cleans up plastics on our seas – these are really inspirational and uplifting stories that I am sure you will enjoy.

JANE NOTTEN
Editor

GSB hosts first African MBA World Summit

The UCT Graduate School of Business hosted the 2018 MBA World Summit, an event that harnessed the collective thinking power of 100 MBA students from top global business schools.

One hundred MBA students from the world’s best business schools were in Cape Town in March to attend the 3rd MBA World Summit – an event that set out to empower exceptional students to act as global change agents and contribute their collective experience toward changing the world for the better.

With a focus on creating impact, the Summit aims to leave a lasting legacy for local communities wherever it is held. Participants of the 2018 Summit were paired with 30 local entrepreneurs to collaboratively explore short, medium and long-term practical solutions for their business obstacles and challenges, particularly in a township environment.

Hosted by the UCT Graduate School of Business (GSB) from the 14-16 March, this was the first time the event was held in Africa. Participants split their time between the school’s campus at the V&A Waterfront and its satellite site embedded in the community of Philippi – 30km away.

Dr Kutlwano Ramababa, director of International Relations at the GSB, said that the school was well placed to host a summit of this kind that combined global thinking with local relevance. “As one of only three business schools in Africa to have triple-crown accreditation the GSB’s international credentials are well established,” she said. “In hosting this event, the GSB drew on its five decades of experience in pioneering business education in Africa and our strong focus on creating sustainable impact for business and society, which made the school a perfect fit for the MBA World Summit.”

Raymond Ledwaba, a GSB alumnus and the local organizer of the Summit, said that the event has contributed to the GSB’s status as a global player. “It demonstrated that we can host prestigious international events and bring thought leaders from across the world to South Africa,” he said. “It is important to note that this was also an African event, with African and South African students participating and contributing to a valuable global network.”

International mobility is a growing theme for MBA students who need to be able to demonstrate a global mind-set. Events like the MBA World Summit are life-changing and career-boosting.

Yannick Reiss, co-founder of the Summit, believes that the essence of the Summit rests on the diversity of its participants. This diversity creates a space for collaboration, global networking, peer-learning and a multi-disciplinary approach to global problems. As this year’s event took place in Cape Town, Ledwaba said it was an opportunity to do things differently and expose participants to South Africa’s unique context. Students spent two days at the GSB satellite site in the community of Philips (GSB Solution Space), a space that was established to enhance the school’s commitment to developing socially relevant solutions to South African challenges.

Local entrepreneurs participating in the event brought real-life challenges to the table and engaged with the students in an intensive, facilitated process. The collaboration kick started a three month programme, that will be managed by the GSB Solution Space Philips and give the Summit and stakeholders the opportunity to track the real impact made in these businesses and communities going forward.

Dr Ramaba said that aside from the positive impact the Summit will have had on local entrepreneurs, participating students will have benefited enormously from the international exchange of ideas and networking with their global counterparts. “International mobility is a growing theme for MBA students who need to be able to demonstrate a global mind-set. Events like the MBA World Summit are life-changing and career-boosting,” she concluded.

Ledwaba added that as Africa has four of the fastest growing economies in the world, the Summit was a good platform to explore the endless opportunities that abound on the continent. The 2018 Summit was made up of participants from 39 international business schools. Each year a maximum of 100 students are selected from over 2 000 applicants who undergo a rigorous multi-stage selection process.
How to respond to the age of massive disruption

Golden MBA alumni from the class of 1967 engaged with Professor Ralph Hamann on what it means to live and work in the age of AI during their class reunion in February.

Darren Ravens Telling the GSB’s stories

As South Africa’s oldest business school, the UCT Graduate School of Business (GSB) is rich in the transformative potential and newly appointed marketing manager, Darren Ravens, is looking forward to being part of the team that tells them.

Ravens brings a wealth of experience in e-commerce, online marketing and brand management to his new position. A former brand manager for Zando and head of eCommerce at Bata South Africa, he also co-founded the digital marketing consultancy Black Lotus Network, and was an integrated marketing manager at 24.com, a digital publisher that forms part of the Media 24 group.

Several months into the job, he says he finds more reasons every day to be excited about his new role. “It is a very dimulating place to work and a great industry to be in. The GSB, in particular, is a very exciting environment.”

People are attracted to stories because we are wired to relate with others. Human beings have been telling stories from the moment we could talk!

He adds that while it is great to be working with a strong and established brand like the GSB, the entrepreneur is very competitive and no business school can afford to rest on its laurels. “We have to be working constantly to ensure that the positioning of the school is aligned with its strategic objectives. We have to keep our finger on the pulse of what the perception is in the market and ensure that the brand responds to what is happening out there.”

Ravens is himself an MBA alumnus of the school – graduating seven years ago – and so he has both an inside-out and outside-in perspective on the school. “I know that the value of the MBA is undisputed and that it had a significant impact on him personally and professionally. The skills that I gained at the GSB have carried with me. And the ones I most value are the interpersonal skills and skills to manage relationships, these are really vital if you want to climb the ladder in any organisation.”

Ken Dreyer, a 1967 alumnus now living in Boston, shared his experience of working with a B Corporation as a way in which the business world might look to other models to mitigate the risks of job losses in the continual quest for profit. B Corporations are for-profit companies, certified by the global non-profit B Lab to meet standards of social and environmental performance and accountability. “If you look at B Corporations bottom line performance, they often out-perform companies that don’t do this,” he said.

Hamann agreed that businesses that value people, as much as profit, may gain a competitive advantage in that consumers may support organisations that build local communities and are seen to value and reward their people. The 4th Industrial Revolution is clearly both an opportunity and a risk, not only for society and for current and future leaders, but also for the GSB itself. “To deliver agile individuals and organisations fit for the future, Hamann concluded that the GSB is responding to the current environment in several ways. “The GSB is staying abreast in our research, innovating in what we teach to prepare students for risks and opportunities in the way we teach by expanding into blended learning with a mix of online and face-to-face offerings, and finally, by continuing to provide thought leadership to the public and private sectors.”

Artificial intelligence (AI) is changing the way we live and work: And while many analysts are hopeful and excited – saying change could enhance quality of life and widen access to essential services – it is hard to ignore the dangers of job losses and an increasing concentration of wealth and power. As part of the discussion, Hamann shared his experience of working with a B Corporation as a way in which the business world might look to other models to mitigate the risks of job losses in the continual quest for profit. B Corporations are for-profit companies, certified by the global non-profit B Lab to meet standards of social and environmental performance and accountability. "If you look at B Corporations bottom line performance, they often out-perform companies that don’t do this," he said.

Hamann stressed that technology itself is not to be feared, and that there is no way of predicting how technological advances will affect individuals or organisations. He added that history is full of examples of pandemics or crises that are worse than the digital age. "The 2001 World Trade Centre fires in New York, for example," he said. "They still won’t hold up after the first six months. People will get tired of staring at a plywood box every night.”

A recent McKinsey report also shows that while there has always been a fear of technology and how machines might replace jobs, over time, these technological advancements often lead to new industries and increased job creation. “However, the issue here is the time lag. People will not have these new jobs straight away, and they will require different skills to perform them,” said Hamann.

The best way to face the AI challenge is therefore to keep abreast of innovation and to empower organisations to be agile and adapt to change, said Hamann. The focus for individuals and organisations should be to put in place structures which re-kill people and social and environmental performance.

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The UCT Graduate School of Business (UCT GSB) has cemented its international reputation as one of the top business schools in the world by again being awarded the AMBA accreditation from the Association of MBAs, which will be effective for a further five years.

“The AMBA accreditation is vital to us as a business school,” says Dr Kulwano Ramabosa, director of International Relations at the UCT GSB. “It is one of the highest standards of certification in postgraduate business education and only the best business schools in the world are so honoured with it.” The UCT GSB is one of just three business schools in Africa with triple-crown accreditation, which means that it is accredited by the three largest and most influential business school accreditation associations.

Dr Ramabosa says that accreditations are an endorsement of the quality education that the business school strives to provide while increasing the school’s visibility internationally. “This gives us the opportunity to attract more international students and faculty. The world is now globalised and it is imperative that we expose all students to diverse perspectives and cultures in order to enrich the learning experience by avoiding the assimilation trap and prepare them to operate successfully in any environment.”

He says the school is also aligned with attracting and arranging international exchange partnerships with good schools in different regions as they are often used as one of several criteria giving a guarantee in the quality of education.

**HELPING CLIENTS ACHIEVE THEIR STRATEGIC GOALS**

From a pan-African leadership programme for a high end bank to a programme to help school principals in the Western Cape be more effective in the day-to-day running of their schools, the GSB’s development team is delivering learning experiences across multiple sectors, catering for local and global clients.

“Customised programmes speak to our respon- siveness, not only to what needs to be taught but also to where and how learning can take place around business demands,” says Rayner Canning, Business Development Director at the GSB. “Our goal is to help clients achieve their strategic goals and we work with them in ways that suit them best to make sure we deliver the desired impact.”

The GSB runs an Executive Development Programme for ADMAs in Port Elizabeth, an example of our commitment to local leadership development.

Programmes offered from targeted short courses and formal academic qualifications such as the Postgraduate Diploma in Management Practice (PGDip), the Postgraduate Diploma in Advanced Management (PGDipAM), the Master of Business Administration (MBA), to the full-time Master of Science (MSc) programme, target a wide range of students.

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**GSB BIDS FAREWELL TO FOUNDING DIRECTOR OF THE BERTHA CENTRE**

Dr François Bonnici, founding director of the Bertha Centre for Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship at the UCT GSB stepped down at the end of March, marking the end of a highly successful seven-year tenure at the helm.

The Bertha Centre was established in 2011 as a partnership between the UCT GSB and the Bertha Foundation and it has made a key contribution to the ongoing mission of the GSB to become a more relevant business school in Africa.

“The UCT Graduate School of Business and the Bertha Foundation would like to thank Dr François Bonnici, for his dedicated work in establishing what is now one of the leading centres for social innovation in the world,” says former director of the GSB, Mills Soko.

While the blog states that François and the Bertha Centre team have made an indelible impact on the GSB, they also note the importance of the centre in advancing social innovation in Africa.

**NEW COURSE TO BOOST LEADERSHIP IN THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY**

Professionals working in the hospitality industry will, for the first time, have access to high-level, industry-relevant learning in South Africa thanks to an innovative partnership between the UCT Graduate School of Business (GSB) and industry players that has seen the launch of a new executive education short course tailor-made for the industry.

“There is nothing like it in the African market and it illustrates the possibilities of collaborative innovation,” says Jonathan Steyn, convenor of the Hospitality Leadership short course at the GSB.

The course fills an educational gap for senior hospitality managers and mid-level managers. Steyn explains, “there is a lot of technical and operational training and education in the hospitality industry. People move up through the ranks, and they are very hands-on, but they haven’t necessarily had the opportunity to develop the conceptual and critical thinking skills needed to make that transition to senior leadership positions.”

Chris Goddren, General Manager at The Peninsula Hotel, who is one of a group of industry leaders who approached and worked with the GSB to design the course contents, says that the course is designed for and by the South African industry and seeks to find innovative solutions for emerging market contexts.

“With the aim of not to tell people how to run a hotel the way we’ve done for 30 years, but to use our experience to address current challenges. Together we can think about and share new ways of doing things,” says Steyn.

The longer-term goal is also to create a body of leadership knowledge that will pass down to future leaders, says Michael Pownall, Managing Partner at PMR Hospitality, who also collaborated on the course design.

The course stresses the importance of innovation in leadership and strategic thinking. “It encourages blue ocean thinking, especially around how to deal with disruption in the industry and also focuses on sustainable innovation in balancing social, environmental and economic purpose, for example how to manage the current Cape water crisis,” says Steyn.

The Hospitality Leadership short course ran from 8-16 June in Cape Town.

**NEWS ROUND-UP**

**UCT GSB gets AMBA stamp of approval**

The UCT GSB has become one of just three business schools in Africa with triple-crown accreditation, which means that it is accredited by the three largest and most influential business school accreditation associations.

“Other GSB clients include global heavyweight McDonald’s, the Tweenier Group and Cell C. It’s important to note that we don’t only cater for high-profile corporations,” says Canning. “Our Principals Management Development Programme, a highly successful collaboration with the Principals Academy Trust in the Western Cape is an example of our commitment to local leadership development.”

“Through research, the school is committed to participating in leading international scholarly conversations,” says Dr Ramabosa.

**SOUTH AFRICA’S OLDEST BUSINESS SHORT COURSE CELEBRATES ITS 100TH INTAKE**

The Programme for Management Development (PMD) at the UCT Graduate School of Business (GSB) is the longest continuously running business short course in South Africa and this September it celebrates its 100th intake. The GSB launched PMD in 1968 two years after its pioneering MBA, at a time when there were just two business schools in South Africa.

“Fast-forward 50 years and Executive Education in South Africa is now a fiercely competitive, multi-billion Rand industry,” says Kurneeneh West, Director of Executive Education at the GSB.

West says that it is a tough but exciting environment to operate in. “You have to be ahead of the game,” she says. “Yes we get to draw on our five decades of experience at the GSB, but we cannot rest on our laurels!” She adds that PMD has stayed the distance because it has been able to reinvent itself as the years have gone by. “The need for management development is a constant,” she says, “though what is required of managers and leaders has changed over time. Today’s working environment is different, an exponential rate thanks in part to the rise of AI and digital technology – and business schools have a duty to keep ahead of this curve.”

Jenny Boxall, who convenes the PMD agrees. “Financial acumen and technical expertise are still rated highly in workplaces, but research shows that managers with self-awareness and self-knowledge are more effective and better able to lead productive teams in today’s workplaces. The course is therefore putting even more emphasis on self-awareness and understanding of the way people communicate, how messages are interpreted and how this process can be improved upon.”

The WEF Future of Jobs report puts people management, emotional intelligence, and coordinating with others in top 10 skills list required to be successful in 2020. While some people are naturals when it comes to these so-called softer skills, most benefit from guidance in developing them, says Boxall. “By gaining insight into your own strengths and weaknesses and becoming attuned to your blind spots, solid people skills are developed that make us better at relating to others as well.”

The 100th intake of the Programme for Management Development runs in September in Cape Town. The programme will also be offered for the first time this year at the GSB’s Johannesburg office in Sandton.

For more information on upcoming GSB short courses. Contact us on:

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Can Africa rise again?

Africa has an opportunity to ride the wave of recent political reform and leadership shifts to boost economic growth, but questions remain as to whether the continent can achieve the necessary diversification of its economies and capitalise on the adoption of new technologies offered by the 4th industrial revolution to catch up with the rest of the world.

By Bekezela Phakathi

Recent political changes in Africa have sparked optimism that the continent, once perceived as a hopeless region, is on the rise again. Angola’s Jose Eduardo dos Santos and Zimbabwe’s Robert Mugabe both vacated office in 2017 after a combined 75 years in power.

The new leaders of the two Southern African nations, Joao Lourenco and Emmerson Mnangagwa, have both promised to root out corruption, open up their economies, and create a business-friendly environment to attract investment and create jobs. In South Africa, the continent’s economic powerhouse, the election of Cyril Ramaphosa as president following the reluctant resignation of scandal-ridden Jacob Zuma earlier in 2018, promises to kick-start the country’s struggling economy and avoid a further credit ratings downgrade.

According to the World Bank, growth in Sub-Saharan Africa is estimated to have rebounded to 2.4% in 2017, after slowing sharply to 1.3% in 2016. The rise reflects a modest recovery in Angola, Nigeria, and SA – some of the region’s largest economies – supported by an improvement in commodity prices, favourable global financing conditions, and slowing inflation that helped to lift household demand. Growth in the region is projected to continue to rise to 3.2% in 2018 and to 3.3% in 2019, on the back of firmer commodity prices and gradually strengthening domestic demand. However, growth will remain below pre-crisis averages, partly reflecting a struggle in larger economies to boost private investment, the World Bank notes.
It is imperative for business schools on the continent to drive this message home: Africa is rising once again and is an ideal place for business. Higher education can be a key driver to narrow the gap between African countries and developed nations via targeted skills development.

But sustained economic growth on the continent has largely been elusive, in part because of the over-reliance on commodities, which are vulnerable to price shocks. For the better part of the last decade, Africa’s economic growth has been driven by its export of primary goods, particularly in terms of job creation.

However, in order for these countries and the broader continent to realise their full potential, diversification of the manufacturing sector and the adoption of technology will be key going forward, according to Dr Greve Chebla, senior lecturer in economics at theUCT Graduate School of Business and Associate Professor Mills Jolo, former director of the GSB.

The two co-convened a short course on the Political Economy of Doing Business in Africa as part of the March 2018 GQAM Global Network Week, which unpacked these issues for a class of international students.

**DIVERSIFICATION ESSENTIAL FOR SUSTAINED GROWTH**

Diversification of African economies is essential to drive growth, build market resilience and reduce the shocks in the face of different global economic conditions. To economically rise, a country has to produce sustained growth well into the future, China being a classic example. Sustained economic growth is important as it improves incomes and thus the livelihoods of the populace, says Dr Chebla.

Noucha Abdassadou, an analyst at Informes, a business research company focusing on Africa and the Middle East, has argued that many African countries are still battling with issues related to the first, second and third industrial revolutions such as electricity meshing of production and automation. Therefore, questions about Africa’s preparedness for the 4th industrial revolution (a digital revolution that is fusing the physical, digital and biological worlds) are being raised. Is Africa catching up with the continual advancement in technology?

“The few cheap labour to natural resources, Africa’s current strengths seem to match with the fundamental needs of the 4th industrial revolution that consist mainly of colossal investment capital required to research and development (R&D) and highly-skilled talent. However, the ongoing industrial revolution represents an opportunity if used well, that will enable Africa to become a major player in the world economy,” says Abdassadou.

According to a report by PwC, there is evidence that Africa is embracing new technologies in a way that sets the continent apart from others and with the potential to transform African economic prospects, create new target markets and unprecedented consumer choices. The continent is also less constrained by legacy than other regions, creating a clean sheet upon which innovators can develop new business models and blur industry boundaries.

With agriculture being the largest employer in Africa, innovative technology is increasingly important to modernise the sector and improve the livelihood of a large farming community. Innovation in education, healthcare, energy and finance also offers a significant opportunity for the continent. However, it is already unfolding. In the past two decades, financial innovation has increased exponentially, says Ms Chebla, and it is changing the very concept of a banking-centric financial system and African innovation has been at the forefront of some of these advances—think of M-Pesa in Kenya for example.

**CASHING IN ON THE DEMOGRAPHIC DIVIDEND**

Thus, despite some of these concerns about the hurdles impeding Africa’s economic growth, there are encouraging signs that the continent could establish itself as a major economic powerhouse. According to Dr Chebla, there is growing appetite amongst the investment community to venture into the continent, and a young and rapidly expanding population and middle class means Africa has an opportunity to reap the demographic dividend and become a new powerhouse of production and consumption in the 21st century, just as Asia did in the late 20th century, says Chebla.

He says most countries on the continent now have stronger democracies, there are fewer internecine wars and stronger institutional and regulatory frameworks, and banks (which could explain why most African countries have recorded single-digit inflation rates recently). Concerns that have held Africa back have largely been loosened. The continent basically now has all the pre-conditions of setting the continent apart from others and with the power to drive change and development to eradicate inequality and poverty on the continent.

The definition of wealth can be as debatable as that of inequality however, in monetary terms wealthy individuals, known as high net worth individuals (HNWIs), demonstrate that despite some present investment and future appetite from South African HNWIs, the lack of marketing and information provided by fund managers and investment advisors appears to be hampering further uptake.

Global asset and wealth management trends are pointing to an increased demand for these approaches to investment among HNWIs. European surveys have pinpointed HNWIs as an important agent of change and acceleration of sustainable finance notably around sustainability and impact investing. A similar survey in South Africa on a database of more than 800 HNWIs, demonstrates that despite some present investment and future appetite from South African HNWIs, the lack of marketing and information provided by fund managers and investment advisors appears to be hampering further uptake.

Undoubtedly, top fund managers in Africa who are leading the way on sustainable and impact investing could do a better job to connect their private wealth clients to the positive financial and sustainable impact they could achieve for the continent through their wealth— without sacrificing returns.

Much also still need to be done to make sure that the wealthy African elite—young and old—are aware of the options available and that they understand that they themselves hold a good deal of power to bring about positive change in their respective countries and on the continent as a whole. Wealthy investors should be asking more questions of their fund managers as to where their funds are being invested and ideally leading by example, in investing for impact and steering the continent towards a brighter future.

The goal of sustainable finance is to allocate more capital towards retum-generating opportunities in the real economy in a manner that achieves sustainable development goals such as fighting social inequality or climate change, promoting gender equality and biodiversity. This is not only a European or US trend. According to the latest African Investing for Impact Benchmark, as of the end of 2017, more than US$ 4.5 billion in investment assets in the Sub-Saharan regions of East, West and Southern Africa were allocated to investment strategies which seek to generate social or environmental impact whilst generating investment returns. However, the investing for impact industry is still in its infancy on the continent.

The Barometer, which was published by New Bery Centre for Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship at the UCT Graduate School of Business, reveals that while investment opportunities in sustainability and impact themes such as renewable energy, agriculture, inclusive financial services, socio-economic transformation as well as infrastructure exist, they are still largely untapped.

A new generation of High Net Worth Africans could provide the financial muscle Africa needs to shift its fortunes.

By Stephneine Gampferdg and Xelga Galdarj
Innovation and education go hand in hand

Innovation is increasing exponentially and the world our children and grandchildren will know is one we cannot conceive of now. But it’s also true that “the world” is not homogeneous, and that as we innovate, we must be mindful of development objectives. We need to guard against leaving people behind!

The risk is real. According to a new report from economists Anton Korinek (Johns Hopkins University) and Joseph G. Stiglitz (Columbia University), economic inequality “is one of the main challenges posed by the proliferation of artificial intelligence and other forms of worker-replacing technological progress.”

Artificial intelligence advancements are likely to increase the disparity of wealth between the rich and poor — already a worsening global crisis. A recent report from Credit Suisse found the richest 1% own half of the world’s wealth and a new analysis produced by the House of Commons library says that they own enough to own two-thirds by 2030 unless action is taken.

Short of changing the rules of the economy, one way to guard against this growing divide is to invest in education to prepare young people more effectively for this unknown future.

Education is essential for the continent’s development under any circumstances, and yet worryingly, 17 million out of 128 school-aged children across Africa are unlikely ever to see the inside of a classroom — according to an analysis from Save the Children. Another 37 million children won’t be able to receive regularly at least a basic education because of child labour, insecurity or weak education policies.

Even more concerning is the prediction from the International Commission on Financing Global Education that even for those who are in formal education now, without major shifts in how we use our educational resources, by 2030 half of all the youth — over 800 million young people — will not have the skills needed to keep up in a new economy.

Artificial intelligence advancements are likely to increase the disparity of wealth between the rich and poor — already a worsening global crisis.

Much needs to change, not only in what we teach — the commission recommends a breadth of skills are imparted to children including critical thinking and communication skills — but also in how we teach. Here the application of new technology to learning offers huge opportunities, from enhancing learning to improving data collection to driving down costs.

Africa is one of the fastest growing markets for mobile phones and mobile EdTech or m-learning. As a result, it has one of the fastest growing e-learning markets, with revenues reaching USD 355 million in 2013 and will more than double to USD 758m by 2018, led by Senegal, Zambia and Kenya.

We must pour our energy into creating the conditions that will support access to education — this includes actively promoting partnerships and investment in education innovation to facilitate an expansion of educational opportunity.

Innovation is helping to ensure that Africa’s children can receive the education they deserve, and educated Africans in their turn are driving innovation. It’s a cycle of excellence that we need to invest in to ensure that nobody is left behind as the 4th industrial revolution gathers pace.

Craig’s Slimkop, an educational app for children under the age of seven which is available for under R40, the free Vodacom e-school, which is also zero-rated, meaning it doesn’t incur data charges; and Thinkahead, a PDF document listing iPad apps by subject and grade.

Then there are apps that specifically encourage science learning in young students; for example one by Toca Lab, which gives children aged seven and up an interactive tool to help them learn about the periodic table and figure out their own virtual laboratory experiments, and EveryCircuit, which has a free version and teaches learners about electric circuits. Cape Town based Pathik Education, a mobile platform, pushes content to instant messaging platforms, while the web platform is used in schools, improving dramatically the engagement of learners. Eflflf Corp, an education and training company for tertiary institutions, has been producing e-learning materials to support students from all walks of life.

And it is not only the private sector that has been working hard. In the Western Cape, for example, the provincial education department has been rolling out a R1.2 billion e-learning initiative over a five-year period and across the continent governments are embracing technology, providing laptops in schools and committing to Sustainable Development Goals with ICT at the heart. It is exciting to see. In a very real way, education drives innovation and development, and so innovation must drive education. It is a cycle of excellence that must be encouraged.

Of course there are still many obstacles to technology-enabled education on the continent from a lack of access to electricity to low internet and mobile penetration. Currently, just 3% of the continent can rely on a permanent access to the Internet. According to the GSMA Intelligence Mobile Economy report for 2017, mobile penetration in South Africa is particularly high, with Nigeria coming in second, South Africa has 37.5 million unique mobile subscribers and 64% penetration rate, followed by Nigeria’s 86 million mobile subscribers, and 49% penetration. But just four other countries have managed over 20 million subscribers, namely Ethiopia, Kenya, the DR Congo, and Tanzania.

An important priority must therefore be to drive greater mobile access for all Africans. We must pour our energy into creating the conditions that will support access to education — this includes actively promoting partnerships and investment in education innovation to facilitate an expansion of educational opportunity.

We need to believe, as the International Commission on Financing Global Education Opportunity does, that it is possible to create a learning generation where all people have the skills needed to thrive in the 21st century and nobody is left behind as the 4th industrial revolution gathers pace.

By Yv Mills Simo

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Three truths to future proof your organisation

By Kumeshnee West

Automation, artificial intelligence and emerging technologies are changing our world and redefining the future of work. Organisations need to gear up to manage this transition wisely and this starts with understanding the new rules of the game.

The 4th industrial revolution has the potential to disrupt every industry in every country through large-scale automation, adoption of emergent technologies, big data and artificial intelligence. There are many predictions and estimates on how this will affect labour markets, but one thing is certain – the jobs we do, and the skills we need to perform them, will change, and rapidly.

A McKinsey report estimated that by 2030 at least one-third of the activities of 65% of occupations could be automated. This means that globally up to 375 million people may need to change jobs or learn new skills. A World Economic Forum report predicted that current trends in a disruptive labour market could lead to a loss of 7.1 million jobs in the next five years, two thirds of which are in administrative roles. And a study by Oxford University estimated that 47% of total employment in the United States is at risk due to computerisation, given that automation and computerisation are no longer confined to routine manufacturing tasks. Big data and artificial intelligence are allowing a wide range of non-routine cognitive tasks to be performed by machines.

While this may sound catastrophic, the good news is that just because large-scale automation may redefine the workplace this does not necessarily mean we will all be out of a job. Changes in technology also create new jobs and spawn new industries. The challenge is going to be ensuring that workers have the skills they need to transition to different jobs. The 4th industrial revolution poses a risk to job security only in the sense that not managing this transition can lead to greater unemployment and social inequality.

If up to 65% of the jobs of tomorrow don’t exist yet – it is impossible to “train” people in the conventional sense. Rather we need to invest in their essential capabilities. In approaching what lies ahead, managers and leaders should consider the following three truths.

1. TALENT WILL BE MORE IMPORTANT THAN CAPITAL

Klaus Schwab, chairman of the World Economic Forum believes that “in the future, talent, more than capital, will represent the critical factor of production.” To make sure they are ready for a future that is still emerging, organisations and people need to be adaptable, innovative and responsive. If up to 65% of the jobs of tomorrow don’t exist yet – it is impossible to “train” people in the conventional sense. Rather we need to invest in their essential capabilities.

To ensure we build talent that is capable of mastering change we need to invest in resilient leadership and emotional intelligence. Leadership skills are not tied to particular jobs or industries and solid leadership development provides the kind of transferable skills likely to be needed in the future. The WEF identified the top 10 skills that will be most needed in 2020 as complex problem solving, critical thinking, creativity, people management; coordinating with others; emotional intelligence; judgement and decision making; service orientation; negotiation and cognitive flexibility.

A World Economic Forum report predicted that current trends in a disruptive labour market could lead to a loss of 7.1 million jobs in the next five years, two thirds of which are in administrative roles.

2. EDUCATION NEEDS TO BE FLEXIBLE TOO

The WEF report recommends that organisations embrace talent diversity, leverage flexible working arrangements and incentivise lifelong learning to best manage the changes ahead. Lifelong learning and executive education certainly have an important role to play in a rapidly changing job market, and these programmes also need to be flexible and adaptable to students’ and organisations’ needs.

In another survey by the Financial Times, researchers found that one in three employers struggle to find suitable candidates for the modern workplace and that functional skills in which MBAs are traditionally strong – such as finance and marketing – were becoming less useful to them than so-called soft skills. The employers surveyed said the ability to work with a wide variety of people (cited by 76%) and the ability to prioritise (cited by 72%) along with the ability to solve complex problems, were among the most prized skills – and the hardest to find.

These essential skills have long been part of most good leadership development, MBA and executive education programmes – and they will need to be scaled up. Business schools must ensure they are graduating the kind of managers and leaders needed in the real world of work.

3. THE LINK BETWEEN EDUCATION AND BUSINESS IS A TWO-WAY STREET

The format of what is being taught needs to be flexible but so does the content.

As the WEF report suggests, education systems need to be re-designed if we are going to tackle the transitions ahead. This entails businesses, governments and educational institutions working together to provide curricula that meet current and future needs. The McKinsey report suggests that governments have a role to play in maintaining economic growth, scaling job retraining and workforce skills development, and providing income and transition support to workers whilst retraining. But they cannot do this on their own.

Educators supply industry with critical skills, and industry has a hand in shaping the talent pool and informing educational institutions of the changes they foresee and the skills they wish to develop. Businesses that invest in long-term partnerships with educational institutions to develop skills and respond to changes in the environment will stand a better chance of building a workforce that is future proof, suitably skilled, adaptable and ready for the challenges that we collectively face. As the African proverb goes: If we want to go far, we need to go together.
Putting EQ in everyone’s pocket

An artful combination of film and neuroscience through technology has birthed Mygrow, The Emotional Intelligence Platform. Co-founded by MBA alumnus, Mark Baker, and incubated at the UCT Graduate School of Business Solution Space, Mygrow has a bold vision for helping individuals and corporates to flourish.

Improving EQ skills is hugely beneficial for individuals and organisations, as it can boost productivity by as much as 40% and have a profound effect on organisational culture and staff retention.

Mark Baker is an organisational psychologist who believes that navigating your way through life is an emotional skill. He says, "Emotional Intelligence (EQ) impacts every aspect of our lives." Unfortunately, many people are lacking in critical EQ competencies such as self-motivation, emotional regulation, interpersonal competencies, decision-making and the ability to manage stress.

Baker wants to change this. In 2016, he put his money where his mouth was and, with one of his oldest friends, Theron Knighton-Fitt, co-founded Mygrow – an innovative and fast-growing online platform that is changing the landscape of EQ development. Mygrow targets both individuals and organisations and works to develop EQ skills at the physiological level using a set of daily exercises that rewire the neurological architecture in the emotional centres of the brain.

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"Improving EQ skills is hugely beneficial for individuals and organisations, as it can boost productivity by as much as 40% and have a profound effect on organisational culture and staff retention," he says.

The vision was "to put emotional intelligence in everyone’s pocket." Baker describes Mygrow as "leveraging technology to do everything that an organisational psychologist would typically do in an organisation, at about a tenth of the cost, with a much wider reach and richer data."

The start-up was incubated in the Solution Space at the UCT Graduate School of Business (GSB) and already services clients across the organisational spectrum.

After completing an Honours degree in psychology at UCT in 2003 and a Master’s in organisational psychology at Stellenbosch in 2006, Baker spent a decade working in leadership development through organisational programmes and individual coaching. He noticed that many EQ interventions were not creating lasting impact. "I noticed that there would be a powerful initial impact on people's lives, but they would revert to old habits, or the organisational culture would drag people back into doing what they had done before."

"I started researching the neuroscience behind EQ and realised that the pedagogy used in traditional training and development had to change. Developing EQ, according to neuroscience, is like developing a physical competency such as physical fitness or playing a musical instrument. You need to exercise or practice over and over again – over a long period of time. Traditional EQ development approaches are a bit like reading a Men’s Health Magazine and hoping to develop a six-pack!"

Baker realised that there is no affordable way of developing EQ skills if you rely on the traditional model of sessions with a psychologist. "We have seen reconciled marriages, better family relationships, stronger teams, and some massive improvements in many aspects of their lives," Baker says. "People are literally changing from the inside out."
A delighted customer is your best marketing tool

In a high-tech world the opportunities for ecommerce entrepreneurs are seemingly endless. But to grow their bright ideas into sustainable businesses, they have to know how to market them – and it starts and ends with the customer.

BY DR MLENGA JERE

Technology has become an incredible business enabler. It has not only reduced barriers to entry for entrepreneurs in many markets, but also created new ways of reaching customers.

We’ve seen the huge success of innovations like Uber that allow people to receive services on demand. The internet has also given businesses the ability to offer their products and services directly to consumers without the need for bricks and mortar shops.

The opportunities in ecommerce are so rich that new ideas seem to be launched every day. The best of them challenge traditional markets and disrupt the way that competitors are used to doing business.

Take Utyre for example – a tech start-up in Cape Town that has turned long-established business models in the tyre industry on their head. When South Africans have needed new tyres, they have always had to take the time to drive their cars to a fitment centre, where they invariably wait an hour or more for the work to be done. Nobody thought of taking this service to the customer. Until now. Utyre takes orders online, where customers can search for and choose the tyres they want, as well as where and when they want them fitted. A mobile fitment unit goes to wherever it is convenient for the client.

It’s a great idea, and one that has already proven successful in Australia, which is where Utyre’s founder picked up the model. However, the question that it and other businesses like it have to answer is how do they turn their idea into something sustainable and successful?

Such businesses have very little in the way of competitive advantage. The model is easy to replicate and is therefore extremely vulnerable. If the established companies in the market feel threatened by the upset, they could easily start their own, similar offerings, probably with far more capital behind them.

The power of first mover advantage

The one thing that disruptors do have in their favour, however, is first mover advantage. As the first company to bring a concept to market, they have some leverage. And it’s important for them to use this head start to build their brands in a way that will help them remain robust. The only way to do that is to have a strong value proposition and delight the customer so that they not only have return business, but their customers become their best marketing tools.

This is easier said than done, because a new business in an untapped market faces real challenges. For a start, they are immediately competing against established companies with big brands that might have a strong physical presence and a fair amount of customer loyalty.

Customers are also used to doing things a certain way. They know how things work in the traditional industry and unless they have a dramatically bad experience, is there enough incentive for them to try something new?

For many people, ecommerce businesses also cause some anxiety around the safety of their information. There is still resistance to entering details like credit card information online, and the recent revelations about Uber’s data breach and cover up will do little to alleviate this concern. Uber Technologies Inc. paid hackers $100,000 (R1,389,670) to keep secret a massive breach that exposed the personal information of about 57 million accounts of the ride-service provider it emerged last November.

In essence, the challenge facing the ecommerce start-up is building trust. They have to show that what they are offering is credible, that it delivers an experience superior to what customers are used to, and that it can do so repeatedly.

Social media is obviously an ideal platform for ecommerce businesses, since it is cheap and reaches an audience already using internet services, but start-ups also have to be careful about how they use it. What people want is authenticity. Customers are becoming increasingly sceptical about what businesses say about themselves, and rather looking for independent voices on social media.

This is true even when those voices are people they don’t know. This is the concept behind ratings sites like TripAdvisor. Potential customers may not personally know any of the people who have reviewed the restaurant they are thinking of visiting, but they trust their feedback far more than the restaurant’s own marketing material.

Few industries have the equivalent of TripAdvisor; however, start-ups like Utyre therefore have to encourage their customers to spread the word on their own. They have to provide an avenue that encourages customers to talk.

While social media is powerful, it is not likely to be enough on its own. Start-ups need to find a multi-channel approach that engages people in other ways too. Whether that is through traditional media like radio, or identifying opportunities to reach potential customers in places where they are likely to be receptive to the idea.

In the case of Utyre, the company has distributed air-fresher tags that double as tyre tread depth indicators through a local car wash. It’s an innovative way to reach the kind of customer they are likely to attract – someone who wants convenience, values service excellence, and probably has a low interest in the technical details when it comes to their car.

Crucial in any marketing campaign however is to make sure that when you do attract customers you deliver what you promise. If you give them more than they expect and encourage them to share that experience with others, you will have turned your customers into your most potent promotional tool. And for any start-up, that is marketing gold.

This article is based on a case study written with MBA student Warren Gatcke. The case study is one of ten recently published by the Case Writing Centre of the OCT GSB as part of a wider aim to increase the amount of African-centric, professional teaching material for business schools around the world.

Making tracks

A delighted customer is your best marketing tool

The ecommerce entrepreneur needs to appreciate that their early customers are a precious resource and it’s critical that they are not disappointed because they will spread the word either way. Word-of-mouth is powerful in the early stages of any business and is even more so in an untapped market. Potential customers will care a lot less about what the business is telling them about itself than what they are hearing from others. Increasingly this is not just in personal interactions, but on social media. The things people say on Facebook, Instagram or Twitter have become vital in building a brand.

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In essence, the challenge facing the ecommerce start-up is building trust. They have to show that what they are offering is credible, that it delivers an experience superior to what customers are used to, and that it can do so repeatedly.
The 4th Industrial Revolution is here. Recent reports have listed some 30 top companies that have already placed machines in key functions, and chatbots are widely moving from basic support roles into mentoring and counselling. To make sure these technologies build better workplaces, we will need leaders with more humanity and less ego.

**BY KURT APRIL**

**The future of work**

**Fun and games and a healthy dose of humanity**

The faster technology advances in the workplace, the greater the need for highly skilled individuals who can manage these processes. There is a need to retrain staff and employees to embrace these new ways of working.

As AI and other technological developments means humans no longer need to be effective.

But AI is not just going to benefit robots, it also benefits human employees. Human beings are becoming increasingly comfortable with the use of chatbots in their everyday lives, for instance, to the extent that some are even beginning to demand them in the workplace. According to Facebook Vice President, David Marcus, there are now more than 100,000 chatbots on the Facebook Messenger platform.

**NEW WAYS OF WORKING**

With progress, it is always a reality that some skills will be replaced. Major companies such as Petronas in Malaysia have already installed robots to complement humans in some key functions – for example, in the Treasury Department. Other organisations such as Nokia have implemented robot technology at manufacturing sites around the globe, in logistics and mobility roles.

In 2017, MSN reported on 30 companies – among them Amazon, GLH, Uber, Tesla, and Target – that have installed robots in key functions, alongside a prediction that robots would take over a large proportion of roles within the next 30 years.

**FUNDAMENTAL CHANGES ARE COMING**

The 4th Industrial Revolution will be no exception. Game-changing developments can be expected and significant adjustments will need to be made. For companies and employees alike, it is a mixed bag – but one filled with immense possibility.

Already, some of these disruptions can be observed as a new wave of AI technology impacts the workplace. The world of gaming in particular is making its presence felt in this space, with many companies gamifying the user experience with a variety of online offerings, whether it be in sales, mock-up of experiences, storytelling or client solutions collaboratively modular learning by employees, or even incentivising goals and KPIs for employees.

**FUN AND GAMES**

The world of gaming has also penetrated the workplace. Many companies are gamifying both the customer and employee experience. For customers, it can create a positive experience and drive higher engagement with the brand.

For employees, there are many benefits, including skills development. Gaming has been shown to increase motivation and productivity, encourage creativity, improve communication, increase engagement, improve innovative dynamics, grow specific skills, and transmit corporate image.

Moreover, there are personal benefits for employees, such as an improved ability to work well with others. These benefits include adaptiveness with failure, which comes with learning to try again and again; working often in cross-cultural teams or global virtual teams; collaboration; and enriched, highly stimulating or multi-sensory environments.

Gaming can be used for helping employees reach their KPIs, and for tapping into employees’ psychological drivers – a fundamental shift in how we view productivity.

**IS THERE A ROLE LEFT FOR LEADERS?**

Naturally, there are safety considerations when one operates in the online sphere. There are ethical considerations, as well as possibilities of cyber breaches and data security. More specifically, hierarchal structures and interpersonal relationships within workplaces are being considerably when not only human beings are employed.

The impact of AI and other technological developments means humans no longer need to lead human only – distributive leadership can now be achieved between human and machine – and traditional notions of place and space no longer apply, as remote, flexible or constant work schedules become even easier. Traditional hierarchical and linear models of leadership may no longer apply as workplace structures change.

So how do leaders navigate these changes with integrity and still provide positive, impactful and ethical leadership? Leadership training is also affected. Traditional topics of leadership must be re-examined through a new lens. How do we lead in virtual environments? How do we lead across cultures? How does technology enable teamwork? Does the traditional notion of a team still exist? How do shared leadership roles work?

When we discuss communication and dialogue, how do we re-frame our discussions taking into account the impacts of these new technologies? How do we re-imagine our working and personal identities in this new world? Our sense of community and belonging? How do we communicate internally and externally, and how do we enrich multi-person, interpersonal dialogue with the many new avenues open to us? For example, when one brings in discussions with, or design of, a chatbot – communication requires an entirely new angle. And that is before we have touched on the considerable impact of social media, gaming or the control of our personal data and privacy.

These are all questions we do not have the answers to yet, but which must be grappled with as the working world continues to change, and as business schools continually invite debate on and dialogue with regard to these important challenges.

Meanwhile, leaders will need to balance the exciting possibilities of technology with the development of people. The World Economic Forum points out that while we don’t need everyone to be a software engineer, we do need employees who can learn, who can share, who can connect the dots and build good relationships with colleagues inside and outside of the organisation. Just as important, we need employees who understand how technology and society interact to drive progress for all stakeholders.

And if we need employees who can do all of that, then we need leaders to match. We will need to find new ways of learning and now more than ever, leaders will need to develop their inner resources to be effective.

Currently the signs are good that the digital age can help us to reinvent the workplace for the better to build more inclusive, productive, creative workplaces that are more attractive to employees. But to achieve all of that we are also going to need leaders who balance the benefits of AI with a healthy dose of humanity.

As the WEF’s Professor Klaus Schwab notes, “We need leaders who are emotionally intelligent, and able to model and champion co-operative operating. They’ll coach, rather than command; they’ll be driven by empathy, not ego. The digital revolution needs a different, more human kind of leadership.”
Developing countries need to wake up to the risks of new technologies

While the 4th industrial revolution holds out hope for advancing economic and social development in developing countries, the risks and benefits of what it may bring need to be carefully weighed up – and the bulk of responsibility for this lies with governments.

BY RALPH HANSSN

Technological advances associated with the 4th industrial revolution – including artificial intelligence – allow the automation of an increasingly wide array of processes in increasingly interactive and sophisticated ways. These advances will likely give rise to many opportunities for economic and social development in developing countries, for instance by increasing food production.

But the new technologies also involve important risks, which have special significance in developing countries. They may build upon and exacerbate existing inequalities – both within developing countries as well as between developing and more developed regions.

Three of these inter-related risks are worsening unemployment, increasing economic concentration, and the spread of biases in influential algorithms. They will manifest in different ways and require different responses in diverse contexts. A cross-cutting problem is that too few developing country governments are giving these risks serious attention.

Risk 1: Worsening Unemployment

The concern that new technologies – especially artificial intelligence – will lead to widespread job losses has been widely discussed. Of course, the fear that new technologies replace workers is an old one. But it’s been pointed out that historically new technologies have often given rise to more new jobs than the ones that have been automated away.

What’s perhaps different now is that the new, interconnected digital technologies will likely have a broader and more far-reaching array of abilities. And so the prospect of new kinds of jobs may well be diminished or limited to increasingly sophisticated domains, such as machine learning.

In addition, new technologies are not just replacing jobs, but they are also enabling the disruption and restructuring of entire industries. For instance, Uber has already pulled the rug from underneath the conventional taxi industry in many places. Imagine the possible consequences of Uber’s shift to driver-less cars. Lower labour costs in many developing countries mean that investments in job-replacing technologies will be lower. But other aspects of developing countries’ contexts increase the possible severity of this risk.

Risk 2: Increasing Concentration of Wealth

Many developing countries are characterised by high levels of inequality within their populations. Elites within these countries will be more likely to make use of AI and other new technologies. This will further increase returns to capital widening the gap between elites productive capacity and that of everyone else. A similar effect is likely at a global level. It’s no coincidence that Russia’s President Vladimir Putin has identified AI as the new terrain for global competition between nations.

New technological advantages for capital are not just due to increasing productivity, but also because they allow new business models that may control or even dominate entire sub-sectors and stifle competition. For instance, it could become possible for a single company to control large fleets of automated vehicles in one or more large areas.

A cross-cutting problem is that too few developing country governments are giving these risks serious attention.

Again, much will depend on whether states can keep up with these developments and respond effectively. Particular attention will need to be paid to intellectual property and competition law. For instance, the strict enforcement of intellectual property rights for AI algorithms may well support increasing economic concentration. It’s also likely that national governments may have less and less influence over such decisions and trends. Even so, many developing country governments are not giving these developments their due attention.

Risk 3: Biases Baked into Algorithms

Finally, the AI algorithms that are at the centre of the 4th industrial revolution will reflect and perpetuate the contexts and biases of those that create them. Difficulties faced by voice recognition software in recognising particular accents are a relatively innocuous example. Of course, the promise is that AI will enable such systems to learn to address such issues. But the learning process itself might be influenced by racial, gender or other prejudices.

AI algorithms are developed almost entirely in developed regions. Thus they may not sufficiently reflect the contexts and priorities of developing countries. Ensuring that AI algorithms are appropriately trained and adapted in different contexts is a part of the required response. It would be even better if developing countries become more engaged in the development of new technological systems from the get-go.

Governments Need to Act

These three risks require that academics, businesses, and civil society actors attend to the role of new technologies in developing countries. But a special responsibility lies with governments. For the most part, they seem to be distracted. Governments ought to carefully assess the above risks in their national context and then establish corresponding policies and programmes. This includes: national skills development and work placement platforms, intellectual property and competition policies, and local technology adaptation and development.
The one thing that will boost your chances of getting a job

In the age of job insecurity, study exchange programmes and international experience will elevate your employability. Up to 80% of employers look for people who have worked or studied overseas.

BY AMENA HAYAT

It is estimated that graduate unemployment in South Africa is at about 7%. That means that close to 600,000 graduates are unable to get a job – despite having a university qualification. Having a CV that stands out from the crowd can be tricky – unless, it seems, you have some international experience to show.

Whether you were able to study abroad, went on an exchange programme to another country or did a module of your course at a partner institution, research shows that this is one thing that could improve your chances of getting the job you want. According to the QS Global Employer Survey Report, more than 80% of 10,000 employers in 116 countries on five continents said they looked for graduates who studied overseas. Six out of 10 companies also gave extra credit for an international student experience.

This report also showed that the industries where international experience was most helpful were energy, hospitality, electronics, and technology, as well as finance and management.

STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES ARE INCREASING

The good news is that in line with employer interest in international mobility, graduate schools are taking steps to ensure that their students have access to international opportunities. Exchange programmes are common in most good business schools. Some have even formed themselves into associations that are dedicated to this purpose. The Global Network for Advanced Management (GNAM), by way of example, is a network of 32 global business schools that was founded on the premise that enterprises need leaders who understand how markets and organisations work in increasingly diverse and complex contexts.

Each year, GNAM organises Global Network Weeks, which give students at network schools the opportunity to travel to another school for a one-week intensive mini-course that takes advantage of localised expertise. This March, more than 700 students travelled to attend one of these weeks at 18 diverse schools including the University of Cape Town Graduate School of Business (GSB) in South Africa, Seoul National University Graduate School of Business in South Korea, IEADA Business School (Santa Fe, Mexico), and Haas School of Business, University of California, Berkeley. The GSB offered a course on the Political Economy of Doing Business in Africa.

While Canada, the UK and the US are still the most preferred study destinations, students are increasingly seeking out opportunities in emerging market countries in Africa, Latin America and the East.

According to a March University World News article, while Canada, the UK and the US are still the most preferred study destinations, students are increasingly seeking out opportunities in emerging market countries in Africa, Latin America and the East. Fast growing emerging markets in the Asia-Pacific, Latin America, Africa and the Middle East are increasing the capacity of higher education systems to attract international students, encourage student exchange and boost economic growth.

People with international experience are easy to appoint

It is much easier to appoint someone who already has inter-cultural skills and international experience, and studying abroad is an avenue where you can gain recognised international experience. According to the IE (Institute of International Education), overseas study is a top skill for employers who are interested in people with a diverse, global background. One of their studies states that international study gives job candidates an important edge – adding to their CV qualities like adaptability, practical knowledge and experiences that enhance their professional skills and improve their career productivity.

At the 2017 IE Generation Study Abroad Summit, it was shown that knowledge from study abroad also led students to landing more jobs. “Now more and more, companies are no longer just looking for technical skills; they are also putting a greater focus on an employee’s ability to speak another language, demonstrate respect for others and cope with cultural differences,” writes Eric Friedman, CEO of IE & ISN Corporation.

If you get an international opportunity – grab it

Living abroad builds personal maturity, develops resilience and broadens perspectives – all key leadership qualities that employers, especially multinationals, look for in their top executives. International experience impacts on attitude and behaviour, shaping awareness and sensitivity to other cultures and diversity, and improves vital communication and relationship-building skills.

So, if there is one thing you can do to improve your chances of getting your dream job – especially in an age of increasing job insecurity – it is to demonstrate that you are internationally savvy. Make sure you take advantage of study abroad opportunities or even perhaps learn a foreign language. These markers can be used as leverage to advance your career and job search.

Because an international work force is good for business

The value of having employers who are culturally sensitive and attuned is obvious – particularly for multinational corporations working across various borders.

While digital solutions can help to bridge the gap – with meetings held via Skype, keeping in contact through WhatsApp and Facebook – technology cannot replace a human presence when building relationships, getting to know a foreign culture and forging the kinds of partnerships that especially joint ventures need to survive.

HR specialist and author Frank Horwitz, who convenes a course on strategy HR at the UCT Graduate School of Business, says between 30-70% of joint ventures fail due to cultural differences as a result of poor communication, a lack of sensitivity and awareness, labour tensions and operational stresses.

However, putting in place policies around international mobility is complex and is thus a key challenge facing the HR industry today. Companies know that the ability to offer compelling global opportunities is likely to attract the top talent and top talent will allow them to close skills gaps and fuel business growth around the world. However, international assignments impose immense cost on the organisation and increased stringency on labour laws in many countries do not make the task of sending assignees abroad easy.

In the age of job insecurity, study exchange programmes and international experience will elevate your employability. Up to 80% of employers look for people who have worked or studied overseas.

By Amena Hayat
Using blockchain to stamp out development aid fraud

Participating in South Africa’s first-ever Blockchain Hackathon organised by Linum Labs and UCT, MBA student and Solution Space scholar Rufaro Masiwa and her team designed a platform to reduce corruption and fraud in the development aid sector.

Though the claim that 70% of aid budgets are “stolen off the top” has been widely debunked, it is sadly undisputed that the loss of aid to theft and fraud is a cause for concern across the developing world. In a worst-case scenario some 30% of aid is lost to corruption and fraud, then-UN secretary-general Ban Ki-Moon pointed out at a high-level social panel on accountability and transparency in 2012.

It was this figure that inspired Rufaro Masiwa, a modular MBA student at the UCT Graduate School of Business (GSB), to work on developing a more secure solution to help donors transfer monetary aid to beneficiaries. Some of the MBA’s core learning goals include understanding the leadership challenges of diverse national and international environments, as well as sustainable development issues and the role of business in promoting these, so her concern dovetailed with her work in the classroom. But Masiwa really got to develop this idea when she was selected to participate in Africa’s largest Blockchain hackathon Unblock the Block hosted by Linum Labs and UCT research institute the African Institute for Financial Markets and Risk Management (AIFMRM) earlier this year. The 10-day event was looking to surface relevant blockchain solutions with a positive application on the African continent and saw almost 80 participants from around the world attending.

Masiwa’s team, Funds Aid, built a platform that would help solve the problem of transferring monetary aid from donors to beneficiaries. “Nearly a third of aid is lost to corruption and fraud. Furthermore, sending monetary transfers through traditional banking systems is associated with high transaction costs, says Masiiwa. The solution, therefore, allows users to bypass traditional channels, instead depositing funds demarcated as aid into an escrow account of a partner bank. The solution cuts across many sectors.”

Zimbabwean-born Masiwa, whose Master’s thesis was in health and development, believes the project also illustrates the importance of adopting blockchain technology beyond increasing wealth, but also in creating a better world increasing the transparency in multiple areas and protecting the vulnerable. “Blockchain is effectively increasing the transparency of transactions, reducing transaction costs and increasing access to finance for the world’s most vulnerable people.

Blockchain is effectively increasing the transparency of transactions, reducing transaction costs and increasing access to finance for the world’s most vulnerable people. “It is a disruptive technology with the potential to positively change the lives of Africa’s financially excluded,” Masiwa says. This is particularly pertinent because the continent is more affected by the refugee crisis than any other continent, with South Africa facing a conservative count of nearly half a million pending asylum claims.

In 2017, it was expected that some African regions would receive around $45 billion in development aid. This is the bulk of the $75 billion the International Development Association, or IDA, has budgeted to spend on financing life-saving and life-changing operations over the next three years, in 30 of the world’s poorest, most vulnerable countries.

The overall first prize for the Hackathon was split between two teams: the first winning concept was Proof of Steal, by team Nyka, a platform for investigating and traditional bank transfers, increasing security in other sectors too. “The solution cuts across many sectors.”

One afternoon, while enjoying a cup of coffee at the V&A Waterfront, Richard Hardiman witnessed something that would change his life. He watched two men in a boat, armed with nothing but a pool-net, taking plastic trash out of the water. He recalls, “the wind and tide were pushing vast amounts of rubbish out to sea, and the men didn’t seem to be getting much of it into the boat.” The frustrating inefficiency of this process really bothered Hardiman and he couldn’t let go of the thought “surely there must be a better way to do that.”

Fuelled by curiosity, he began researching how large cities remove trash from their waterways, and he discovered that there was no other way of doing it. Four years later Hardiman leads Ranmarine, a tech start-up in Cape Town and Rotterdam, inventor of the WasteShark. This remote controlled nautical drone cleans water surfaces in harbours by scooping up waste. Hardiman realised that 80% of plastic waste in the ocean comes from harbours, marinas, ports, and storm water drains and the WasteShark is designed to target these areas.

Currently there are 10 WasteSharks being tested around the world, in India, the Netherlands, the USA and Cape Town’s V&A Harbour. “The compact and agile WasteShark can clean up to two hectares of water at a time and can work for 16 hours a day, it has no carbon emissions and does not harm wildlife. It can also be customised to scoop up chemical spills. Apart from picking up trash, it collects valuable data. Hardiman explains,” versus collected data on water depth, chemical composition and salinity – that’s very exciting from a technological point of view. We can really investigate the quality of our water.”

What began as a curiousity turned into “accidental environmentalism” as Hardiman’s research revealed the state of the world’s oceans: “I began to worry for the safety of our planet. I realised that eight million tons of plastic go into the ocean every year – and this will get worse, tenfold, over the next decade. By 2025 there will be more pieces of plastic in the ocean than there are fish. Our oceans are becoming plastic soup.” He says this threatens our way of life and our food chain. “Fish are eating the plastic and this is returning to us on our plates.”

This sparked Hardiman’s sense of social responsibility. “I knew I had to do something. I guess I developed a guilty conscience, but it spurred me to act, to put my entrepreneurial streak to good use. Also, work is much more meaningful when you are contributing to the greater good.”

Hardiman does not have a maritime or technological background. He began his career as a journalist and moved into radio, as a DJ on KFM and a director at 2OceansVibes, an online radio station. He always wanted to be more entrepreneurial and completed his Postgraduate Diploma in Business Administration at the GSB in 2009. “Going back to study was a seminal moment for me, I knew I wanted to create something to do more,” he says.

We’ve specifically invested in intuitive design for the controls so that anyone without technological experience can operate it. The WasteShark is a drone but it’s designed for humans.

The WasteShark was inspired by the Disney Pixar character WALL-E, a robot left to clean-up earth after humans have gone to live on other planets. Hardiman says he loved WALL-E’s sense of dedication, his determination to do the jobs humans don’t want to do. He acknowledges that there is a lot of fear around AI and robotics potentially taking away employment. “Because the WasteShark is born in Africa, I am very aware of not wanting to take away anyone’s job. Actually, the ports we work in are not comfortable with autonomous vessels as these are heavily congested areas. Each WasteShark provides employment as it requires a remote control operator. “We’ve specifically invested in intuitive design for the controls so that anyone without technological experience can operate it. The WasteShark is a drone but it’s designed for humans.”

In a TedTalk, Hardiman quotes Jacques Cousteau, the famous marine explorer and conservationist, saying “people protect what they love.” What Hardiman may not know is that Cousteau also said “when one man for whatever reason, has the opportunity to lead an extraordinary life, he has no right to keep it to himself”. This certainly describes Hardiman’s remarkable journey.

Self-proclaimed “accidental environmentalist” and GSB alumnus, Richard Hardiman has built a drone, based on a science fiction character, that can clean the ocean.

Saving us from plastic soup

“The GSB is very close to my heart – without it I wouldn’t have had the ability to pull a team together to run a business or to make this happen. The classes and group work gave me the necessary skills, grounding and confidence to free the rest of a safe job and become an entrepreneur.”

We’ve specifically invested in intuitive design for the controls so that anyone without technological experience can operate it. The WasteShark is a drone but it’s designed for humans.
In business, everything is about people

James Espey, OBE and MBA alumnus of the 1968 class, has spent 50 exceptional years in business building brands and people. He talks to us here about the challenges facing a new generation of leaders squaring up to AI.

The world of work is changing. Artificial Intelligence and the 4th Industrial Revolution are bringing many capacity gaps, but what are the knock-on effects from a "human" perspective?

In business, really everything is about people. It is people who make the world work – only people. The problem is that often in modern workplaces people are treated as numbers – but they are not numbers. As a result, you see more and more mental health problems in the workplace. AI and the 4th Industrial Revolution think that we are accentuating this tendency to treat people like numbers and this is concerning.

People are hiding behind tech far too much. There is no doubt it is useful but it should be used as an aid to judgment not a substitute. When I chair board meetings – I make people switch off their phones and I only take a pen and note pad. When I am talking to you, I concentrate on talking to you. People are the capital that make it happen – AI doesn't really change that. I have done a lot of things wrong in my career but the one thing that I am proud of is that I hardly ever lost staff. It boils down to how you treat people.

"Humanness" and "EQ" in the workplace are becoming more and more sought after – how do we develop leaders who want to build their leadership capability in the face of what AI and the 4th industrial revolution are bringing?

Just because certain things will be replaced by machines does not mean we won’t need people anymore. In fact, I think that now more than ever we need good people skills and good self-awareness to be effective in the workplace. The best thing that leaders can do therefore is to build their self-awareness and hone their capacity to work with and influence others.

You have made public that you have suffered more than one mental crisis during your career and one of your key projects now is as President of the Shaw Mind Foundation, an organisation that is dedicated to fighting and redressing mental health issues. Are we looking at an epidemic of stress in the workplace?

One of the things I like least in the world is HR. Don’t talk to me about HR – I call that human remains. If you treat people like numbers – it will have an impact on their mental health. Instead you need to ask; what are you doing for the well being of your staff especially in the age of AI and job insecurity?

What happens in the workplace is that often people are not functioning properly as they are scared to talk about mental health; they are scared to say anything and instead try to live with it. A survey of employees conducted by the Shaw Mind Foundation in 2014 found that 31% said that they would not feel able to talk to their manager if diagnosed with a mental health problem; 23% said that if they told their boss that they were stressed at work, they felt that their ability to do the job would be questioned.

But these are issues that have to be confronted – not only because of the cost to business, but also because of the human cost. The UK economy as a whole is thought to be negatively affected by mental health problems in the workplace by approximately £70 billion annually. In the USA, estimates for the total cost of mental health and substance abuse to businesses annually are considerably higher. Meantime, according to research in Australia, a massive 20% of suicides are linked to work pressures.

Collectively, employers spend upward of $8 billion a year on wellness programmes – yet these underperform by most measures, and barely 25% of employers even try to understand how well their programmes do – according to Harvard Business Review.

Can you comment on this? What should organisations be doing differently?

There is much that organisations can do to deal with this crisis. Managers should be better trained to pick up mental issues and to support staff who are suffering. Additionally, they need to work to reduce the stigma of mental health in the workplace and also ensure that workplaces are not unreasonable. Work hours should be restricted. Consider limiting email on the weekend for instance. In addition, businesses also need to ensure that all employees are engaged in the issue. As employees make up the bulk of any business it is crucial that they also play a pivotal role in supporting each other and building a culture that does not stigmatise mental illness.
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