

Employee

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AFRICA FOCUS

- > McDonald's South Africa & CATHSSETA Partnership
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DRIVING CHANGE AT NACB

MS. OTSETSWE K. KOBOYANKWE
Acting Chief Executive Officer
The National Arts Council of Botswana -NACB

CELEBRATING PROFESSIONALS

- > BAMB Acting CEO, Ms Ruth Seipone
- > Naledi Magowe
- > Samantha Mogwe
- > Thato San Bio



EXPERT ADVICE

- > Hidden drawbacks of Corporate Training
- > The Impact of Cancel Culture on Employee Voice
- > Measuring Employee Satisfaction
- > Navigating the Intersection of Artificial Intelligence



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Acting Chief Executive Officer

The National Arts Council of Botswana -NACB

The soft spoken Otsetswe's decorated and colourful career journey began from humble beginnings. A lawyer by profession, she began her career in 2008 at the Attorney General (AG) Chambers where her duties included provision of legal advice for and on behalf of Government Ministries and departments. During her tenure, she assisted with drafting numerous of pieces of legislation.



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‘My Father’s Shadow’ opens Africa XChange Summit 2025

The first-ever Africa XChange Summit, held October 15–16 during Film Festival Cologne, brought together Africa’s top creatives, tech firms, and investors to shape the future of media and innovation.

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CEO'S NOTE!

MOMPOLOKI MAKWANA
Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
Employee Africa Magazine

– Employee Africa Magazine, Issue 25



Dear Readers,

It is with great enthusiasm and a sense of pride that I welcome you to this latest edition of Employee Africa Magazine. As always, we aim to bring you stories of inspiration, insights into the evolving workplace, and thought leadership that empowers you to excel both professionally and personally.

This issue, our cover story shines a spotlight on an exceptional leader whose journey exemplifies perseverance, integrity, and dedication Ms. Otsetswe K. Koboyankwe, the acting CEO of the National Arts Council Botswana (NACB). Otsetswe's story is not just one of professional achievement but also one of resilience and unwavering commitment to her passions and purpose.

Starting her career as a lawyer in 2008, Otsetswe's journey is a testament to the power of dedication and continual growth. Her early years at the Attorney General's Chambers as Principal State Counsel saw her providing legal advice to government ministries and departments, playing a pivotal role in shaping Botswana's legal landscape. Her expertise contributed to drafting important regulations, including the Botswana Qualifications Authority Regulations, and establishing vital institutions such as the Botswana Teaching Professionals Council. Her work has helped lay a robust foundation for the country's educational and regulatory frameworks, demonstrating her profound impact on national development.

What makes Otsetswe's journey even more inspiring is her transition from law to the arts sector, where she now leads the NACB. Her leadership exemplifies how diverse experiences and a passion for societal contribution can culminate in impactful leadership. Her story encourages us all to embrace change, pursue lifelong learning, and

leverage our skills to serve broader societal goals.

In addition to her story, this issue features her insights on leadership, creativity, and the importance of fostering a vibrant arts industry an essential component of cultural identity and economic development. Her journey reminds us of the importance of resilience, adaptability, and a clear sense of purpose in navigating career paths.

Furthermore, our main Expert Advice articles tackle pressing issues relevant to today's organizations. We explore the hidden drawbacks of corporate training, shedding light on how to make learning initiatives truly effective. We also examine the impact of cancel culture on employee voice an increasingly relevant topic in today's socially conscious environment and share innovative strategies for measuring employee satisfaction to build more engaged, motivated teams.

As leaders, professionals, and change makers, our collective growth depends on continuous learning, embracing diversity, and fostering environments where every voice is valued. I encourage you to reflect on these insights and consider how they can be applied within your own organizations.

Thank you for your unwavering commitment to excellence and for being part of this vibrant community of professionals dedicated to making a difference. Let us draw inspiration from Otsetswe's remarkable journey and these insightful discussions to propel ourselves forward, fostering a culture of innovation, inclusivity, and resilience.

Wishing you an inspiring and productive read.

Mompoloki Makwana
CEO, Employee Africa Magazine

LEADERSHIP WITH PURPOSE

MS. OTSETSWE K. KOBOYANKWE

Acting Chief Executive Officer
The National Arts Council of Botswana -NACB



LEADERSHIP WITH PURPOSE

OTSETSWE KOBAYANKWE
NACB, Acting Chief Executive Officer

The old adage “dynamites come in small packages”, is personified in Ms Otsetswe Keletso Koboyankwe, the Acting Chief Executive Officer of the National Arts Council of Botswana (NACB). A leader with a purpose to position the creative and cultural sector as a key contributor to the economy of Botswana. **WRITES STAFF REPORTER**

Setting the tone and commenting on her leadership and management mantra, Koboyankwe boldly declared “I believe in meritocracy. With a staff complement that is relatively young, it is heartwarming to see young people have the zeal and energy to bring innovative ideas. It is critical to encourage and offer support on the basis of merit,” she mentioned, solidifying her leadership direction filled with purpose and sustainability. Furthermore, Koboyankwe stated that some of the qualities that make her a good leader is the curiosity to learn and constantly improve and the ability to receive feedback and introspect.

DECORATED CAREER

The soft spoken Otsetswe's decorated and colourful career journey began from humble beginnings. A lawyer by profession, she began her career in 2008 at the Attorney General (AG) Chambers where her duties included provision of legal advice for and on behalf of Government Ministries and departments. During her tenure, she assisted with drafting numerous of pieces of legislation. Ms Koboyankwe also assisted in drafting the Attorney General's Chambers Corruption Prevention Committee Code of Ethics. Due to her unwavering commitment, she was appointed a member of the taskforce on the domestication of Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW in Botswana – Gender Affairs Department.

Following her successful stint at AGC, she then joined Civil Aviation Authority of Botswana (CAAB) from 2016 to 2017 as Chief Legal Services Officer and promoted to General Legal Counsel in 2017. She has managed legal and contractual risks and ensured effective enforcement of aviation regulations with decisive follow up, investigations and intervention. Subsequently appointed the Chairperson of the Legislative Review Committee of the CAAB where she championed the review of all pieces of aviation legislation and accompanying



regulations. Koboyankwe has provided legal advisory services at regional and international bodies such as Interim SADC Safety Organisation (ISASO), formerly COSCAP, African Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC) and International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO).

NACB MANDATE

Having joined the NACB in 2023, Koboyankwe leads the implementation of the Council's mandate that includes developing, promoting, and protecting the diverse

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creative arts and cultures in Botswana. In addition, Koboyankwe noted that NACB is tasked with establishing NACB District offices to cater for local arts and culture practitioners and improve on the accessibility of the Council's programmes. It also collaborates and partners with recognized bodies to advance the creative and cultural sector as well as encouraging and facilitating commercialisation of arts and culture through these partnerships.

The determined leader, Koboyankwe, said the strategic vision over the next five years is for NACB to be a sustainable hub for the creative sector. "A hub is a centre or geographic concentration that brings together companies, entrepreneurs, investors and other relevant players in the creative and cultural sector. It is characterized as a vibrant and dynamic business ecosystem, where collaboration, innovation and knowledge sharing are fully encouraged," she said.

TECHNOLOGICAL EXPOSURE

With organisations now tapping into new technologies for driving strategy and vision for growth, NACB is not an exception to technological disruption. "Being at the helm of NACB, I want to build an organisation that makes it possible for Botswana artists to access international markets. I aim to develop policies that encompass digitisation and the use of AI. Supporting digital content creation will accelerate and support the creative economy growth with a consequential positive net effect on the overall GDP of Botswana," she added.

She said she would like to see artists being enabled, to monetise from the TikTok, YouTube and other digital platforms. "Embracing digitization within the creative sector is critical. For example, embracing non-fungible tokens (NFTs) to represent digital drawings, paintings, music, films, poetry or even books. By using NFTs artists can sell or rent their artworks."

SUCCESSFUL PROJECTS

Delving into how successful NACB has been under her leadership, the visionary Koboyankwe said "I have less than 2 years overall in NACB with approximately eleven (11) months at the helm of the organisation. During the past eleven (11) months; I have managed to implement two critical programmes that are part of the transitional plan between our parent Ministry and the NACB." The strategic programmes include the following:

Arts and Culture Grant

According to her, the NACB Arts and Culture Grant aims to support the creative economy in the development, promotion, and preservation of the creative and cultural industries in Botswana. The grant, she said, supports individual artists, groups, and organizations that contribute to the growth and development of the arts in Botswana.

Koboyankwe said financial support will be allocated to projects that align with the NACB strategic priorities.

In addition, she said NACB also has a Mobility Grant which aims to provide financial support to individuals or a group for travel locally, nationally, regionally, and internationally for participation in forums that develop and promote the arts and culture sector. Through the Mobility Grant, Koboyankwe revealed that they have managed to support artist travel around the world for different events flying the Botswana flag high.

For example, she said:

Mpho Sebina was facilitated to attend the 67th Grammy Awards in Los Angeles, United States of America. Mpho Sebina was voted in to the Grammys Recording Voting Academy in 2024, the first ever Motswana to do so.

Similarly, NACB funded Ms Masego Mohwasa and Ms Lerato Orapeleng to attend the Africa Magic Viewer's Choice Awards (AMVCAs), in Lagos, Nigeria, where their film "Mokwalo" was nominated. This is testament to the NACB's support to artist travel outside Botswana to go showcase authentic Botswana stories. Ms Koboyankwe reaffirmed NACB's commitment to uplifting the creative industry by supporting local filmmakers to represent Botswana in global stages such as AMCVAs, Cannes Film Festival.

Last but not least, NACB through its collaboration with The Republic of Estonia, will facilitate the screening of a local film Baratani [Hill of Lovers] at the Black Night Film Festival in November 2025. The Black Night Film Festival is an annual film event held in Tallin Estonia where participants get the opportunity to attend Business to Business meetings with fellow filmmakers, distributors, and other industry players. PÖFF is one of the biggest film festivals in the Northern Europe.

In November each year it brings the newest and most fascinating examples of the world's cinematography together with international film makers to the doorstep of local viewers. Around 4000 film festivals are held all over the world each year. Only 15 of them have received the A-category certification from the International Federation of Film Producers' Associations. PÖFF belongs to this A-category together with Cannes, Berlin, Venice, and other leading film festivals of the world.

NACB has also managed to fund the attendance of Ms Sello, the producer of the local film "Baratani".

Sponsored through the Arts & Culture Grant, a young Motswana was assisted to bring Hollywood star Ms Megan Good to come interact with Botswana film makers at the Dreamers Exchange Festival 2025.



Shaka iLembe Masterclass

Furthermore, Koboyankwe said NACB in collaboration with MultiChoice Botswana proudly hosted a Masterclass featuring the esteemed producers of Shaka iLembe, Ms. Desiree Markgraaf, CEO and Mr. Jacob Ntshangase, Head of Research both from The Bomb Shelter Film Company.

This engagement, she said, brought two of Africa's leading creative minds to Botswana to share their expertise and experience with our local filmmakers, writers, and storytellers. It forms part of NACB's broader commitment to fostering regional and continental connections that place Botswana's creative industries at the heart of Africa's cultural dialogue.



National Arts Festival 2025

"The Council recently took over the National Arts Festival from our parent Ministry. The competition is a national event that brings the entire nation together in the spirit of celebration. It is the pinnacle of the heritage month and a platform for showcasing the cultural diversity that Botswana prides itself in," said Koboyankwe.

She said not only does the nation celebrate, but the artists are also rewarded for their talent and the unwavering commitment that they consistently display in the various fields of artistic excellence.



Création Botswana

She said Création Botswana is a programme jointly implemented by Creation Botswana, supported by a tripartite; Alliance Française de Gaborone, the National Arts Council of Botswana, and the French Embassy in Botswana aimed at supporting and scaling up entrepreneurs in the fashion and textile industry in Botswana. The programmes objectives are to:

- Stimulate and support of fashion entrepreneurship;
- Bolster the fashion in Botswana;
- Promote international cooperation and business development;
- Connect fashion entrepreneurs with their peers in Africa and Europe;
- Strengthen Botswana-France relations;
- Encourage sustainable practices in fashion entrepreneurship.

"The Council is grateful for the French Embassy for its support both financially and technically by providing global expertise to train Botswana to become successful fashion entrepreneurs," she asserted.





WORD OF ADVICE

Her word of advice to the arts and culture community is that it takes patience, humility and a lot of prayer to serve within the creative and cultural sector. She said the creative and cultural industries have traditionally not been given the due recognition and respect they deserve as key players within the economy of Botswana. “Art in Botswana was never recognised as an avenue through

which one could earn a living from as opposed to teaching, medicine and law. This has led to an entrenched malignment of artists, yet every aspect of our lives revolves around art,” she said. “I have learnt to listen more and embrace the ideas they bring to the fore.

It is the ideas that the artists have that can bring to fruition the aspirations of our government to see the creative and cultural

“Art in Botswana was never recognised as an avenue through which one could earn a living from as opposed to teaching, medicine and law.” – Koboyankwe

industries be a large contributor to the national GDP.”

Lastly, Koboyankwe said aspiring leaders must learn to take advice and the support offered by the forerunners within the sector.

FUTURE OF ARTS

Koboyankwe said as the Acting CEO of NACB, she would like to see major policy shift within the sector to create pathways that will facilitate and enable artists to tap into vast opportunities that already exist. She stated that there is a great need to enact laws that would enable the sector to thrive. According to Koboyankwe, many developed countries thrive on the creative and cultural sector, adding that there is need to unlock the nightlife economy in Botswana. “By night fall Gaborone becomes quiet, all activity dies down. This is in sharp contrast to developed countries where cities become a beehive of activity at night once the “formal” economy closes down,” she said.

To close the glaring gaps, Koboyankwe said NACB will position artists and creatives at the centre of the economic ecosystem in Botswana.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

She said her biggest challenge has so far been inadequate funding to satisfy the demands by the artists. For example, as we administer the Art and Culture Grant, there is a huge demand for funding support.

“We are unable to fund all exceptional project proposals that we receive. We currently receive a grant amounting to P4 million. Our last Art and Culture Grant call received a total of 489 submissions with a funding need of approximately BWP 89 million. We were only able to fund 33 projects,” she said.

She added: “Despite this, we are working tirelessly to solicit funds from the private sector and international partners to enable the Council to continue supporting, developing and promoting the creative industry locally, regionally and internationally.

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EXPERT ADVICE





The Impact of Cancel Culture on Employee Voice and Workplace Dynamics

In recent years, cancel culture has become a hot topic, affecting not just social media discussions but also workplace dynamics. It's reshaping how employees express themselves and interact with each other. Cancel culture can silence voices, stifle creativity, and create fear and conformity among team members. This post looks into its effects on employees and offers practical solutions to foster a healthier work environment.

Understanding Cancel Culture

Cancel culture is essentially about withdrawing support from someone for expressing a controversial opinion. In

the workplace, this can happen when employees avoid sharing their thoughts for fear of backlash, leading to a culture of suppression.

For instance, a 2021 study from the American Psychological Association revealed that 62% of workers felt they couldn't express their opinions freely for fear of being judged or ostracized by their colleagues. This unsettling statistic underscores how pervasive cancel culture has become in everyday communication.

The Chilling Effect on Employee Voice

One of the most critical impacts of cancel culture is its chilling effect on employee voice. By creating an environment where

people fear repercussions for speaking up, innovation and creativity take a back seat. When employees hesitate to contribute their ideas, the whole organization suffers. According to a McKinsey report, companies that encourage diverse thinking can boost innovation by 20%. Silence stifles not only individual expression but also collective progress.

Moreover, a lack of open dialogue can lead to disengagement. When employees perceive their workplace as a place where ideas go unheard, job satisfaction can plummet. LinkedIn's Workplace Learning Report indicates that organizations with engaged employees outperform their peers by 202% in terms of productivity.

Leadership is pivotal in shaping this culture. By demonstrating support and openness, leaders can empower employees to share their voices confidently.

The Role of Leadership in Mitigating Cancel Culture

Leaders are key in shaping a culture that combats cancel culture's negative effects. They can create a work environment where employees feel safe sharing their thoughts. Open communication and active listening are essential.

Leadership should model the behavior they wish to see. When leaders openly discuss differing viewpoints and navigate tough conversations, they pave the way for employees to feel comfortable doing the same. This not only elevates employee voice but also cultivates a culture based on trust and creativity.

Encouraging Constructive Feedback

Another effective strategy to counteract cancel culture is implementing systems for constructive feedback. Creating safe and anonymous channels for sharing input can help alleviate the fear of reprisal.

Positive framing of feedback is crucial; focusing on growth encourages a setting where employees feel valued. For example, organizations can establish monthly feedback sessions aimed at acknowledging contributions while suggesting improvements.

Carrying out regular surveys to gauge feelings about workplace dynamics can

also provide insight into potential areas for improvement, ensuring that employees feel heard.

The Importance of Diversity and Inclusion

Embracing diversity and inclusion can significantly counter cancel culture's challenges. A diverse workforce brings a wealth of perspectives. Companies that prioritize diversity see 35% higher returns than their less diverse counterparts, according to McKinsey.

Fostering inclusion involves rigorous training programs, mentorship opportunities, and creating forums for underrepresented voices. When all employees feel their opinions are valued, they are more likely to engage in open conversations. This proactive effort not only enriches discussions but nurtures a culture of respect.

Navigating Difficult Conversations

Addressing tough conversations is crucial in a workplace impacted by cancel culture. Training employees in effective communication equips them with the tools to engage constructively.

Encouraging an approach rooted in empathy supports a culture of understanding. For instance, companies can conduct workshops that involve role-

playing scenarios, allowing employees to practice navigating sensitive topics while receiving constructive feedback.

By fostering open dialogue, organizations can create a balanced environment that promotes collaboration rather than confrontation.

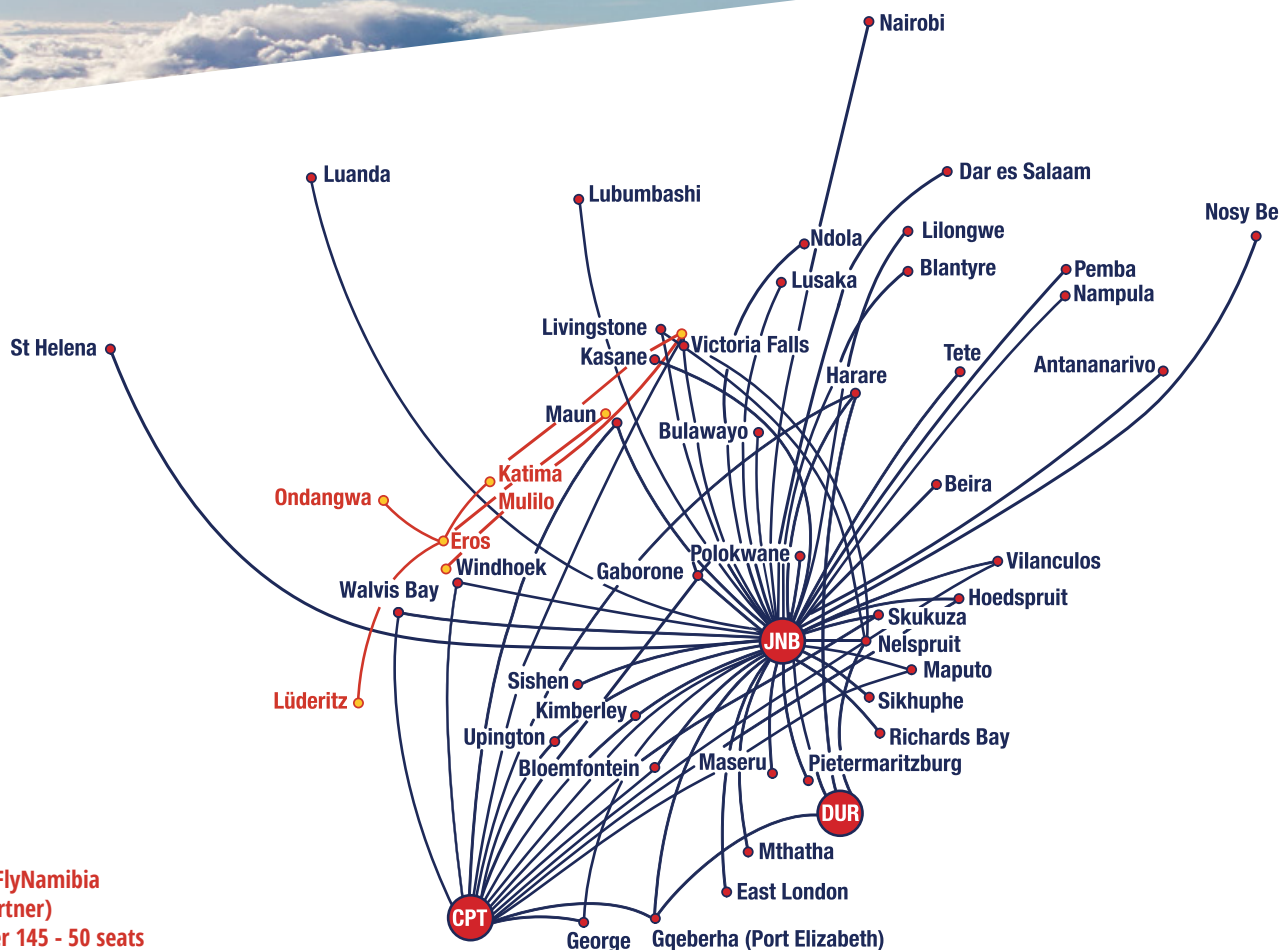
Final Thoughts

The effects of cancel culture on employee voice and workplace dynamics are significant. It can result in a stifling atmosphere, where creativity and trust are compromised. Nevertheless, organizations can take proactive measures, such as promoting open communication, encouraging constructive feedback, and prioritizing diversity and inclusion.

Leadership is pivotal in shaping this culture. By demonstrating support and openness, leaders can empower employees to share their voices confidently.

As we continue to navigate the complexities of modern workplace dynamics, it's vital for organizations to commit to a culture of respect and understanding. By doing this, they ensure all employees feel valued and heard, paving the way for a more dynamic and engaged workforce.

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Measuring Employee Satisfaction: The Ultimate Litmus Test

Employee satisfaction is the heartbeat of any organization. It serves as a key indicator of how well a workplace is functioning. When employees feel valued and content, they are more likely to perform at their best. This article uncovers effective ways to measure employee satisfaction and discusses why these insights matter.

The Importance of Employee Satisfaction

Employee satisfaction is not just a nice idea; it is crucial for driving productivity and retaining top talent. Research from Gallup indicates that highly engaged employees are 21% more productive than their less engaged counterparts. Moreover, companies with a higher level of employee

satisfaction experience 41% lower absenteeism and 24% lower turnover.

By prioritizing employee satisfaction, organizations can create an environment where individuals thrive. Productivity, motivation, and commitment soar when employees feel satisfied in their roles. This ultimately leads to innovation and a stronger bottom line. Measuring employee satisfaction should be a priority for any organization that seeks long-term success.

Common Methods of Measuring Employee Satisfaction

Organizations have different tools available to gauge employee satisfaction. Each method offers unique insights and has its own advantages depending on the

organization's specific needs.

Surveys and Questionnaires

Surveys are a widely used method for measuring employee satisfaction. These tools can be deployed regularly to gather feedback on job roles, management effectiveness, and workplace culture.

Surveys can be designed to be anonymous, encouraging genuine and candid responses. Questions should be clear and relevant to elicit valuable insights. For example, a company might ask employees to rate their job satisfaction on a scale of 1 to 10 and offer open-ended questions about what could enhance their experience. By analyzing the collected data, organizations can identify trends and

'Effective leaders are approachable and transparent'

areas for improvement.

One-on-One Interviews

Conducting one-on-one interviews can offer deeper insights into employee satisfaction. These conversations provide employees the chance to share their feelings and experiences in a comforting environment.

Although this method requires time and resources, it can produce richer data than surveys. Managers can uncover individual employee stories and specific challenges. For instance, a manager might learn that an employee feels overstressed due to unrealistic deadlines. Addressing such individual concerns can significantly improve overall satisfaction.

Focus Groups

Focus groups gather a small number of employees to discuss their experiences and workplace perceptions collaboratively. This setting promotes open dialogue and can highlight common themes that may not appear in surveys or interviews.

For example, a focus group might reveal that many employees feel overwhelmed due to poor communication between departments. These discussions can enhance community among team members, as they share their thoughts and ideas in a group format.

The Role of Leadership in Employee Satisfaction

Leadership is a vital factor in shaping employee satisfaction. Good leaders set the tone for workplace culture and influence how employees see their roles.

Effective leaders are approachable and transparent. They actively seek feedback from their teams and show a commitment to addressing any issues that arise. For example, a manager who conducts regular check-ins or asks for input on team projects is likely to make employees feel more valued. When employees sense that their input matters, their satisfaction and engagement levels usually increase.

Creating a Positive Work Environment

Building a positive work environment is crucial for enhancing employee satisfaction. This encompasses not just physical conditions like a clean workplace but also the emotional atmosphere.

Organizations should aim to cultivate an inclusive culture where everyone feels respected. Team-building activities, employee recognition programs, and tailored professional development opportunities are all effective strategies. For instance, companies that implement recognition programs can boost employee morale by as much as 14%.

The Impact of Employee Satisfaction on Performance

The link between employee satisfaction and performance is well-established.

A satisfied employee is typically more productive and innovative. Conversely, low satisfaction levels frequently lead to absenteeism and high turnover rates. According to a report by the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), companies with high employee satisfaction have a 3.2 times higher revenue growth and 2.5 times higher productivity.

Measuring the ROI of Employee Satisfaction

Investing in employee satisfaction can deliver substantial returns. Organizations can measure ROI by tracking key performance metrics like productivity rates, employee retention percentages, and overall company performance.

By correlating these metrics with employee satisfaction data, organizations can gain insights into the impact of their initiatives. For instance, after implementing an employee wellness program, a company might observe a 30% decrease in turnover, demonstrating the financial benefits of prioritizing employee happiness.

Final Thoughts

Measuring employee satisfaction is the ultimate litmus test for organizations wanting to thrive. By employing various methods such as surveys, one-on-one interviews, and focus groups, companies can gain valuable insights about their employees' experiences.

Leadership plays a crucial role in creating a positive work environment, which directly enhances employee satisfaction and performance. Ultimately, organizations that focus on employee satisfaction are better positioned to succeed in today's competitive market.

As workplaces evolve, understanding and measuring employee satisfaction will remain crucial for achieving organizational success. Taking proactive measures to improve employee satisfaction can help cultivate a more engaged, motivated, and productive workforce.

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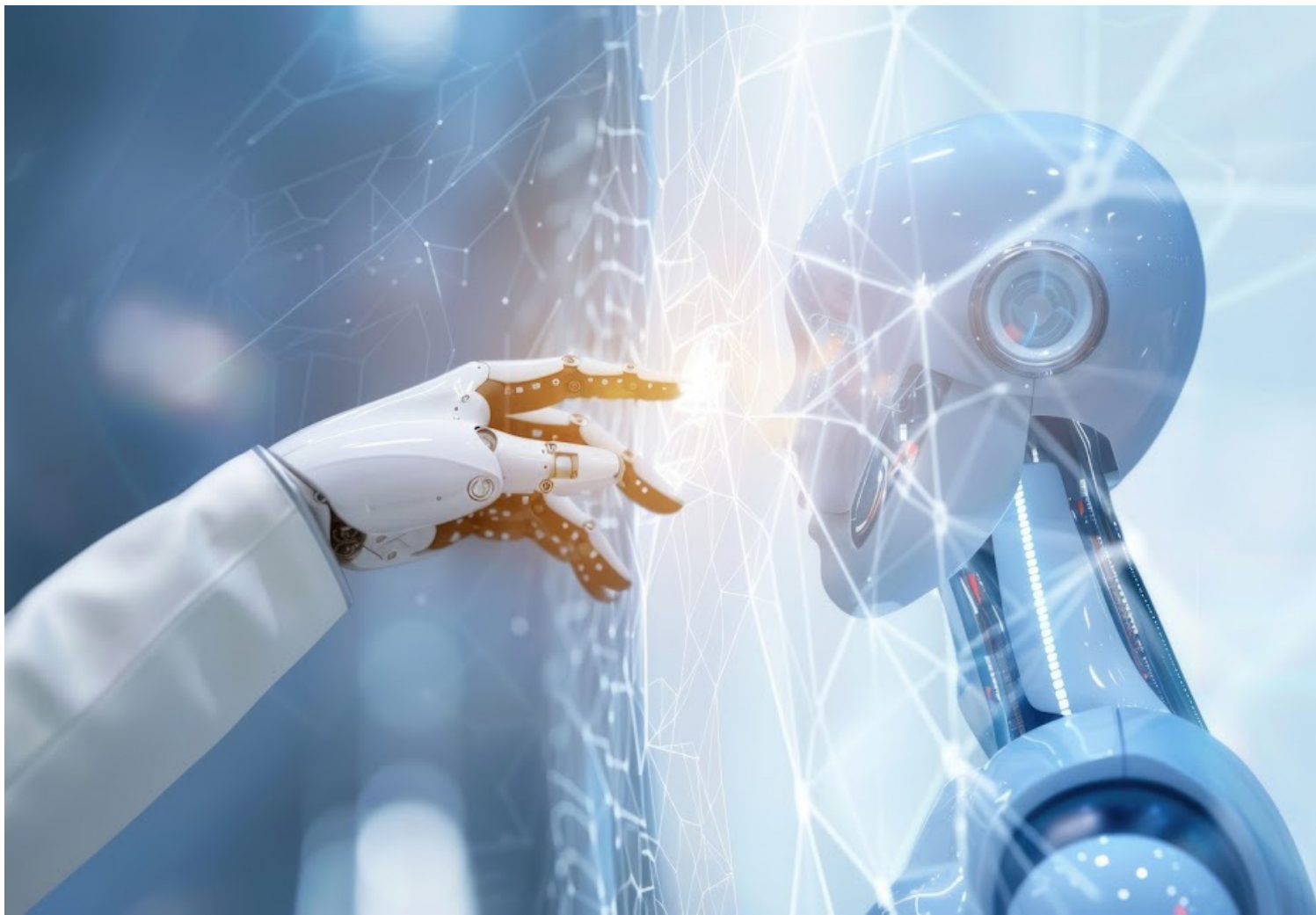
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Navigating the Intersection of Artificial Intelligence and Human Intelligence

The blend of artificial intelligence (AI) and human intelligence (HI) is a hot topic. As AI systems grow in their complexity and capabilities, it's crucial to understand how they can enhance human skills.

This post dives into the relationship between AI and HI, highlighting their strengths, the possible synergies, and what this means for various industries.

Understanding Artificial Intelligence

Artificial intelligence is the ability of machines to imitate human intelligence processes. These processes include learning, reasoning, and self-correction. AI has two primary forms: narrow AI, focused on specific tasks, and general AI, which aims to perform any intellectual task a human can.

Narrow AI examples include:

> **Virtual Assistants:** Devices like Amazon's Alexa and Apple's Siri use AI to understand voice commands and execute tasks.

> **Recommendation Systems:** Platforms like Netflix employ AI to analyze your viewing habits and suggest shows you might enjoy.

These applications excel at processing extensive data quickly. For instance,

AI can analyze thousands of medical images in seconds, detecting conditions with an accuracy rate of over 90%. Yet, they lack the emotional insights and contextual understanding found in humans.

The Unique Strengths of Human Intelligence

Human intelligence covers various cognitive skills such as emotional understanding, creativity, and ethical reasoning. Unlike AI, humans excel in navigating complex social landscapes, empathizing with others, and making moral decisions. This emotional intelligence is vital in sectors like healthcare and education, where personal connections matter deeply. For example, consider a nurse providing patient care. While AI can suggest treatment options based on data, only a human can truly understand a patient's fears and emotions, making the care more compassionate. Additionally, humans can think critically and adapt to new challenges. While AI can recognize patterns, it often struggles when faced with ambiguity. Humans can approach problems from different angles, enabling innovative solutions, as seen when companies pivot their strategies based on customer feedback or market changes.

The Synergy Between AI and HI

The collaboration between AI and HI can lead to significant advancements across fields. By combining their strengths, organizations can boost productivity, spark creativity, and enhance decision-making. Take the healthcare sector again as an example. AI can analyze medical data quickly to suggest diagnoses. Human doctors use these insights alongside their understanding of a patient's unique situation, leading to better treatment plans.

In creative fields, AI tools can help artists. For instance, graphic design software can automate repetitive tasks, allowing designers to spend more time on creative concepts. This collaboration fosters more innovative art and design because it frees human creators to focus on what they do best.

Challenges and Ethical Considerations

Integrating AI and HI brings numerous challenges and ethical issues. A major concern is bias in AI algorithms, which can reinforce societal inequities. For example, a study found that facial recognition systems misidentified people of color at rates up to 34% more than white individuals. It's vital for AI systems to be built on diverse and representative data to reduce this risk.

Moreover, the growth of AI raises questions about job displacement. Although AI can make work more efficient, it may also render specific roles obsolete. For instance, an estimated 30% of jobs in the U.S. are at high risk of automation in the coming years. Organizations need to prioritize training and reskilling their workforce to adapt to these shifts.

The Future of AI and HI Collaboration

As technology progresses, the partnership between AI and HI is set to evolve. Future developments may see more intuitive AI systems that grasp human emotions and contexts better. For instance, AI could play a role in mental health care by offering tailored support while human therapists provide the essential empathy that machines cannot. Educational institutions are also beginning to include AI tools in their teaching methods, preparing students for a future where both intelligences coalesce. By cultivating

**AI can
analyze
medical
data
quickly
to suggest
diagnoses.**

a mindset focused on collaboration, future generations can leverage the best features of AI and HI to drive innovation.

Embracing the Future Together

Exploring the intersection of artificial intelligence and human intelligence brings both challenges and opportunities. Recognizing the strengths of each and fostering teamwork can unlock new avenues for innovation. As we progress, we must confront ethical challenges to ensure AI complements the human experience rather than diminishes it. The goal is a balanced relationship between AI and HI, where technology amplifies human growth and creativity. Embracing this partnership can lead to significant advancements in various sectors and enrich the human experience in ways we have yet to fully grasp.

The pathway forward through the convergence of artificial intelligence and human intelligence is just beginning. By building a collaborative approach and tackling arising challenges, society can harness the strengths of both intelligences for a more promising and innovative future.

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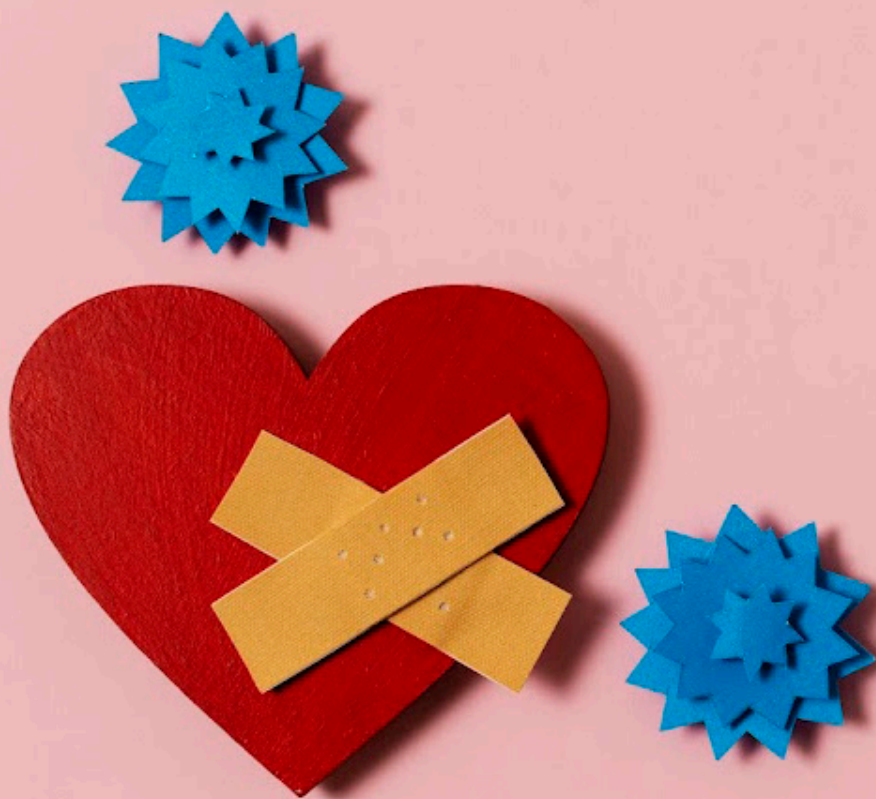
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Prioritizing Employee Safety After Heartbreak: A Guide for Managers

In today's fast-paced work environment, emotional well-being is just as important as physical safety. Heartbreak, whether from personal relationships or life events, can deeply affect an employee's performance and mental state. As managers, recognizing these challenges is vital. Prioritizing employee emotional safety can help create a positive workplace. This guide provides practical strategies to support heartbroken employees,

fostering a culture of care and resilience.

Understanding the Impact of Heartbreak on Employees

Heartbreak can show up in many ways, leading to decreased focus, productivity, and strained relationships with colleagues. Research indicates that employees dealing with emotional stress have a 50% chance of reporting lower morale. The repercussions of

this distress can result in increased absenteeism and workplace conflicts as employees find it tough to concentrate on their tasks.

For instance, a team member going through a breakup may miss deadlines or fail to engage in meetings, often leading to frustration among peers. This cycle can bring down both individual and team performance, hindering overall productivity and job satisfaction.

Creating a Supportive Environment

To prioritize employee safety after heartbreak, managers should cultivate a supportive workplace that promotes open communication and empathy. Here are several strategies to consider:

Encourage Open Dialogue:

Establish a culture where employees feel safe discussing their emotional challenges. Regular check-ins can aid managers in assessing the mood of the team and offer necessary support. Consider using one-on-one meetings as a platform for these discussions.

Provide Resources: Ensure access to mental health resources, like counseling services or employee assistance programs. A study found that companies investing in mental health programs saw a 30% drop in employee absenteeism. Providing these resources helps employees work through their feelings healthily.

Promote Work-Life Balance:

Encourage employees to take necessary time off for personal issues. Studies show that 60% of employees feel guilty about taking leave, yet allowing them to prioritize their mental health encourages overall wellness.

Implement Flexible Work Arrangements:

Offer flexible work hours or remote options when possible. This flexibility can help employees manage their emotions while fulfilling job responsibilities effectively.

Foster Team Support: Invest in team-building activities that encourage camaraderie and support among colleagues. A strong support network can lessen feelings of isolation and promote resilience.

Training Managers to Recognize Signs of Distress

Training managers to identify emotional distress among their team members holds immense value. This

training can encompass:

a) Identifying Behavioral Changes:

Managers should be vigilant of shifts in employee behavior, such as avoiding team activities or showing a decline in work quality. For example, an employee who used to lead team discussions but now sits quietly during meetings may need support.

b) Understanding Emotional Cues:

Training helps managers recognize signs of struggle, allowing for empathetic interventions.

c) Effective Communication Skills:

Equip managers with techniques for sensitive conversations. Training in open-ended questions and active listening fosters an environment where employees feel heard.

Investing in this training can cultivate a more compassionate leadership team, better prepared to support employees through difficult times.

Encouraging Self-Care Practices

Promoting self-care practices among employees can greatly enhance their emotional well-being. Managers can bolster self-care initiatives by:

Organizing Wellness Programs:

Implement wellness activities that prioritize mental health. Regular mindfulness workshops or yoga classes can reduce stress and increase overall morale.

Promoting Healthy Work Habits:

Encourage routine breaks, time management, and maintaining work-life balance. A healthy work environment has been linked to a 21% increase in productivity.

Creating a Positive Work Culture: Build a culture that values mental health. Acknowledging and celebrating employees' achievements, whether big or small, enhances their sense of belonging.

Encouraging Social Connections: Foster social interactions among employees through regular team

lunches, group activities, or casual gatherings. Meaningful connections can make employees feel supported and engaged.

Monitoring Employee Well-Being

Monitoring employee well-being is critical in spotting those who may require additional support. Managers can adopt these practices:

a. Conducting Surveys: Utilize anonymous surveys to assess employee satisfaction and mental well-being. Data gathered can help highlight potential areas for improvement.

b. Establishing Check-In Protocols:

Schedule regular one-on-one meetings with team members to discuss workloads and emotional states. This proactive strategy can help catch issues early.

c. Creating a Feedback Loop:

Encourage continuous feedback regarding the support system in place. This input allows managers to adjust their approach and ensure employees feel valued.

Wrapping Up

Heartbreak can profoundly influence an employee's emotional and physical wellbeing. Managers play a pivotal role in prioritizing safety and support in these moments. By fostering open communication, offering ample resources, and promoting self-care practices, organizations can create an environment where employees feel empowered to navigate their emotional challenges.

Ultimately, a focus on employee safety in times of heartbreak not only aids the individual but also enhances the workplace's overall health and resilience. By implementing these strategies, managers can nurture a supportive culture where employees thrive.



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Exploring the Hidden Drawbacks of Corporate Training Programs

In a world where businesses constantly evolve, corporate training programs are often seen as crucial for employee growth and company enhancement. While they can provide essential skills, there are hidden issues that can diminish their effectiveness. This article highlights some overlooked challenges of corporate training, helping organizations recognize potential pitfalls that could impact their investment.

The Illusion of One-Size-Fits-All

A major drawback of corporate training is the misconception that one training program can effectively serve all employees.

Training is typically developed for a general audience, often leading to disconnection between the material and individual needs. For instance, a sales training module designed for a large team might overlook the specific challenges faced by a new sales associate. This disconnect can lead to disengagement; employees may feel the content is irrelevant. In fact, studies suggest that 70% of employees struggle to apply what they learn when training is not personalized.

Time and Resource Constraints

Another significant challenge is the time and financial resources necessary for

effective training programs.

Organizations invest substantial funds and hours into training, yet the returns can be uncertain. For example, a company might allocate up to 20% of its budget for training, but if employees are too busy to engage, the investment could yield little benefit. Moreover, when training pulls employees away from their daily tasks, stress levels can rise, and productivity often dips. According to research, 40% of employees report that training interferes with their regular responsibilities, complicating their ability to meet targets.

The Risk of Overtraining

While ongoing training is meant to boost

Research shows that 90% of employees claim they need more hands-on experience to feel confident using new skills. Companies must focus on training that includes simulations and real-world case studies to improve learning results.

skills, too much training can overwhelm employees.

When companies prioritizing constant training programs neglect to assess their impact, employees can become fatigued. For instance, an employee might attend three workshops in a month, leaving them stretched thin and questioning their effectiveness. Burnout can set in swiftly, with some studies indicating that over 60% of employees feel under pressure due to excessive training sessions. This environment can limit creativity and stifle innovation.

Lack of Practical Application

Understanding concepts in theory is different from applying them in real situations.

Many corporate training programs emphasize theoretical knowledge, leaving employees with little practical application. For instance, an employee may complete a course on digital marketing but find it difficult to implement those strategies in their daily tasks. Research shows that 90% of employees claim they need more hands-on experience to feel confident using new skills. Companies must focus on training that includes simulations and real-world case studies to improve learning results.

Resistance to Change

New training initiatives can often be met with skepticism from employees.

Adopting new practices can be challenging, leading to resistance rooted in fear or satisfaction with current methods. For example, when a tech company introduced a new project management software, many employees resisted the change, believing the old system worked just fine. To ease this transition, organizations must foster a culture of collaboration and encourage feedback, allowing employees to express their concerns and gain buy-in.

The Impact of Training Culture

The mindset around training can dramatically affect its success.

When training is seen merely as a checklist task instead of a chance for professional growth, employee engagement may suffer. For instance, in firms with a positive training culture, where continuous learning is celebrated, employees are 30% more likely to report job satisfaction. Organizations can cultivate this environment by recognizing achievements, providing mentorship, and holding discussions about the benefits of ongoing learning.

Measuring Training Effectiveness

Lastly, evaluating the success of training programs can be challenging for organizations.

Without clear metrics or evaluation systems, it's hard to determine if these initiatives are meeting their objectives. Companies should formulate key performance indicators (KPIs) to measure the impact of training. For example, tracking employee performance before and after training can show clear progress. Additionally, feedback from employees can offer insights that help refine future programs.

The Cost of Training Fatigue

Multiple training sessions can lead to training fatigue.

This condition arises when employees feel overwhelmed by the number and frequency of required training. Research indicates that about 30% of employees experience burnout from excessive training commitments. This situation can lessen their enthusiasm for learning. Organizations should be aware of training frequency and intensity to prevent this fatigue and maintain employee motivation.

Final Thoughts on Training Effectiveness

Corporate training programs are important for enhancing employee skills and promoting organizational success. However, it is vital to be aware of their hidden drawbacks. From the myth of one-size-fits-all solutions to difficulties in measuring success, organizations must critically assess their training strategies. By actively addressing these concerns and encouraging a culture of continuous learning, companies can better harness the benefits of training. Ultimately, a thoughtful and strategic approach can cultivate a more engaged and skilled workforce, paving the way for long-term success.

A photograph of a Cielo store at night. The storefront is dark with a large illuminated sign that reads "Cielo | Inspiring Spaces". The "Cielo" part of the sign has a red semi-circle in the 'o'. The entrance is wide and open, revealing a modern interior with wooden pillars, a mezzanine level, and various furniture pieces like sofas and armchairs. The floor outside is a checkered tile pattern.

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Ruth Seipone



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Thato San



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Botswana Agricultural Marketing Board (BAMB),
Acting Chief Executive Officer Ruth Seipone

Empowering Botswana's Agriculture

> An Interview with Ruth Seipone, Acting CEO of the Botswana Agricultural Marketing Board

In an insightful interview with Employee Africa Magazine, Ruth Seipone, the Acting Chief Executive Officer of the Botswana Agricultural Marketing Board (BAMB), shared her vision for transforming Botswana's agricultural sector. With a background rooted in public service and a passion for institutional reform, Ruth is dedicated to positioning BAMB as a pivotal force in ensuring food security, fostering economic growth, and empowering farmers across the country.

A Leadership Driven by Purpose and Innovation

Ruth's leadership journey has been shaped by a deep commitment to public service, focusing on operational excellence and sustainable development within Botswana's agriculture sector. Having joined BAMB seven years ago, she has worked alongside committed professionals who share her passion for advancing the country's food security agenda. Her leadership philosophy emphasizes accountability, transformation, and empowerment all aimed at keeping BAMB relevant, efficient, and impactful.

Modernizing through Digital Transformation

One of Ruth's key priorities is the digital modernization of BAMB's operations. She highlighted the organization's ongoing implementation of a new point of sale system at the Gaborone West branch, which is set to go live soon. This initiative aims to streamline grain procurement and sales, improve transparency, and enhance customer experience. The plan is to expand this digital system across all 40 branches nationwide, ensuring more efficient services for farmers and stakeholders alike.

Addressing Payment Delays and Supporting Farmers

A significant challenge Ruth is tackling is the issue of delayed payments to farmers. She emphasized her commitment to ensuring that farmers are paid promptly once they deliver their grain to BAMB. Currently, delays of several months have been problematic, undermining trust and affecting farmers' ability to reinvest in the next planting season. Ruth is working closely with financiers to establish a reliable, timely payment system particularly vital as the country approaches a new plowing season. She believes that paying farmers promptly is



essential to fostering trust and sustaining their livelihoods.

BAMB's Role in Food Security and Market Stability

Ruth underscored BAMB's central role in strengthening Botswana's food security through effective management of strategic grain reserves. The organization's warehouses boast a capacity of over 145,000 metric tons, including newly completed silos in Panda. By procuring key grains such as maize, sorghum, beans, and cowpeas directly from local farmers, BAMB ensures a stable supply of essential commodities. These reserves serve as a vital buffer during shortages or emergencies, securing the nation's food supply.

Promoting Employment and Youth Engagement

Highlighting the sector's employment potential, Ruth pointed out that approximately 70% of employment within Botswana's agricultural sector is informal. From farming

and harvesting to logistics and processing, agriculture offers numerous opportunities for income and job creation. BAMB actively promotes initiatives like contract farming and local sourcing to empower youth and women, making agriculture an inclusive and vibrant sector. Additionally, digital innovations in logistics and financial management are opening up new, modern employment opportunities within the sector.

Alignment with National Development Goals

Ruth explained that BAMB's efforts are closely aligned with Botswana's Vision 2036 and the National Agricultural Transformation Agenda. These initiatives aim to promote self-reliance, rural empowerment, and value chain development. She envisions a future where farming is seen as a profitable and innovative career, attracting the youth and driving economic growth. Through partnerships with organizations such as Nardi and BMC, BAMB is expanding beyond grain aggregation into processing, trade facilitation, and technological innovation moving toward a comprehensive, full-spectrum agricultural sector.

A Message to Africa's Youth

Concluding the interview, Ruth emphasized the importance of agriculture for young Africans. She urged young people to view agriculture not as a fallback but as a dynamic, rewarding sector full of opportunities for innovation and leadership. Every technological advancement, every seed sown, contributes to national transformation and economic resilience. She encouraged the youth to be bold, purposeful, and committed to making a difference in their communities and countries.

Final Thoughts

Ruth Seipone's leadership at BAMB exemplifies a vision of a modernized, inclusive, and resilient agricultural sector. Her dedication to modernization, timely payments, and youth empowerment aims to build a sustainable future for Botswana's food security and economic development. Her message resonates across the continent: agriculture is the key to a prosperous, self-sufficient future for Africa.



Samantha
Kitlanang

SENSATIONAL!

Samantha Mogwe-Kitlanang: Artist | Project Management Consultant
| Grammy Voting Member | Founder of Tune Into Empowerment



Samantha Kitlanang is a Botswana-based multi-disciplinary creative and thought leader, affectionally known in the entertainment fraternity as Samantha Mogwe, born to a Motswana father and a Zambian mother. Known for her soulful, genre-blending RnB sound, she began her artistic journey as a poet before transitioning into music. With influences including Aretha Franklin, Brandy, and Tiwa Savage, her sound is characterized by rich harmonies and vocal layering that have earned her recognition across the continent.

She is a dynamic public speaker, cultural strategist, and project management professional. Samantha holds a degree

in Theology, has studied music with Trinity College London, and is a certified PRINCE2 Agile Practitioner. She applies her project management expertise to lead transformative initiatives in the arts and creative sectors.

As a Voting Member of The Recording Academy (GRAMMYS), Samantha's contribution to the international music ecosystem is globally recognized. She is the founder of NALA Project Masters, a consultancy offering agile project-based solutions, and the creator of Tune Into Empowerment, a capacity-building initiative supporting female artists in Botswana through music business education, wellness,

and leadership.

Her achievements include multiple awards such as the YAMAs and BOMUs, international nominations (AFRIMMA and ZIKOMO Awards), and performances alongside artists including Zonke, Joe Thomas, Kenny Latimore, Lira, and Hugh Masekela. She has also spoken at notable platforms such as TEDx Gaborone, the Africa Rising Music Conference, and the Africa Youth Entrepreneurs Summit.

Samantha continues to merge creativity, leadership, and advocacy through her projects, building sustainable bridges between art, impact, and entrepreneurship.

A portrait of Naledi Magowe, a woman with long dark hair, wearing a black turtleneck, smiling with her arms crossed. The background is a blurred green outdoor setting.

Visionary leader

Naledi Magowe



Visionary leader

Naledi Magowe is a visionary Co-founder and Chief Marketing Officer at Brastorne, dedicated to bridging the digital divide for rural African communities.

Brastorne mobile solutions have impacted over 5.3 million people across six countries (Botswana, DRC, Cameroon, Guinea, Zambia and

Côte d'Ivoire) and continue to scale. Recognized globally as a thought leader, Naledi's work in T4D projects, strategy, and communications has earned her numerous awards, inspiring many as Brastorne expands its reach across Africa, promoting innovation and empowerment.



A portrait of Thato San, a woman with long, dark, wavy hair, smiling and wearing a light blue button-down shirt. She is standing in a modern office with large windows in the background. The text 'Founder of Organic Handmade' is overlaid on the image in a large, black, serif font.

Founder of Organic Handmade

Thato San

Founder of Organic Handmade

Thato San

Thato San is a visionary entrepreneur and creative force — the founder of Organic Handmade, a proudly Botswana-made skincare brand built from passion, resilience, and purpose.

Armed with a degree in Real Estate, Thato's journey took an unexpected turn when her own struggle with problematic skin inspired her to explore natural, handmade remedies. What began as a personal healing journey soon evolved into Organic Handmade, a thriving skincare line that has grown over five years into one of Botswana's most admired local brands — celebrated for its authenticity, clean formulations, and dedication to self-care.

Passionate about empowerment, Thato founded The Startup Kind, an initiative dedicated to supporting aspiring entrepreneurs through mentorship, business coaching, and essential resources — including donations that help them begin their journeys. Through this foundation, she hopes to cultivate a spirit of collaboration and giving back among Botswana's next generation of business leaders.

A true creative at heart, Thato is driven by purpose, community, and the belief that beauty goes beyond what we see — it's the confidence, courage, and kindness we share with others.

Her story is one of reinvention and impact — a reminder that when



passion is nurtured with vision and consistency, it can transform not only a career but an entire community.

“Beauty isn’t just in how we look, it’s in how we make others feel, and the kindness we leave behind.”

Founder of Organic Handmade
Contact Info
 +267 72382149
 organickiosky@gmail.com

Thato's vision is to redefine beauty through innovation and authenticity. As a creator, mentor, and entrepreneur, she continues to build spaces and brands that inspire

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Tapping into Africa's 230-million AI-powered jobs opportunity

Kenya's budding skills ecosystem offers key learnings for African countries to scale digital capabilities, says Winnie Karanu, Microsoft AI Skills Director

By 2030, AI is projected to unlock 230 million digital jobs across Africa – a transformation comparable to South Korea's post-war rise or India's IT boom in the 1990s. Realizing this potential requires bold investment in digital skills across every corner of the economy.

Despite widespread ambition, with governments, donors, and private sector leaders prioritizing digital skills, progress remains uneven. The challenge is not only scale, but also coordination. Fragmented efforts and a lack of unified strategy continue to slow momentum and dilute impact.

To fully realize AI's potential for job creation, Africa must build a coordinated, inclusive skilling ecosystem, where government, education, industry, and civil society work together to shape the AI economy. This means moving beyond isolated programs to scalable frameworks that prepare diverse audiences, from policymakers and educators to entrepreneurs and job seekers. It also requires infrastructure and tools, including large language models (LLMs) tailored to Africa's linguistic, cultural, and socioeconomic contexts.

There is much to learn from the ongoing rollout of Kenya's AI Skilling Initiative (AINSI), which presents a promising approach to progress. Its framework offers valuable insights to inform similar efforts elsewhere.

Government – the cornerstone of national AI capability

Strong government leadership is essential for building national AI capacity. Governments are uniquely positioned to set strategic priorities, regulate responsibly, and provide access to critical infrastructure and data.

Kenya's Regional Centre of Competence for Digital and AI Skilling is a compelling model for countries seeking to institutionalize AI training. Beyond training around 1,500 public servants in AI and cybersecurity, the Centre's structured approach, combining bootcamps and online programs, demonstrates how targeted, scalable interventions can build capacity across government, with almost 6,500 public sector officials across the country registered. Growing interest from countries like Uganda and Nigeria highlights its potential as a replicable model for inclusive and innovative AI ecosystems.

However, much work remains. To ensure skilling efforts lead to meaningful employment,

harmonizing credentials and recognized qualifications across regions is vital. This validates skillsets and helps employers identify talent with confidence. Governments play a central role in setting these standards and aligning them with industry needs.

Industry – the vehicle for scaling transformation

For AI to drive national progress, it must be embedded across all industries, formal and informal. Micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), which account for over 44 million businesses across sub-Saharan Africa, are critical to this effort. Imagine how vast the impact would be if each MSME could use AI to hire just one more person?

AINSI's cross-sector partnerships are helping build momentum. Collaboration with the Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA) demonstrates how industry-led initiatives can accelerate AI skilling. KEPSA's training of over 70,000 organizational leaders, professionals and SMEs in AI and cybersecurity is helping drive progress from the top down. Yet, there is more to learn about reaching underserved sectors and sustaining long-term impact.

SOURCE: Microsoft



McDonald's South Africa & CATHSSETA Partnership: Training 1,400 Unemployed Youth

McDonald's South Africa (MSA) is collaborating with the Culture, Arts, Tourism, Hospitality, and Sport Sector Education and Training Authority (CATHSSETA) to train 1,400 unemployed youth through a Hospitality Learnership Programme. This initiative aligns with CATHSSETA's recently adopted High Impact Programme, which aims to empower unemployed individuals with skills that could lead to employment within McDonald's and the broader hospitality sector. This initiative comes at a critical time, as continuous skills development is essential in countries with high youth unemployment rates.

CATHSSETA is one of the 21 Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) established under the Skills Development Act (No. 97 of 1998) as amended. It was first established in 2001 as the Tourism and Hospitality Education and Training Authority (THETA), then re-established as CATHSSETA on April 1, 2012, to better reflect its broader mandate. Its mission is to facilitate skills development within its sub-sectors through grants for learning programs and the monitoring of education and training, as outlined in the National Skills Development Plan (NSDP), 2030.

CATHSSETA operates in the following sub-sectors:

- **Arts, Culture, and Heritage**
- **Conservation**
- **Gaming and Lotteries**
- **Hospitality**
- **Sport, Recreation, and Fitness**
- **Tourism and Travel Services**

"Our role and mandate, as set out in section 10 of the Skills Development Act, 1998, include developing and implementing a sector skills plan, which describes the trends in each sub-sector as well as the skills that are in demand. Additionally, this plan identifies priorities for skills development.

We support and administer learning programs, facilitate the implementation of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), and conduct quality assurance on learning in line with Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO) requirements. We also undertake quality assurance and disburse mandatory and discretionary grants using the collected levies to the qualifying stakeholders to implement skills development initiatives. Employers pay 1% of their payroll to the

South African Revenue Service (SARS) monthly, of which CATHSSETA receives 80% for administration costs and grants, while the remaining 20% is paid to the National Skills Fund," says Marks Thibela, Chief Executive Officer at CATHSSETA.

Continuous skills development is crucial in addressing unemployment, as it equips individuals, especially the youth, with the knowledge and competencies needed to adapt to changing job markets and technological advancements. By enhancing their skills, workers and job seekers can improve their employability, thereby reducing the unemployment rate and contributing to the overall economic growth of the country.

McDonald's role in this partnership includes:

Recruitment: Driving mass awareness about the learnership to attract high-quality candidates and sharing the positive narrative of the partnership.

Engagement: Educating the public on participating in this initiative and providing regular stakeholder updates.

"Hospitality does not feature prominently in the top ten learnerships that people



talk about. The unemployment numbers among the youth are staggering, and as a responsible corporate citizen, we identified the need to bring CATHSSETA into the youth employment conversation. It was a meeting of minds, as their priority is skills development. Furthermore, we have partnered with Job Jack to ensure a seamless recruitment process, as they understand the technological preferences of Gen Z," says Greg Solomon, Chief Executive Officer at McDonald's South Africa.

McDonald's is prepared to train more than the 1,400 youth promised to CATHSSETA. The overwhelming response to the program highlights the urgent need for job creation in South Africa, as demonstrated by the 9,000 applicants, many of whom are graduates.

"The program required that we partner with a reputable training partner, and for this reason, we collaborated with Training Force, which focuses on delivering industry- and job-specific skills assessments and training interventions to businesses," continues Solomon.

The CATHSSETA & McDonald's SA

program offers blended training, combining classroom and on-the-job training and assessment, with courses such as Occupational Health, Safety and Security, Business Communication, and Business Finance. From its recruitment efforts, McDonald's has already enrolled 1,200 candidates in the learning program. This partnership is successful due to McDonald's compliance with government legislation, particularly those related to skills development.

"To illustrate our commitment to skills development, McDonald's established Hamburger University at our head office to offer our employees the best training available. Hamburger University is a global training centre dedicated to developing individuals' skills and knowledge in restaurant operation procedures, focusing on quality, service, cleanliness, and value. This empowers our teams to perform their tasks optimally and uphold our high standards," says Solomon.

"This is one of the important interventions needed in South Africa. While the education system can do a lot, I believe the private sector also needs to play a significant role, which is why this initiative

is crucial. It is not just about hosting learners who are graduates, it is about providing them with the experience that is essential for gaining employment, one of the biggest challenges facing our youth," said Deputy Minister of Higher Education, Buti Manamela.

Manamela concluded by saying, "I challenge everyone, including the hospitality sector and other SETAs, to contribute to helping the government create employment and provide young South Africans with access to skills that can lead to potential entrepreneurial opportunities. Skills development and training should not be the sole responsibility of the government. We must, and have been, working closely with the private sector to ensure that young people are equipped with the skills needed for sustainable employment."

By investing in continuous skills development, McDonald's and CATHSSETA are making a significant contribution to reducing youth unemployment and fostering a skilled workforce that can meet the demands of a dynamic economy.

Source: McDonald's South Africa

Google, PanSALB Launch AI Glossary In isiZulu, isiXhosa And Afrikaans



Google, in partnership with the Pan South African Language Board (PanSALB), has launched a new AI Glossary for isiZulu, isiXhosa and Afrikaans, giving millions of South Africans the language tools to engage with artificial intelligence in their mother tongue.

The launch took place at Google's South Africa offices in Johannesburg, where representatives from the Pan South African Language Board, the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture, the Department of Basic Education, the Department of Higher Education, and the SABC were joined by academics, translators, and language experts. The event included a panel discussion on how African languages can adapt alongside technology.

The glossary defines 100 standard AI terms and their meanings in each of the three languages. This project builds on earlier work to produce a Swahili version in East Africa and is part of a broader collaboration between Google and African partners to make digital innovation more inclusive and bridge the digital divide for an estimated 266 million speakers of these four languages across the continent.

Among the terms defined are everyday concepts such as conversational AI – systems that simulate human dialogue

through natural language processing – and hallucination, which describes instances where AI tools generate information that sounds credible but is incorrect. Other entries, like active learning and noisy data, explain how machines are trained and refined through interaction and information filtering.

In Africa, English is the dominant language in technology and science, making it harder for non-English speakers to take part in conversations about new technologies. By defining key AI concepts in local languages, the glossary helps close this gap, giving people the words to engage confidently with emerging technologies and supporting developers, educators, translators and everyday users alike.

The glossary was developed through a highly collaborative process. Google, in partnership with Twaweza Communications and PanSALB, hosted a series of round-table discussions and workshops with linguists, lexicographers, AI experts, and academic and government stakeholders. This multi-day process ensured the terms were not simply translated, but were standardised and adapted for each language to ensure accuracy and cultural relevance.

Google Country Director, Kabelo Makwane

from Google said the project shows what can be achieved when technology companies and language institutions work together. “We want everyone to have the words to understand and shape the technologies that are changing the world,” Makwane said. PanSALB chief executive, Lance Schultz, said the partnership demonstrates how linguistic development and digital innovation can go hand in hand. “Our aim is to ensure that South Africa’s languages remain living, relevant and adaptable,” he said. “By standardising AI terms, we are helping to modernise our languages and ensure that their speakers are not excluded from the global digital conversation.”

The glossary is available immediately and will be freely accessible to the public. It will serve as a reference for anyone working in education, translation, or technology, and will support continued efforts to promote linguistic inclusion across the continent.

Google invites researchers, educators, developers, translators & interpreters, policy makers, and language enthusiasts to access the full glossary from GitHub and begin using these terms in your conversations, curricula, and technology. This is how we collectively bridge the digital divide.

Source: TechFinancials Online

New CEO appointed by Microsoft South Africa

Vukani Mngxati





Vukani Mngxati has been appointed CEO of Microsoft South Africa, effective October 1. His appointment builds on Microsoft's more than three decades of partnership and investment in South Africa, reflecting the company's continued commitment to enable public and private sector companies to unlock the power of AI and drive inclusive economic growth.

In his new role, Mngxati will lead Microsoft's South African operations, driving initiatives that support the country's digital and AI

transformation journey. Leveraging the foundation built, he will focus on expanding cloud infrastructure, growing AI skills in local communities and building partnerships that align with South Africa's national development goals.

His appointment further strengthens Microsoft's local leadership as the company continues to equip South African businesses, government, and civil society with the technology and tools they need to innovate, grow, and compete globally – while enabling them to benefit from its

strong partner ecosystem and global best practices.

Mngxati will draw on his more than 25 years of experience in enterprise modernisation and strategic innovation to lead Microsoft's involvement in the country's digital and AI transformation, preparing businesses to be future ready.

He has held several leadership positions at Accenture, most recently as CEO and chairperson and pursued an entrepreneurial venture of his own earlier in his career.

Source: Engineering News

Who is the new CEO of Standard Bank of South Africa?

Meet David Hodnett



David Hodnett officially steps into the role of CEO at Standard Bank of South Africa, following a distinguished career in the banking sector. His appointment marks a pivotal moment for the bank as it navigates a complex financial landscape.

When the Prudential Authority greenlit his appointment in October 2025, David Hodnett officially assumed the role of Chief Executive Officer of Standard Bank of South Africa (SBSA), succeeding Kenny Fihla. His elevation follows a storied path in South Africa's banking sector, defined by risk oversight, operational stewardship, and internal leadership transitions.

Hodnett's roots lie in audit and advisory: prior to his executive banking career, he served as a partner at KPMG South Africa. He first joined Standard Bank in the 2000s, climbing through executive risk roles in its personal and business banking divisions. In 2008, he made a notable move to Absa,

where his portfolio expanded. He held roles including Chief Risk Officer, Finance Director, and eventually Deputy CEO of South Africa, overseeing areas such as IT, operations, and the "Rest of Africa" business.

In February 2010, Absa announced his appointment as Group Finance Director, while he retained risk responsibilities for a transitional period. During his Absa tenure, Hodnett navigated both growth and structural transformation, deploying capital, managing risk frameworks, and integrating cross-border operations.

Return to Standard: Risk, Ethics, Corporate Affairs

In March 2019, he rejoined Standard Bank as Group Chief Risk Officer, succeeding Neil Surgey.

His return came after a period of change in banking regulation and market volatility, making the risk function central to the group's resilience.

By 1 January 2021, his mandate expanded — he was appointed Chief Risk and Corporate Affairs Officer, integrating governance, ethics, stakeholder engagement, and reputation oversight alongside risk.

During a leadership shuffle, Hodnett briefly served as interim CEO for Business and Commercial Clients within Standard Bank Group between August and December 2021, before returning to his core portfolio in January 2022.

In January 2022, his expanded role formally took effect. Under his stewardship, Standard Bank has progressively calibrated its risk appetite, elevated ESG and stakeholder dimensions, and bolstered internal governance across group operations.

The SBSA Mandate

Hodnett's new leadership comes amid strategic succession moves. With his transition, Thabani Ndwandwe will assume the Group Chief Risk Officer role (while retaining his SBSA risk functions).

Sim Tshabalala, CEO of Standard Bank Group, emphasised that Hodnett's appointment signals the group's internal depth of leadership succession. "David has extensive experience in South Africa's financial services sector and has demonstrated exceptional leadership capabilities in our group," remarked Tshabalala.

Hodnett officially took charge of SBSA following regulatory clearance from the Prudential Authority. One of his early tasks: integrating risk oversight with commercial agility in a volatile macro environment, while managing regulatory expectations, digital transformation, and the intensifying South African credit landscape.

If he succeeds, this may mark a turning point in how South Africa's banking giants cultivate internal leadership and integrate risk, reputation, and strategy seamlessly.

Source: IOL NEWS



Lifestyle



‘My Father’s Shadow’ opens Africa XChange Summit 2025

By: Bwetunge Ivan
www.lifestyleuganda.com

- Marking new era for African film

The first-ever Africa XChange Summit, held October 15–16 during Film Festival Cologne, brought together Africa’s top creatives, tech firms, and investors to shape the future of media and innovation.

COLOGNE, Germany — For the first time, the Africa XChange Summit joined the lineup at the Film Festival Cologne this week, bringing together African filmmakers, producers, tech entrepreneurs, and investors for two days of conversations about the continent’s fast-growing creative economy.

The event, held Oct. 15–16, offered a platform for African innovators to showcase new ideas, explore business models, and build bridges with global audiences.

The summit opened Wednesday night with the Nigerian feature film *My Father’s Shadow*, a semi-autobiographical drama by director Akinola Davies Jr. The film — the first Nigerian title ever selected for competition at the Cannes International Film Festival — has since been chosen by the United Kingdom as its Oscar submission for Best International Feature Film.

The story follows two brothers, Akin and Remi, played by Godwin and Chibuike Marvellous Egbo, as their father drives them from their rural home to Lagos amid the unrest surrounding Nigeria’s 1993 elections. What begins as an ordinary journey becomes a defining day for both the family and the nation. Davies blends a child’s point of view with the turbulence of history, crafting what he has called “a love letter to Lagos.”

A booming creative frontier

By Thursday, discussions turned from cinema to the wider landscape of Africa’s creative industries — including film, gaming, technology, and finance — and how they are reshaping the continent’s economic future. Speakers highlighted the rising global demand for African talent and content, especially among a young, digitally connected population.

Demographics, digitalization, and a growing start-up culture are fueling optimism. Nigeria’s “Nollywood” remains the most visible example: producing roughly 2,500 films each year, it has become the world’s second-largest film industry after India’s



Bollywood and ahead of Hollywood in output.

The sector, according to a UNESCO report, could generate more than 20 million jobs across Africa if its full potential is realized. Much of that growth is tied to digital tools and online distribution, which have opened global markets to African creators.

“The creative industry is one of the most dynamic sectors on the African continent,” said Philipp Hoffmann, Managing Director of Rushlake Media, one of the event’s organizers. “And Africans’ growing self-confidence is justified. They are actively taking their future into their own hands.”

He added, “In Germany, this is still too rarely recognized. It’s time for that to change.”

Beyond aid: toward equal partnership Participants agreed that Africa’s creative boom is not just an artistic movement but an economic one — and that meaningful collaboration with Europe must go beyond development aid. What the continent needs, they argued, is equal access to global

markets and financial resources.

“It’s often young creative people who come up with their own ideas and new solutions to local challenges,” Hoffmann said. “That’s far more successful than importing familiar models from the Western world.”

The Africa XChange Summit was organized by Rushlake Media in partnership with the production company Die Gesellschaft DGS, with programming curated by renowned British-Nigerian film curator Nadia Denton. The conference was supported by the Film- und Medienstiftung NRW and the Film Festival Cologne.

“With this conference, we want to put African countries in the spotlight,” Hoffmann explained. “The African creative industry should get the visibility and resources it needs to reach its full potential.”

Rushlake Media, which operates out of Cologne and Nairobi, has built a reputation for helping African content reach international platforms — a mission the summit echoed throughout its sessions.



Colman Domingo is Valentino Beauty's new global ambassador for fragrance

The 55-year-old actor has previously worked closely with the Italian luxury fashion house – even sitting in the front row for the brand's show at Paris Fashion Week earlier this month – and will now collaborate with the company to promote its fragrances lines around the world.

"The brand understands that beauty is about breaking moulds and celebrating what is unique. I believe in inspiring authenticity, and I see that same spirit in every fragrance."

Claudia Marcocci, Valentino Beauty brand president at L'Oreal – which holds Valentino's fragrance and beauty licence – commented: "His creativity and integrity resonate deeply with Valentino Beauty's mission, making him the perfect partner as we continue to redefine what beauty means today."

The brand considers the Euphoria actor to be the ideal person to represent the fashion

house.

Valentino Beauty said: "Beyond his work, he is celebrated for his openness, generosity of spirit and unwavering commitment to storytelling that uplifts diverse voices."

"His dynamic style, fearless expression and ability to connect with audiences worldwide mirrors the brand's vision of beauty as an act of self-love and liberation."

Colman wore a black tuxedo designed by Valentino's creative director Alessandro Michele at the Golden Globe Awards earlier this year and his stylists Micah McDonald and Wayman Bannerman explained that he felt "comfortable" in the garment as he and Michele are "kindred spirits".

Wayman told The Hollywood Reporter: "There is definitely a comfort level there, There is a celebratory element that the brand brings to menswear fashion, and it's always a joyous moment when we connect with Alessandro and a custom creation."

So many influences and voices can be expressed through fashion, and Alessandro is not afraid to find the meeting point for those multiple elements."

Micah added: "Alessandro and Colman definitely became kindred spirits and there's another level of pride in that, when you can wear clothing created by someone you believe in on a human level."

The pair also explained how they adore working with the Sing Sing star because of his keen interest in style.

Wayman said: "Our fittings are always super fun, because he's such a free spirit and adores fashion."

"We try a lot of things in fittings — different colours and silhouettes, mixing prints and patterns together, we play with shapes — and Colman's always all for it, and we never take very long, because we move through things organically. We're all just so in sync."

www.capitalfm.co.ke

EXCLUSIVE |

‘I push boundaries!’

– Black Coffee celebrates joining global elite



By: Joy Mphande

Source: <https://www.timeslive.co.za>**Black Coffee is riding a wave of success.**

The Grammy-winning DJ, whose real name is Nkosinathi Innocent Maphumulo, was recently inducted into the inaugural Qatar Airways Creative 100 at Art Basel Paris, selected in conjunction with Qatar Airways and American producer Swizz Beats, who is also the co-founder of The Dean Collection.

“This is a very exciting moment in my career as I look to tap further outside my comfort zones in all sectors of my being — music, fashion, arts and the like,” he told TshisaLIVE in an exclusive interview.

The Creative 100 is a global platform that aims to celebrate and connect the people shaping art, culture, sport, design, music and entertainment. The full list of inductees

will be revealed globally in February 2026 at the flagship event in Doha.

“It’s a real honour to be categorised among such greatness and good company across so many various sectors of the entertainment business. It’s my wish to always be surrounded by excellence as I push boundaries.

“This award and the surrounding events has been inspiring on many levels — I have always tried to push boundaries and think outside the box. These moments remind us that nothing is out of reach. That said, I don’t think the island is ever quite “conquered” and that’s the beauty of my job: evolving with the moment, always trying to push forward.”

“It’s important to always remember where you came from. Success isn’t born overnight; it’s a cultivation of years of dedication, sacrifice and focus that can’t be shifted”

— Black Coffee

As he flies the South African flag high, Black Coffee says he could not be more proud of the young talent that has emerged, bridging cultures and telling South African stories.

“The raw talent emerging from my country is undeniable. Music and dance is a part of our day-to-day life and to be able to transmit our culture further is a blessing. At the end of the day, music is our only universal language, so being able to spread joy is where the global reach stems from.”

He’s garnered a cult following in Ibiza, where he’s delivered high-energy performances alongside some of the biggest names in the global music scene.

“Hard work and dedication to building a safe space for all. We’ve created a really beautifully diverse community on Saturdays at Hi. Each set I perform is carefully curated to the moment, city, venue and beyond — but ultimately I play music that I love, that comes from the heart. That’s the only way to transmit the best experience possible.”

Beyond the studio and the DJ booth, which sees him travelling across the globe, he’s made headlines in Mzansi for finalising his divorce and acquiring a jaw dropping R157m villa in Clifton, Cape Town.

He continues a busy global touring schedule, with dates announced for late 2025 and early 2026 including Dublin, Los Angeles, Berlin, Egypt, Dubai, Brazil and Tulum, Mexico. He is also scheduled to host the Black Coffee Weekender in Cape Town in February 2026.

“It’s important to always remember where you came from. Success isn’t born overnight; it’s a cultivation of years of dedication, sacrifice and focus that can’t be shifted.”



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