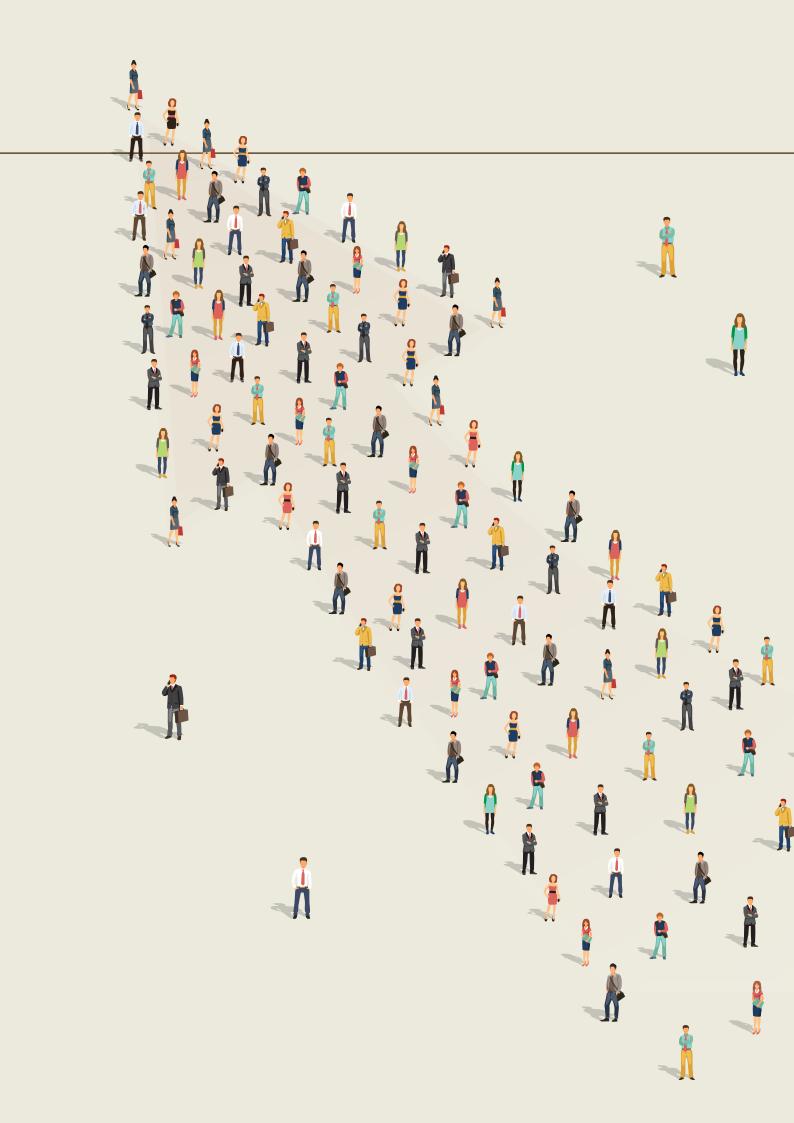
South African Leadership Standard



2017 First Edition





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Introduction



"If you consciously choose to be a positive influence in the world, you will always find opportunities to make a difference."

Thuli Madonsela

Why do we need a South African Leadership Standard?

Our South Africa of the mid to late 2010's is generally acknowledged to be experiencing a crisis of leadership. For some time now we have been confronted daily with examples of organisational failures in all spheres of the economy and in many institutions of our society, which are often rooted in our fractured past, but must be dealt with in the present and future though strong and effective leadership which, unfortunately, is largely lacking. Our reputation as a nation is under threat and the repercussions are felt financially and socially by everyone in the country.

The leadership crisis has to be looked at also as a moral crisis, because sometimes we can see strong leadership, but coming from a poor moral base which does not place morals, ethics and good governance at the forefront. The results are scandals, corruption and damage to people.

Our young democracy cannot afford such leadership shortcomings if we are to solve our national development problems, which manifest largely as unemployment, inequality and poverty, and if we are to get ourselves onto an economic growth path which will benefit all South Africans.

We have pockets of excellent leadership across all spheres of the economy, individuals who deliver valuable results and role model good moral leadership. However, these pockets do not spread their positive influence as much as we would hope they would, and as a result thereof, we do not achieve a critical mass of good leadership.

Even good leaders will agree that the role and task of leadership is complex in modern times. A volatile and increasingly uncertain business environment, a lack of economic growth, uncertainty, increased compliance requirements, business and political scandals, rapid change, technological advancement, disruptive technologies, globalisation and a myriad of other factors complicate the role of leaders.

Against the backdrop of this leadership crisis, the development of a national leadership standard will assist in developing authentic leaders and mobilising them to rise to the occasion based on clear guidelines for leadership practice. We need a common platform of understanding what leadership means for SA leaders in all fields so that we can unlock the potential in SA's workforce and society in general. We need a standard to guide all leaders in their daily leadership practice and a common understanding on the demands of leadership which can serve two important functions:

- To present to leaders in simple terms what is expected of them; and
- To form the basis from which to understand current failures of leadership in many sectors.

From here, we can identify actions to improve leadership in South Africa.

What is the scope of the Leadership Standard – who is a leader?

For the purposes of this Standard, we consider that 'anyone with influence' should be considered to be a leader, no matter his or her level in the organisation and no matter what type of organisation, whether Parliament, government, public sector, private sector or an NGO. Sometimes, therefore, a leader has structural authority over a team of people and sometimes a leader is a subject matter expert or internal consultant who influences people across the organisation and possibly represents the organisation externally. Someone who operates as a self-employed consultant would also have a leadership role within his or her sphere of professional work.

The 'influence' may be such that it can be exercised directly or relatively directly. Thus, for example, shareholders of a company who are passive investors would not be considered to be leaders for the purposes of this Standard. Once a shareholder takes on an active role, either through active influence or pressure on the Board, or by becoming a Board member or taking on an executive role, then such shareholders would be exercising a leadership role.

For the purposes of the Standard, the sphere of influence is one which extends outside our own role as a private citizen who has influence within circles of family, friends or neighbours. However, many of the concepts contained in the Standard could usefully be incorporated into those more private roles to enhance the quality of leadership within those roles.

The Standard refers frequently to 'employees', who are essentially the followers of leaders in a formal organisation. However, it is important to note that the leaders themselves, at all levels, are employees also.

Why is this Leadership Standard issued by the SABPP?

The SA Board for People Practices (SABPP) is an HR professional and quality assurance body operating in accordance with the NQF Act and the Skills Development Act. Research by the SABPP in 2011 revealed that HR practitioners lacked a national identity given the absence of a national framework on HR professionalism. In short, each HR practitioner does his own thing, or conforms to his or her company's approach to HR. Hence there are inconsistencies in HR practices, within companies, across companies, industries and nationally. The HR Management System Model and a set of HR Management Standards was unanimously supported throughout the country and subsequently approved by the SABPP Board after extensive multi-stakeholder consultation and involvement. Since then, a full audit framework has been developed to audit organisations against the HR Standards.

The South African HR standards have provided leadership within the HR domain of practice, and have been successfully implemented in several countries and have attracted interest from all over the world.

Inevitably, with SABPP having raised the bar on HR practice, attention is drawn by many stakeholders to the parallel need to raise the bar on the people management skills and behaviours of organisations' leaders and line managers, and the SABPP has been requested to address this issue. Many of the HR Directors implementing the HR Standards have commented on the lack of leadership and people management skills of their management teams, which are seen as a major obstacle to implementing the HR Standards successfully within their organisations.

Something must be done, and it starts with the collaboration between the SABPP, Wits Enterprise and Talent Talks to drive excellence in leadership as one of the key people practices. The SABPP sees leadership as the first in a list of key people practices that managers need to master for proper governance and performance. Once the leadership standard is in place, other standards can follow.

How can a leadership standard help improve matters?

The enormous body of research and academic writing on the topic of leadership illustrates how complex the concept of leadership can be. However, most people taking on leadership roles would like to know in simple terms what is expected of them and how they can continuously improve their leadership skills.

Part of the complexity of the concept of leadership is a debate on the emphasis between "being" and "doing" as individual leaders. The "being" is around personal or self-mastery, around being authentic with your followers, around paying full attention to their needs. Whereas the "doing" is often seen as carrying out the management tasks that the leader is expected to do.

Across and within organisations, inconsistencies in leadership and people management practices occur. The different philosophies of universities, business schools and other learning providers contribute to the problem, given the fact that some institutions' management and leadership curricula are dominated by traditional management approaches developed during the previous century, while current and future demands require a different leadership paradigm and competence. The result is that students exiting these institutions come from different academic backgrounds based on vastly different schools of thought. In many cases, these students have to be retrained according to the needs of the organisation, and some companies even go as far as to create their own corporate universities to train their own leaders.

The intention with this South African Leadership Standard is to provide one simple framework against which organisations and individual leaders can reflect on their leadership. Each leadership model taught and applied by different universities, business schools, consultants, psychologists and learning providers can be mapped to this standard. It is not the intention of the SABPP to insist that there is only one model of leadership, the complexity of the topic clearly shows that this is not realistic.

Therefore the way in which the Leadership Standard is framed concentrates on four parts, which will enable a consistent application of different leadership models. We believe that through this framework, the "being" is translated into visible outcomes, some of which depend on "doing" and others on the relationships created by "being".

These parts are:

- A Leadership Framework depicting different dimensions which need to be considered. For each of the five core elements within this Framework, three sections have been elaborated.
- 2. Outcome Statement. This explains what should be a visible outcome of leadership in this element.
- 3. Fundamental Requirements for Good Practice. These are a set of clear and simple indicators which will form the building blocks for achieving the Outcome Statement.
- 4. Key Questions. These are a set of questions which any organisation or individual leader needs to reflect on and arrive at an answer which suits the specific context of the organisation or individual leader.

What is the difference between the Leadership Standard and a leadership competency model?

The Standard is couched in terms which emphasise visible results or outcomes of the leaders' behaviours. The attitudes, skills and knowledge behind those behaviours are not addressed in the Standard. Thus the many leadership competency models in use in organisations can be focussed to ensure that they guide leaders' behaviour towards the achievement of the Standard.

How have we approached the compilation of this South African Leadership Standard?

The three partners in this project, the SABPP, Talent Talks and Wits Enterprise, adopted the consultative and cocreating methodology used previously by the SABPP when it formulated the HR Management Standards. A high profile event was organised for September 14th 2017 at which interested individuals from a wide range of South African organisations (private, public and non-profit) came together to consider and discuss what the content should be for the Leadership Standard. The product of the group discussions at this event is contained in this document and is presented as an initial "first edition" which is to form the basis of wide consultation across South Africa.

The range and depth of stakeholders who have an interest in creating and adopting the best possible South African Leadership Standard is immense, and a careful strategy will be followed in identifying, approaching and involving as many stakeholders as possible.

Can this South African Leadership Standard be applied outside South Africa?

The Leadership Standard was drawn up by South Africans in response to a crisis in leadership in South Africa. However, it is likely that the content of the Leadership Standard would apply in many other different situations. A similar consultative process would be needed in another country to ensure applicability and stakeholder involvement.

Acknowledgements

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For the illustration of the Leadership Standard Elements, Lita Currie, 3stickmen.









The delegates who worked on the content at the September 14th Event were:

Name and Surname	Organisation	
Table 1 - Reflection		
Frans Kutumela	MTN	
Anthea Saffy	Anglo American Platinum	
Allen Mbalati	Gauteng Department of Health	
Cabangile Sithole	Medipost Pharmacy	
Ben Van der Schyff	CTU Training Solutions	
Jan Hollenbach	Maccauvlei Learning Academy	
Sarie Venter	SABPP	
Table 2 - Vision		
Kate Dikgale-Freeman	DNA	
Brian Matthee	Chryso Southern Africa (Pty) Ltd	
lan Becker	Boston City Campus	
Jerry Gule	Institute of People Management	
Maropeng Sebothoma	SARS	
Karel Stanz	University of Pretoria	
Addi Lang	Forever Changed Campaign	
Table 3 - Vision		
Shamila Singh	SABPP	
Charl Coetzer	Basil Read Limited	
Milly Paile	National School of Government	
Jako Poolman	BMT College	
Mike Truelock	South African OD Network	
Sello Makhubela	SMATMASS	
Lindiwe Nombaca	SABPP	
Table 4 - Reflection		
Mabore Sithole	Medicall	
Christo Louw	Kap Automotive	
Moses Moshe Maswanganye	Department of Transport	
Melicia Williams	SAMWU College	
Sandra Schlebusch	Assessment Centre Study Group	

SABPP	
Anglo American Platinum	
National School of Government	
Bytes System Integration	
University of Johannesburg	
SABPP	
Rand Water	
Financial Intelligence Centre	
New Dimensions Magazine	
Pick n Pay	
Department of Home Affairs	
University of Pretoria	
SAMWU	
Bowmans	
SAMWU College	
SABPP	
Sun International	
Pick n Pay	
Gauteng Department of Health	
Boston City Campus	
Redefine Properties Limited	
Forever Changing Campaign	
SABPP	
IQ Business	

SABPP

Annetjie Moore

Name and Surname	Organisation	
Table 8 - Values		
Eric Moepeng	Private	
Suren Naidoo	OUTsurance Insurance Company Ltd	
Gregory Royce	St Peter's Preparatory School	
Nerina Jordaan	TiAuto Investments	
Naren Vassan	SABPP	
Zanele Ndiweni	SABPP	
Selloane Malcala	SALGA	
Lerato Mashee	SAMWU	
Table 9 - Values		
Victor Rannona	Petzetakis Africa (Pty) Ltd	
Tebogo Mphamo	Tsogo Sun	
Ephraim Mojelefa	Rapid Loading Terminal	
Fanny Grobler	eStudy (Pty) Limited	
Janine Nel	OUTsurance Insurance Company Ltd	
Miranda Kiguwa	S A Bankers Services Company	
Nolunthando Malgas	SABPP	
Bongikele Ndaba	SABPP	
Valencia Lupondwana	Independent Consultant	
Table 10 - Leading Peop	le	
Frank De Beer	Bytes Systems Integration	
Sharmila Govind	BASF	
Milka Hope	Mercantile Bank	
Phyllis Malope	SACONO	
Tintswalo Makhubele	SACONO	
Gwen Francis	TiAuto Investments	
Mmathema Matle	SA Reserve Bank	
Tebogo Mahesu	SABPP	

Where do we go from here?

An explicit model and approach is needed to utilise the knowledge of South Africa's good leaders and to replicate and build on their successes. Good leadership should become the norm and not the exception, hence the need for a leadership standard that spans across industries, sectors and spheres of society. Exceptional leadership is needed to take organisations, industries and South Africa as a country forward.

This "first edition" will serve as the basis to start the journey. Whilst further consultation will happen, we believe that we already have the content that organisations and individuals can start to use to reflect on current practice, identify gaps and take action.

For further information about the leadership standard work, please contact the SABPP office on (011) 045 5400 or see the website www.sabpp.co.za for more than 50 articles about the initiative. Regular updates and progress reports are available on twitter @SABPP1 and Instagram @sabpp_1 using the hashtag #LeadershipStandard.

We want to thank all leaders and other participants who have been involved in the development of the draft Leadership Standard. You are welcome to share it with your colleagues for further inputs and consultation. You will see the Leadership Standard framework and the full standard on pages 10 – 19 of this document. On 26 October 2017, delegates at the launch function signed a Leadership Pledge to publicly commit to the implementation of the Standard.

Let us prioritise leadership in South Africa to create better organisations making a more significant impact on society!

Leadership greetings

Siphiwe Moyo, Chairperson: SABPP Marius Meyer, CEO: SABPP Xolani Mawande, COO: SABPP

Penny Abbott, Research and Policy Adviser, SABPP

26 October 2017

The Leadership Standard Framework

The five elements of the Framework are contained in a context where the Leadership Philosophy of the organisation and its individual leaders sets a Tone at the Top and is expressed through the Organisation Culture which delivers the Leadership Outcomes.

The five elements are:

- 1. Instilling a Vision
- 2. Delivering Results which Create Value
- 3. Living the Values
- 4. Influencing People
- 5. Reflecting for Improvement

These are shown diagrammatically as below:

Leadership is all about providing a vision and direction for the organisation and the ability to inspire people to go there with you."

Nonkululeko Gobodo

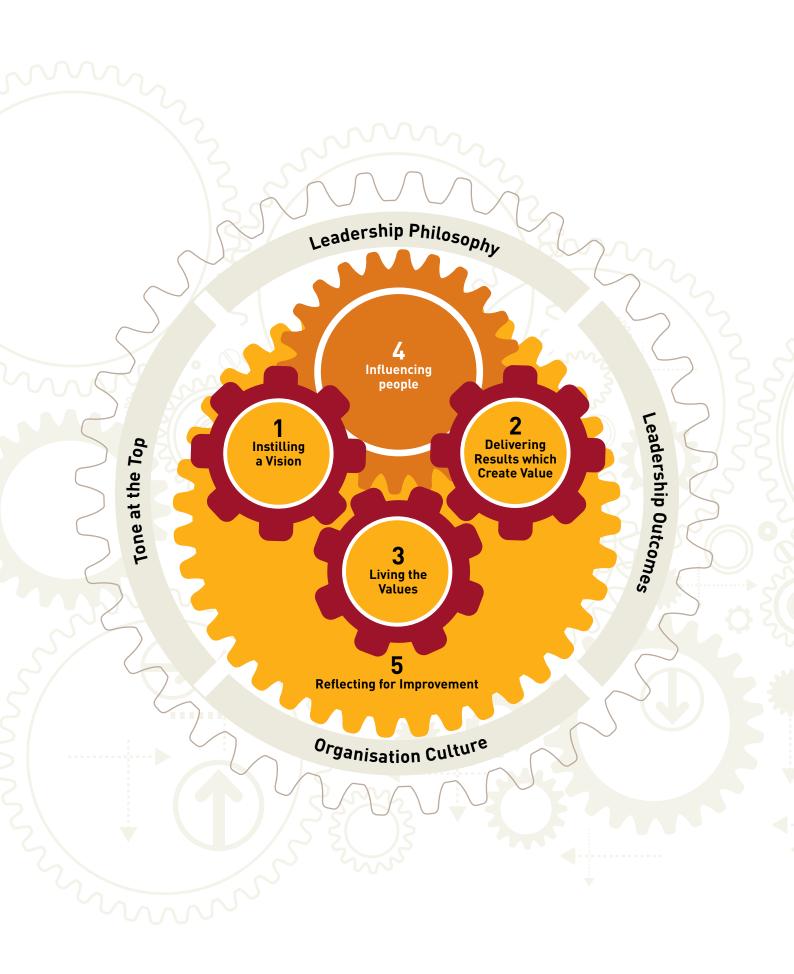
Each of the five elements contains three sections:

- Outcome statement. This explains what should be a visible outcome of leadership in this element.
- ii. Fundamental Requirements for Good Practice. These are expressed in a set of clear and simple indicators which will form the building blocks for achieving the Outcome Statement
- iii. Key Questions. These are a set of questions which any organisation or individual leader needs to reflect on and arrive at an answer which suits the specific context of the organisation or individual leader.

We have not attempted a definition of each element because that can be limiting and can give rise to different opinions which might undermine the power of the Leadership Standard. We believe that we should concentrate on the outcomes which imply action and moving forward rather than a definition which is static. The Outcome Statement is intended to be clear enough to convey what we mean by each element.

Leadership is dealt with both in the collective and the individual. The actions and behaviour of the collective leadership have the biggest influence on the organisation, while the actions and behaviour of individual leaders need to be aligned to that of the collective in order to ensure consistency and integrity to the collective leadership. Leaders need to recognise that there are three dimensions which will influence the effectiveness of a leader: the leader him/herself, the followers and the situation. The Leadership Standard describes, as explained above, the outcomes expected from the interaction between these dimensions.

On the following pages you will find the content of the leadership standard.



Leadership Standard Element



1.1 OUTCOME STATEMENT

The collective leadership of the organisation sends a strong, simple message of the chosen future for the organisation which clearly conveys a purpose which inspires stakeholders and enables the organisation to find its way through uncertainties as they unfold in the future, presenting new opportunities and threats.

Individual leaders live this message and make it real for their teams, showing them the line of sight between the vision and their work.

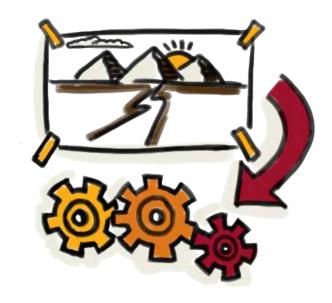






- 1.2.1 The vision is appropriate to the organisation's South African context and will contribute to the national vision as stated in the Constitution: "to achieve a better quality of life for all citizens and to free the potential of each person". The need for job creation and alleviation of poverty and inequality is front of mind in deciding on the organisation's chosen future. The vision demonstrates the active citizenship of the organisation.
- 1.2.2 The vision is enduring but flexible to changing circumstances. The vision is active in bridging the present and the future.
- 1.2.3 The vision is ethical, realistic and practical and clearly shows how the organisation and its leaders will contribute positively to sustainability of all six capitals of the International Integrated Reporting Framework (financial, manufactured, intellectual, human, social and natural).
- 1.2.4 The process of defining the vision is collaborative, including as many stakeholder groupings as is appropriate so that a comprehensive range of risks is considered and differing interests of stakeholders are taken into account and balanced.
- 1.2.5 The vision is widely and regularly communicated and stakeholders are helped to understand the context and application of the vision.

- 1.3.1 What is the most effective collaboration process with stakeholders to ensure positive relationships and engagement with the vision?
- 1.3.2 Have we checked that our organisation culture will support the vision and if it is not aligned, what will we do about it?
- 1.3.3 What are the best ways to convey the message of the vision to stakeholders?
- 1.3.4 How will we know that everyone in the organisation is aligned in working towards the vision?
- 1.3.5 How will we keep the vision alive and inspiring for our people?
- 1.3.6 How will we ensure that our vision continues to be relevant to our changing context?



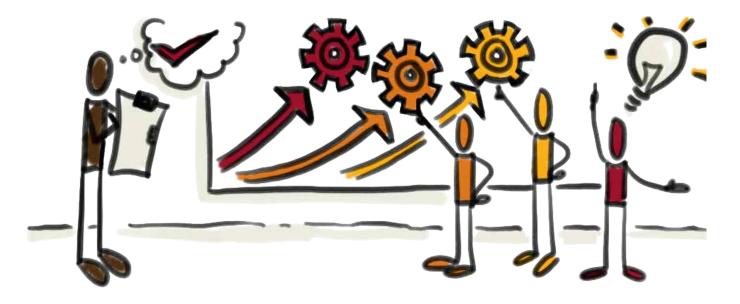
Delivering Results which Create Value

2.1 OUTCOME STATEMENT

The collective leadership of the organisation translates the vision into a clear strategy and then into products and/ or services which create tangible value for the different stakeholders. This value is delivered in innovative, ethical and sustainable ways. All activities of the organisation are properly governed.

Individual leaders align their efforts to ensure that they lead their teams to contribute to those tangible outputs, delivering results which have a positive impact on the performance of the organisation.





- 2.2.1 The organisation's products and/or services are defined in terms of value created in relation to all of the six capitals of the International Integrated Reporting Framework to ensure sustainability.
- 2.2.2 Sound governance systems are in place, in conformance with national and international good practice, as regularly updated. These systems will include monitoring and evaluation of achieved results against the intended results to ensure that value is appropriately delivered.
- 2.2.3 The skills of all leaders in management techniques (planning, organising and controlling) are developed and regularly updated so that leaders deliver value effectively and efficiently.
- 2.2.4 An entrepreneurial, innovative approach to product/ service development, customer service, organisation design, and management processes and systems is pervasive across the organisation and this approach values and promotes the advantages that diversity and inclusion can bring. A spirit of continuous improvement means that lessons learned from experience are fed back into processes.
- 2.2.5 Clear responsibilities and accountabilities are allocated so that rewards and recognition for achievement/performance are linked to the delivery of value in the short, medium and longer term.

 Reward systems and processes are carefully designed to balance team and individual contributions, to build collaboration and to avoid unhealthy internal competition and unethical practices.
- 2.2.6 Changes necessitated by technology or context: balance the interests of stakeholders; are soundly designed; and are introduced using sound change management approaches to ensure adoption and/or effective implementation and to minimise negative disruptions.

- 2.3.1 How do we ensure that we continue to create significant value as markets and contexts evolve? How will we measure the value we create?
- 2.3.2 How do we balance the value created for the six different capitals?
- 2.3.3 How do we ensure that we deliver services/products that are ethically marketed, delivered and maintained?
- 2.3.4 How do we ensure we are up to date with technology and market trends whilst still maintaining some core internal stability?
- 2.3.5 How do we build the capability of our employees and other stakeholders to positively engage with necessary change?

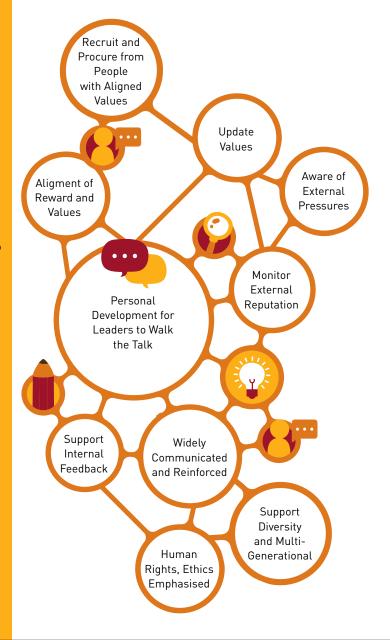


Living the Values

3.1 OUTCOME STATEMENT

The collective leadership of the organisation has developed through collaboration a set of clear values (principles and norms) which underpin all decisions and actions in the organisation and promote an ethical culture. These values are clearly communicated and are seen to be consistently lived by the collective leadership. The reputation that the organisation earns is clearly linked to these values.

Individual leaders build their "personal brand" through commitment to these values and they role model the values to their teams, taking courageous decisions where required and standing up for what is right.

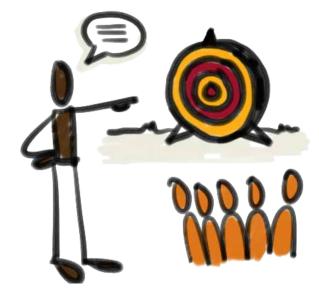




- 3.2.1 The values defined by the organisation uphold basic human rights as set out in the South African Bill of Rights and promote ethical and positive outcomes for the organisation, its employees, other stakeholders and society.
- 3.2.2 The values defined by the organisation are appropriate to the multi-generational and diverse nature of stakeholder groupings.
- 3.2.3 Appropriate communication methods are in place to ensure that employees know, understand and can shape their behaviour according to the values.
- 3.2.4 The organisation helps employees to live the organisation's values where they find it difficult to resolve contradictions and pressures from the world outside.
- 3.2.5 The organisation has in place ways to monitor adherence to values by all levels of employees including all leaders. Reward and recognition processes incorporate both positive and negative reinforcement for behaviour in line with the values. Managers and employees who do not live the values are not tolerated.
- 3.2.6 The organisation has in place ways to monitor its external reputation amongst various stakeholder groupings.
- 3.2.7 There is a trusted process in place where employees can give the organisation feedback on observed non-adherence to the values by fellow employees of any level. Informal and formal grievances may be submitted based on non-adherence to values.
- 3.2.8 The organisation places importance on evaluating during the recruitment/procurement processes whether prospective employees and suppliers show that they will align themselves with the organisation's values
- 3.2.9 The organisation regularly evaluates the appropriateness of its values and adapts where necessary.

3.2.10 Individual leaders and future leaders (talent) are assisted with personal development so that they can authentically live the values and behave with integrity. Leaders throughout the organisation are known to "walk the talk" and are respected and trusted both internally and externally.

- 3.3.1 What is an effective collaboration process to ensure that our organisation's values both support our journey towards our vision and reflect the diversity of personal values of our leaders, other employees and other stakeholders?
- 3.3.2 Are appropriate positive and negative consequences implemented in our organisation to reinforce our values? Are we confident that our feedback process is trusted and protects those giving the feedback?
- 3.3.3 Where are we now in relation to living our values?
 Have we embedded values based leadership and decision making in all areas of our organisations so that our decisions are guided by our values at all times? Have we ensured ownership of our values by each employee in the organisation so that living values becomes "infectious"? Have we inspired values of ethics and integrity as desirable to all in our organisation?
- 3.3.4 Are we transparent in linking our decisions as leaders, including tender processes, ethical service delivery, appointing of staff and reward decisions, to our values?
- 3.3.5 What leadership development processes will most effectively help our leaders and future leaders to live our values?
- 3.3.6 Can we recognise and deal with anyone in the organisation who is a toxic leader?

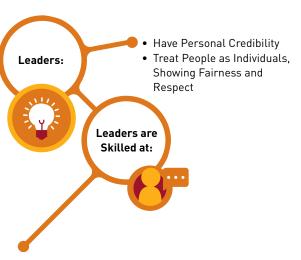


Influencing People

4.1 OUTCOME STATEMENT

Individual leaders throughout the organisation inspire and empower employees and other stakeholders, giving challenge, guidance and support so that individual and collective efforts are aligned to achieve the desired results

Individual leaders confront problems and take courageous people-centred decisions.



- Involving and Empowering Team Members
- Communication
- Assigning and Delegating Roles, Responsibilities and Tasks
- Selecting People Responsibly
- Setting Expectations and Goals
- Motivating Individuals
- Objectively Assessing Performance and Causes of Non-Performance
- Giving Honest and Constructive Feedback
- Making Objective and Fair Decisions on Reward and Recognition
- Confronting Unacceptable Behaviour
- Coaching
- Assisting with Career Development
- Identifying Cases of Personal Problems Affecting Work
- Promoting Collaboration and Teamwork
- Adapting Leadership Style to the Situation



- 4.2.1 The organisation demonstrates its belief that leaders at all levels should:
 - a) have personal credibility, based on an authentic and consistent track record of making courageous, ethical decisions and communicating honestly, with the ability to admit that they don't know in conditions of uncertainty;
 - take trouble to understand their team members as individuals and show fairness and respect for people in all their actions and decisions.
- 4.2.2 Leaders in the organisation learn and put into practice the skills to:
 - a) Involve team members (whether permanent, temporary, outsourced or contracted) appropriately and effectively on matters affecting them, creating a safe space for them to innovate and make suggestions;
 - b) Communicate fully, openly and honestly with employees and other stakeholders, conveying both good news and bad news, using a communication style appropriate to the particular group of people;
 - Assign roles and responsibilities, delegating tasks and responsibilities appropriately to empower team members;
 - d) Select people responsibly, in terms of existing competence or the potential to develop;
 - e) Set clear expectations and goals for team members;
 - f) Determine the best way to motivate each individual and create job satisfaction. Identify where a team member has a problem affecting their work and enable them to access the right assistance;
 - g) Support the team members through change processes,
 - Evaluate performance and determine root causes of non-performance, give honest and constructive feedback on performance;
 - i) Make objective decisions on positive and negative consequences of performance, including recognition and pay, ensuring that the organisation's pay policy is applied fairly;

- j) Confront breaches of ethics, values, policies and operating procedures within the team and determine appropriate action;
- k) Coach team members to acquire new skills, take on new tasks and improve performance;
- Assist team members with their career development through objective evaluation of potential, suitable career paths and a personal development plan;
- m) Promote collaboration and teamwork within the team and with other teams;
- Adapt his or her leadership style to characteristics of the team members and to different situations.

- 4.3.1 How do we ensure that leaders are acquiring and practising all the required people management skills?
- 4.3.2 How do we identify future leaders?
- 4.3.3 How do we develop those future leaders?
- 4.3.4 How do we measure leaders' performance in leading people?
- 4.3.5 How do we make sure that we help our leaders adapt their influencing skills to different cultures or situations (for example, in different countries)?
- 4.3.6 How do we make sure we help our leaders adapt their people management skills for a future world of work?

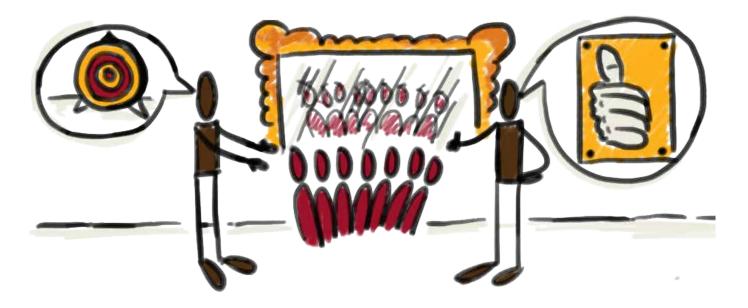


Reflecting for Improvement

5.1 OUTCOME STATEMENT

The collective leadership of the organisation has created a culture where leaders individually and collectively take time out to stand back and think about to what extent they have lived up to the values and expectations of the organisation and what has or has not been achieved. Reflection has a clear purpose: to improve self-awareness through new insights to assist with self-correction, continuous improvement of results and development of self and others. These insights are communicated openly and honestly with stakeholders.





- 5.2.1 The organisation actively promotes a reflection culture through assigning time and space to regular self-assessment activities of teams and individuals. Individual reflection is not only about what has been achieved, but also aims to improve self-mastery, which includes emotional intelligence.
- 5.2.2 Teams and individuals are trained in reflective techniques and in giving and receiving honest and constructive feedback aimed at reducing personal 'blind spots'.
- 5.2.3 Leaders are encouraged to reflect with the support of a reflection partner(s). Coaching and personal networks focused on learning are considered as useful tools to support reflection.
- 5.2.4 Outcomes of reflection activities are valued, recognised and used to improve leadership, processes, systems and practices in the organisation.

- How can we show the strategic benefit of reflection?

 How can we fit time and space for reflection into our many organisational priorities? Are we ready for this?
- 5.3.2 What is the most effective support we can give our leaders to enable them to build a capability for honest and constructive reflection?
- 5.3.3 How can we recognise those leaders who most effectively practice reflection?
- 5.3.4 How can we monitor that reflection is occurring and is delivering tangible results for individuals and for the organisation?
- 5.3.5 What reflective practices have we implemented in our teams? Are we expanding our repertoire of reflective practices? Are we looking at both intended and unintended consequences? Are we critically reviewing our personal and team decision making processes to guard against unconscious bias and cognitive biases?

My Leadership Pledge

In my calling as a leader, and in my aspiration to be an outstanding leader, I commit myself to the Leadership Standard with the following actions:

- to challenge the status quo with courage, perseverance and resilience in the relentless search of a better future for all, including addressing socio-economic challenges
- to create and pursue an inspiring, inclusive, and shared vision/dream that will leave a worthy, lasting legacy for current and future generations
- to serve others and the common good unselfishly through a 'we' agenda, even if personal sacrifices are required of me
- to live our values with unwavering integrity at all times, and to be ethical in all I do by being good, doing good, and ensuring good
- in demonstrating genuine authenticity, to lead by example, my talking and walking being the same under all circumstances
- 6. to take personal accountability for all of my decisions, actions and their consequences, and also of those I am leading
- 7. to treat those I lead with respect, dignity, fairness and care, and create deep trusting relationships with them around a shared destiny
- 8. to enable and empower those I am leading to be courageous, challenging followers, filled with passion, hope, confidence, and faith
- 9. to be visible and present where it truly matters and to ensure that real value is being added
- to reflect on my leadership and to continuously develop myself as a leader, and to support other leaders and staff in their development and performance

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Tel: +27 11 045 5400 Fax: +27 11 482 4830

www.sabpp.co.za info@sabpp.co.za

223 Jan Smuts Avenue Rosebank, 2193

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