

P *Productivity* & *Quality* **Q** *Forum*

ISSN No: 1024 0 8080
January - March 2023
Volume 21 No. 5



**BNPC-DRIVING BOTSWANA'S
ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION
TOWARDS PRODUCTIVITY,
COMPETITIVENESS AND
EFFICIENCY.**



**BOTSWANA
NATIONAL
PRODUCTIVITY
CENTRE**

Together, we transform Botswana

BNPC STRATEGIC FOUNDATIONS AND QUALITY POLICY

VISION

Leader in driving national productivity.

BNPC will lead in transforming the current productivity landscape in Botswana across differing sectors, enterprises, and community groups. The leadership will be demonstrated by coordinating key stakeholders in order to co-create and deliver value adding national productivity improvement initiatives for Botswana.

MISSION

We provide innovative and high impact solutions that enhance national productivity and competitiveness.

BNPC will continuously scan the environment in pursuit of productivity improvement opportunities that create a strategic playground for innovation. The goal is for Botswana to serve as a benchmark for national productivity improvement and BNPC to provide similar solutions globally.

STRATEGIC INTENT

To drive productivity in national prioritized sectors through Innovation, Technology, and Indigenous Knowledge by 2023. By 2023, BNPC is committed to have improved national productivity across all sectors with particular focus on national prioritized sectors – Mining, Agriculture, Tourism, Diamond Beneficiation and Financial Services. The Centre will conduct extensive research and application of indigenous knowledge to yield innovative solutions that address prevailing productivity and competitiveness challenges.

SLOGAN

Together, we transform Botswana

VALUES

Collaboration	We continuously exhibit teamwork and build each other up as we create value for Botswana. This goes beyond the confines of the Centre; therefore, we extend the same to all our stakeholders and partners as we form part of the national economic transformation value chain.
Innovation	At BNPC, every challenge is an opportunity to create human centred solutions through the use of indigenous knowledge and technology. We embrace our rich Botswana culture and intend to leverage and infuse its uniqueness into all that we do – creating a distinct BNPC mark.
Passion	We are zealous about creating value for Botswana, as we deliver our mission with pride and purpose. We passionately inspire and equip others to constantly strive towards meaningful economic and societal contribution.
Agility	We thrive under pressure and in uncomfortable circumstances with agility. We create opportunities where there appears to be none and remain resilient in the process.
Integrity	Our posture is rooted in doing what is right at all times. Each member of our team reflects resolute integrity by displaying transparency and accountability in all internal and external engagements.

QUALITY POLICY STATEMENT

We commit to providing impactful transformational services in productivity and quality improvement to meet expectations of all interested parties. This will be achieved by setting objectives against which the Centre will measure, manage, and communicate progress, and continually improve the Quality management system to ensure compliance with all applicable requirements of ISO 9001:2015.





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WORK STRESS AND ITS MANAGEMENT

By Kabo Solomon

Most of us are aware that employee stress is an increasing problem in organisations. Employees are often stressed out from greater workloads and having to work longer hours because of downsizing at their organisations. There are surveys that show employees complain about the stress created in trying to balance work and family responsibilities. The purpose of this article is to identify causes and consequences of stress, and then consider what individuals and organisations can do to reduce it.

Stress is a dynamic condition in which an individual is confronted with an opportunity, constraint, or demand related to what he or she desires for which the outcome is perceived to be both uncertain and important. In other words, stress involves the interaction between a person's environment. The physical or psychological demands from the environment that cause stress are called stressors. Stress is not always bad. There is eustress, which is pleasant (such as winning a lottery or taking pleasure in a job well done), and distress, which is unpleasant (such as losing a job or being under enormous pressure at work). While stress is typically discussed in negative context, it also has a positive value. It is an opportunity when it offers potential gain. Consider, for an example, the superior performance that an athlete or stage performer gives in highly competitive situations like the Olympics. Such individuals often use stress positively to rise to the occasion and perform at or near their maximum (Selye, 1976).

Potential sources of stress

There are several sources of stress. Environmental, organisational and individual factors act as sources of stress.

Environmental factors

Environmental uncertainty influences stress levels among employees. Changes in the business cycle creates economic uncertainties. When the economy is contracting, for example when the value of the pula depreciates, people become increasingly anxious about their job security. The wellbeing of employees can be affected because they must re-evaluate their lifestyles, for example, by cutting some leisure spending in order to cope with mortgage payments after interest hikes. Technological uncertainty can cause stress. Because new innovations can make an employee's skill and experience obsolete in a very short period of time, computers, robotics, automation, and similar forms of technological innovation are a threat to many people and cause them stress (Motowidlo, Packaed, and Manning (1987).

Organisational factors

Task demands are factors related to a person's job. They include the design of the individual's job (autonomy, task variety, degree of automation), working conditions, and physical layout. Assembly



lines, for instance, can put pressure on people when their speed is perceived as excessive. Similarly, working in an overcrowded room or in a location where interruptions are constant can increase anxiety and stress.

Motowidlo, Packaed, and Manning (1987) indicates that role demands relate to pressures placed on a person as a function of the role he or she plays in the organisation. Role conflicts creates expectations that may be hard to reconcile or satisfy. Role overload is experienced when the employee is expected to do more than time permits. Role ambiguity is created when the role expectations are not clearly understood, and the employee is not sure what he or she is to do.

Murphy (1986) is of the opinion that Interpersonal demands are pressures created by other employees. Lack of social support from colleagues and poor interpersonal relationships can cause considerable stress, especially among employees with a high social need.

Organisational Structure defines the level of differentiation in the organisation, the degree of rules and regulations, and where decisions are made. Excessive rules and lack of participation in decisions that affect an employee are examples of structural variables that might be potential sources of stress (Murphy, (1986).

Organisational leadership represents the managerial style of the organisation's senior executive. Some chief executive officers create a culture characterised by tension, fear and anxiety. They establish unrealistic pressures to perform in the short run, impose excessively tight controls and routinely fire employees (Parker and DeCotiis, TA, 1983)

Individual Factors

People hold family and personal relationships dear. Marital difficulties, the breaking off of a relationship, and discipline troubles with children are examples of relationship problems that create stress for employees because they aren't left behind when they arrive at work. Economic problems created by people, individuals over-extending their financial resources is another set of personal

troubles that can create stress for employees and distract their attention from work. Some people are poor money managers or have wants that always seem to exceed their earning capacity.

Individual Differences

Some people thrive on stressful situations, while others are overwhelmed by them. Perception moderates the relationship between a potential stress condition and an employee's reaction to it. For example, one person's fear that he will lose his job because his company is laying off personnel may be perceived by another as an opportunity to get a large severance allowance and start his own business.

Experience on the job can be related to stress. People who remain with the organisation longer are those with more stress resistant traits, or those who are more resistant to the stress characteristics of their organisation. Secondly, people eventually develop coping mechanisms to deal with stress. Because this takes time, senior members of the organisation are more likely to be fully adapted and should experience less stress than the newly employed staff members.

People with internal locus of control believe they control their own destiny. Those with an external locus of control believe their lives are controlled by outside forces. Evidence indicates that internals perceive their jobs to be less stressful than do externals. When internals and externals confront a similar stressful situation, the internals are likely to believe that they have a significant effect on the results. Therefore, they act to take control of events. In contrast, externals are more likely to be passive and feel helpless. Some people's personality includes a high degree of hostility and anger. These people are chronically suspicious and mistrustful of others. Hostility significantly increases a person's stress and risk for heart diseases.

Consequences of stress

Stress manifests itself in several ways. For instance, an individual who is experiencing a high level of stress may develop high blood pressure, ulcers, irritability, difficulty in making routine decisions, loss of appetite, accident proneness and the like. These can be subsumed under three(3) general categories: physiological, psychological, and behavioural symptoms (Forbes and Pekala, 1993).

Physiological symptoms-most of the early concern with stress is directed at physiological symptoms. This is predominantly because the topic was researched by specialists in the health and medical sciences. This research led to the conclusion that stress could create changes in the metabolism, increase heart and breathing rates, increase blood pressure, bring on headaches, and induce heart attacks (Forbes and Pekala, 1993).

Forbes and Pekala, (1993) are of the opinion that psychological symptoms-stress manifests itself in psychological states such as tension, anxiety, irritability, boredom and procrastination. When people are placed in jobs that make multiple and conflicting demands or in which there is a lack of clarity as to the incumbent's duties, authority and responsibilities, stress will be experienced.

Behavioural symptoms-This includes changes in productivity, absenteeism, turnover, changes in eating habits, increased smoking or consumption of alcohol, rapid speech, fidgeting and sleep disorders.

Managing stress

Spangenberg and Orpen-Lyall (2000) indicates that there are individual and organisational approaches towards managing stress. Individual approach is where an employee takes personal responsibility for reducing his or her stress level. Individual strategies that have proven effective include implementing time management techniques, increasing physical exercise, relaxation training and expanding the social support network. Cartwright and Cooper (1997) are of the opinion that organisational approaches to stress include improved personnel selection, job placement, use of realistic goal setting, redesigning of jobs, increased employee involvement, improved organisational communication, and establishment of corporate wellness programmes.

Conclusion

Stress management can play an important role in ensuring that organisations maximise from the talent they employ. Individuals and organisations play an important role in stress management. This is rightly so because they are both sources of stress. When employees are stressed, the labour productivity could be lowered, and this does not auger well for organisations in their pursuit for excellence. HR practitioners, line managers and co-workers need to join hands together to ensure that all factors that can result in stress are managed. Internationally, most employers develop Employee Assistance Programmes and Wellness Programmes as a way of managing stress and Botswana companies should benchmark and implement such programmes.

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PRODUCTIVITY TIPS FOR SMES AND INFORMAL SECTOR

By Bonno Bogatsu

The world over, SMEs and the informal sectors are becoming major drivers of the economy, so more effort should be made to increase their productivity and competitiveness. Even though they have great potential to boost economies and growth they are also the ones most susceptible to close within their first year. In Botswana a study done by BIDPA (Determinates of informal sector business success in Botswana, 2018) highlights that 70 percent of SMMEs in Botswana fail within the first eighteen months of operation, while the overall failure rate is around 80 percent. As such, this shows that these drivers of the economy must indeed be supported for sustainability, but the first support comes from within. A business owner has to ensure they are in the right state to receive help. The following tips can be used by individuals planning to start a business or an already existing business to assess their viability and approach to business thus also striving to improve productivity and competitiveness in their endeavour.

1. Customer Vaeroolue Propositions – Understanding your WHY

Why does your business exist – businesses should exist because there is a customer need, hence you start up to solve a problem that people have. It is important to understand the problem that people have, conduct research and assess if you can monetize the solution you see as befitting to this problem. In solving a problem that people have, you also become a beneficiary because people are willing to spend on it. Make a value proposition to the problem of your customers.

2. Understanding the numbers

After establishing that there is something that people need, one then must sit down and monetize the proposed solutions. This does not only mean making profit projects, but one also must do research to assess the viability of their idea. It is also important to know basic bookkeeping for your business.

3. Using the talent accessible to you – you cannot master everything

You may start as a solopreneur during the ideation stage of your business but once the business gears up towards being fully operational, it is important to engage knowledgeable and skilled people that can be delegated to do the jobs they are best suited for and passionate about. If you do not have the rightful knowledge and skills set, consider outsourcing those components of the business. In doing this it is also important to evaluate your network, who are the people that you know and can assist in growing your business; be it through word of mouth, referrals, or partnerships. Capitalize on this.



Clients listening attentively during the Mindset Change activation.

Now that our business is operational the next productivity tips to consider are.

4. Keep a workplan

Keep a detailed schedule for your intentions for a working day, that is, outline the activities and amounts of work you are to achieve on that day. Stick to achieving this. This will help form a routine that will make achieving your deliverables daily easy. Having this workplan will help you assess your achievements for the day and set SMART (SPECIFIC, MEASURABLE, ACHIEVABLE, RELEVANT AND TIME BOUND) targets for the next day.

5. Practice time management

Having outlined your targeted achievements for the day, now it is important to slot in the time that will be required to achieve each activity. Block your day into chunks of time and assign tasks to each of them. Some tasks must be done every day and others will be once a week or a month. Assigning time to your activities can also allow you to set goals in relation to time such as planning out your goals by weekly increments or monthly periods. This way tracking progress is easy – if a goal isn't accomplished within a set time frame, you'll know that something isn't working and needs your attention.

6. Prioritise your work

From developing a workplan and slotting time to the activities in your workplan it is now important to prioritise the work looking at your achievement goals. The activities or tasks that will help you



achieve your goal should be prioritised and acted on diligently. It is worth noting that when prioritizing what tasks to focus on do not forget to consider what you're choosing NOT to do. For those tasks, see if they can be delegated out or completed some other way besides taking up your time later (REMEMBER TIP 3 that you cannot master everything therefore delegate the work or call in someone to assist with what you do not have the skills to do).

Multi-tasking to get more things (tasks or activities) done is not an effective way to save time. Trying to do many things at once often leads to greater inefficiency and less effective results. Multi-tasking most times leads to mistake that leads to increased costs for the business trying to rectify the mistake. Therefore, it is important to stick to your schedule and priority list of activities doing one thing at a time.

Now that we have started our business and made the necessary plans to achieve the business goals, it is important to consider the following tips.

7. Manage your people and resources

Working with your people or team, you must all pull together to achieve a common goal. It is critical to make sure that you are all working in a flow, and that everyone knows what their responsibilities are, and no tasks are being duplicated by multiple people. Bring your team into the conversation about productivity and engage with them on how they can improve on their work. Ask

them what tips and tools work for them. Having people making suggestions on how to improve their work encourages engagement leading to improved productivity. When introducing new tools also, try them collectively as a group, and assess whether they work as a team.

8. Give your team a clear direction from the start

As a small business owner, you can only get so much done on your own, therefore, remember TIP 3 that talks to utilizing the talent of people available to help you. With a team you can accomplish much more if you involve and engage them. You must make sure your employees fully understand where you want to take the company and their role in the achievement of this goal. If employees must constantly come to you to ask questions, it can halt your productivity and theirs. Understanding the direction enables employees to work more independently and only come to you or other managers when it's necessary. With a clear direction, people are more able to aligned and committed to achieving the intended goals.

9. Communication

To achieve TIP 8 and 9 you must have open communication with your team. People you work with must be informed and kept on the proceedings of the business that mostly affect their work and delivery. An informed workforce is engaged to work and deliver knowing that their input is valuable for the progress of the organisation. Keeping people on the loop of the business happenings mobilises them to work together to achieve more thus improving productivity. Call meetings and send emails to share information or alternatively in an era we are living, even a WhatsApp text would do to keep your people informed.

10. Say "No" to opportunities that don't fit with your mission

As a business you should keep on reflecting on your WHY – UNDERSTAND YOUR VALUE PROPOSITION from TIP 1. As you schedule and perform tasks try to avoid taking in extra tasks that don't fit with your business's main purpose, this will be a huge drain on your resources. Focusing only on the most essential activities can ensure that you and your team stay as productive.

We are not saying do not expand your business if you have the potential, we are saying do a proper risk analysis and management before diving for the opportunities.

11. Give accolades

As humans we all want to be appreciated for our efforts and as a result you and your employees must be given recognition for good work when you have delivered well. This encourages productivity and mobilises efforts of people working. REWARD and RECOGNITION it can be in monetary terms or any other way (Certificate or letter/note of appreciation) the company may choose. If you have an especially productive employee, recognize them. They will want to recreate the magic again to shine again.

These tips together with the determination of an individual owning a business can help ensure sustainability of a business. SME and informal sector players must take note of these tips and try to apply them on running their business, they will assist in aligning them towards success and survival.

ESTABLISHING AND IMPLEMENTING A QMS

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BNPC interventions on local companies have led to improved productivity and a reduction in wastages.

BACKGROUND

Horizons Investment (Pty) Ltd was formed in July 2010. The company has an excess of ten (10) years' experience within rubber lining, conveyor belt splicing, alumina ceramic tiling, corrosion control as well as servicing many clients within the mining industries. In an endeavour to define its position in the marketplace, the company has taken a strategic decision to develop and implement a Quality Management System (QMS) aligned to the requirements of the international standard ISO 9001:2015. The

QMS will help the company to document business practices, better satisfy the requirements and expectations of its customers and improve the overall management of the company.

Botswana National Productivity Centre (BNPC) was appointed by Local Enterprise Authority (LEA) to provide Horizons with consultancy services to establish and implement the QMS with an ultimate objective to have their system certified against the standard.

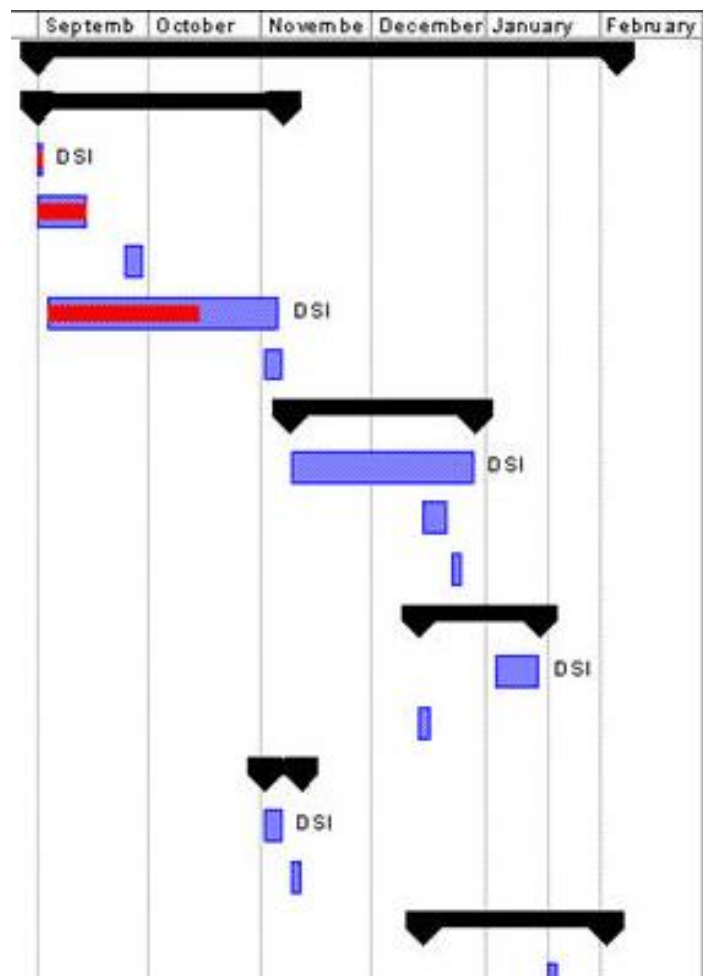


Productivity, competitiveness and efficiency are the cornerstones of BNPC's work in the local economy.

CHALLENGES

Upon commencement of the consultancy services, BNPC conducted a Gap Analysis aimed at establishing baselines and challenges within the company to ensure their closure through the use of the QMS. It was observed during the gap analysis that Horizons established a Health and Safety system, which is normally a prerequisite for mining businesses. With regard to QMS, the following challenges were observed.

- Although the company was already operating a SHE system, the documentation was not up-to-date and was not aligned with the international ISO 45001 standard. The current setup of management system standards allows for easy integration, and thus, having an existing standard in place would have reduced the number of new documents to be created. The control of existing documentation was neither defined nor effective.
- The implementation of existing SHE documentation is also lacking. Although employees were aware of the SHE system, there were insufficient records to provide evidence that the system was implemented.
- Every business exists with clear objectives of where it wants to be at some point in time, and horizons are no exception; however, there were no clear objectives set apart from making profit, which was also not measured.
- Due to its influence on the organisation, the risks maintained by Horizons were skewed to the SHE system, subsequently leaving out other corporate risks.
- Although company receives both negative and mostly positive feedback from customers, there was no evidence to justify the customer satisfaction of 80%
- No evidence was available to show that internal audits were carried out to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the processes and methods instituted by the company, and neither were there records to show that meetings were held by management to discuss the performance of the company and map way forward.



The generic aspects of the scope of the project are outlined below

Training	3 days
Documentation Review and Development	12 days
QMS Performance evaluation	3 days
Project Closure	2 days
TOTAL DURATION	20 days



Training

The selected internal steering committee was subjected to a two-days QMS awareness training to sensitise them of the project. This team spearheads the development and implementation of the QMS within the organisation. QMS training involves an introduction to ISO 9001 and interpretation of the requirements, as well as the necessary objective evidence to be maintained.

Documentation Review and Development

With a rudimentary understanding of QMS, the steering team spearheaded the development of the “quality manual”, which in essence is not a requirement but a mitigation to knowledge management. The steering committee was handheld clause by clause to review and develop the required documentation. Subsequent to being satisfied of the quality manual, a workshop was held to introduce all employees to QMS, and a go-ahead was given for the use of the documents, implementation of the system. At the same time, an application to the Botswana Bureau of Standards (BOBS) was made to certify the system against ISO 9001:2015.

QMS Performance evaluation

The purpose of the implementation is to generate an auditable trail for the system and to assess the usefulness of the system. An internal audit will be scheduled for six (6) months after the commencement of implementation. Due to inadequate staffing within the organisation, there was no possibility of internal capacity building, and thus the BNPC stepped in to facilitate the activity. Going forth however, the organisation should identify suitable candidates who can be trained to be internal auditors.

BNPC has adopted an active participatory approach between the client and consultants in its consultancy to ensure user ownership and suitability of the outcome of the consultancy work. This approach also aspires to the ISO 9001:2015 standard requirements of employee engagement that provides opportunities for talent management and skills enhancement for employees. In order to ensure sustenance and continuity of the quality management system, the BNPC consultancy activities will embed skills transfer and handholding programmes for the project team, including internal auditing. Change management can only be attained through leadership championship of the project, as well as the full involvement of the department’s representatives at all stages of the project plan.

The project scope covered the establishment, documentation and auditing of a Quality Management System based on the requirements of ISO 9001:2015 and facilitation of readiness for certification of the QMS. The project was expected to run for a period of twenty (20) days of active consultancy, staggered, depending on the assignment deliverables and commitment of the client over a period of six (6) months.

RESULTS AND IMPACT

At the time of reporting, internal audits had not yet been conducted. It is however expected that through implementation of the QMS, the company will continuously identify opportunities and areas of improvement in their processes and leverage on those to meet and/or exceed their customer's expectations. QMS certification will provide customers of the company with some assurance that best practices are used and maintained in service delivery.

During the implantation of the QMS, starting with the development phases, the following observations either hindered or catapulted the project.

COVID-19 Pandemic

The project commenced in May 2021, just before the Delta variant of the Covid-19, which took away so many lives. The risk of members of committee contracting Covid-19 had already been identified and mitigated by following Covid-19 protocols which seemed ineffective given the fatalities. As lockdowns were imposed, the project was forced to also pause, causing an unwarranted delay to the already delayed project.

Human Resources

Horizons is owned and managed by the same individual, therefore, all activities are centralised around the managing director. The other employees are also limited to take up other duties outside their scope due to their educational background and demands of their work. Having the managing director as the focal person is good for ownership of the system, but also posed a challenge when it came to setting up meetings as well as meeting deadlines. Internship Program



The SHE Office is critical, especially for businesses contracted by the mines in Botswana. However, it is habitual for companies contracted by the mines to poach SHE Officers from their competitors, and Horizons was no exception. Following a severe haemorrhage of SHE Officers, the company resorted to the recruitment of Interns from the government internship program. The similarities in the structures of Management Systems Standards (such as IAO 9001 for QMS, ISO 14001 for Environmental Management Systems, and ISO45001 for Health and Safety) has made it easy for the SHE Officers to interpret the QMS standard using the knowledge acquired from the SHE standard, ISO45001.

Improved Efficiency

The introduction of a QMS within Horizons has significantly improved their efficiency when it comes to service delivery. The revision of forms and development of procedures has assisted employees with ease of retrieval of information. The following are forms and initiatives taken up by the company;

- Initially petty cash was issued from the MD's pocket without records to track how much was being issued. A form has since been introduced to track who has taken cash and how much it was. Receipts are always maintained as proof of purchase;
- All employees have personal files that maintain all necessary records including Omang, training certificates, CVs, and leave records. Initially, these were stored independently, for projects;
- The job card has been revised and aligned to practice such that its application is in chronological order as per how events transpired. This has subsequently improved calculation of billing information in terms of duration and distance travelled;
- Other forms have also been revised such that they serve as procedures by being clear on what needs to be recorded for future references.

CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

A QMS operates as a basic framework to help organisations manage services and document relevant changes and corrective measures for internal and external audits. The implementation of all this requires total participation by all and most especially management commitment to show direction. Upon successful implementation and ultimate certification of the QMS, the client will realize the following outcomes;

- a) *Deliver customer focused services consistently and at the required quality;*
- b) *Enhance compliance with company policies and applicable regulations;*
- c) *Enhance the company's corporate image;*
- d) *Widen market accessibility;*
- e) *Reduce system liability risks;*
- f) *Increase value for money;*
- g) *Ensure protection of end users and enhance customer focus;*
- h) *Facilitate international trade;*
- i) *Meet and exceed customer's expectations.*

BNPC is convinced that the interventions administered to Horizons in preparing it for the QMS certification are enough to allow BOBS to process the application, conduct audits; stage 1 and Stage 2 and ultimately issue a certificate. It should, however, be highlighted that the QMS certification can only be retained if the company continues to practice and live their quality management system. The company is also advised to continue to review and improve their QMS for better performance at all times and not just wait for the audit.



OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE

By Kennedy Tommy

Operational excellence is the execution of a business strategy in a consistent and reliable manner, with lower operational risk, operating cost, and increased revenues relative to competition. OpEx is highly needed in today's rapidly changing business models and technology driven world which requires organisations to undertake end-to-end business transformation (Ojo, 2020). Aguilera, JT et al., (2019) states that OpEx is highly essential for the growth of the organisations and all size industries, due to its characteristics of search of quality, efficiency, and effectiveness of enterprises. Operational excellence programs should include many interrelated and interacting components such as quality (Q), continuous improvement (CI), knowledge management (KM), human resource development (People), HSE compliance and management, and performance measurement within an aligned business (Barr & Cook, 2009).

While most agree that operational excellence should include normal functions in a manufacturing operation such as production, maintenance and engineering, and processes such as quality, environmental and continuous improvement, many other factors for operational excellence seem to vary from perspective to perspective. Thus, programs that manufacturers engage in may seem the same, but may, in fact, be different in key areas (Barr & Cook, 2009). The key to improving the company's operation is to focus on 'process' metrics rather than 'result' metrics. Some of the 'process' metrics such as product/shipping defects, late/missed deliveries, and forecast accuracy enables us to improve performance more so than internal 'result' metrics such as profits, returns, and inventory turns which don't tell us how to improve them (Lawrence et al., 2008).

"Attaining OpEx involves a return to the basic building blocks of any organisation: the establishment, communication, and assessment of requirements. Make sure requirements are clearly established, effectively communicated, and periodically assessed to promote and facilitate the continuous achievement of operational excellence. Provide employees with the tools and mechanisms they need to do their jobs right the first time. Concepts such as reengineering, lean manufacturing, just-in-time, statistical process control and Six Sigma can significantly contribute to operations enhancement. However, they cannot eliminate the day-to-day operational costs that arise from deviations, non-conformance's and situations caused by human error (Bigelow, 2002).

The more contemporary meaning of the term 'Operational Excellence' has its roots in the Lean movement, which is, in turn, rooted in the Toyota Production System (TPS) (Found, P et al., 2018). There should not be one size fits all approach to OpEx models, every OpEx model should be designed on the basis of specific objectives and characteristics of a particular organisation.

Operational procedures that have developed from constant human interaction and paper-based processing continue to haunt organisations that strive for operational efficiency. Technological progress has influenced the industrial world and all industrial sectors have been challenged with a change in technological paradigms, especially through the exploitation of modern ICT. Information Technology solutions are very efficient for automating business processes, storing, and retrieving large amounts of data, and maintaining accurate and accessible information (Lawrence et al., 2008).

Operational Excellence is the area that includes the set of models, methods, approaches, and tools through which each organisation sets itself the goal of constantly improving its operations towards excellence. Operational Excellence models differ from traditional models in that they aim at a long-term change in the company's organisational culture (D'Orazio, L. et al., 2020).

CULTIVATING AN ENTREPRENEURIAL MINDSET AMID THE EFFECTS OF THE COVID PANDEMIC

By Poloko Thobega

The entrepreneur is affected by several things, among them, the business environment in which they operate and need to apply their minds to come up with solutions to counter these challenges. The mindset could be positive or negative. Lakhan (2021) describes mindset as a set of beliefs that shape how one makes sense of the world and relate to it. It influences how one thinks, feels, and behaves in any given situation. A positive mindset is critical for the success of any business. The recent Covid -19 came as a huge factor in the life cycle of businesses and entrepreneurs. This did not only affect businesses but affected the livelihoods of the entire community. Most entrepreneurs were affected psychologically, while others needed serious counselling.

Entrepreneurship can provide freedom, wealth, and the ability to build your ideal lifestyle. Social entrepreneurship (Timmons, 2009) is a variation of entrepreneurship with the social mission explicit and central to its reason for being. The impact on society rather than wealth creation becomes the primary value created. The entrepreneur builds wealth and value within a market structure and the market discipline controls how the entrepreneur functions to build wealth and value. Social entrepreneurs operate in different environments, and, more importantly, under different rules than business entrepreneurs. But there are also many challenges of entrepreneurship that can hinder you from achieving those goals, and even make entrepreneurship more difficult than your previous life that requires a change of mindset. Developing an entrepreneurial mindset takes hard work; it is not always easy or stress free, but it can be developed and nurtured. The (Hopkins, 2013) odds are you will not be successful in business for a very long time. Entrepreneurship can be learnt in entrepreneurship classes, books, and articles, talking with entrepreneurs who have experienced developing it or can be learnt through trial and error.

Being a successful entrepreneur requires outside-the-box thinking and larger-than-life ideas. Anyone can come up with a new idea but building a successful business around it is the entrepreneurial challenge. The entrepreneurial mindset is unique in that one must be creative, communicative, and highly motivated to succeed, yet open to risk and failure. Oftentimes, the success or failure of a business comes down to the characteristics of the entrepreneur themselves. It takes a unique aggregate of characteristics to mould one big idea into a fully functional thriving business. Is there a certain amalgam of skills and traits which allows some entrepreneurs to become wildly successful?

The Impact of Mindset

Mindset (Dweck, 2006) plays a critical role in how one copes with life's challenges and develops solutions to these challenges over time. When a child has a growth mindset, they tend to have a hunger for learning and a desire to work hard and discover new things. This often translates into academic achievement. This also applies to an entrepreneur who has need to develop solutions that will solve a particular problem. Through perseverance the entrepreneur plays around with his ideas to create a legacy for the world through changing his ideas into workable solutions. Instead of throwing in the towel, an entrepreneur with a growth mindset views it as an opportunity to learn and grow ,and come up with innovative ideas through perseverance. On the other hand, those with fixed mindsets are more likely to give up in the face of challenging circumstances. Entrepreneurs can take steps to ensure that their employees develop growth mindsets by praising efforts not results and through motivation.



BNPC staff attending to a client during the Mindset Change activation at the Gaborone Main Mall.

The employees

Hancock (1989) states that the loss of productivity combined with absenteeism from financial stress has a major impact on organisations, costing more in the long run per employee and cumulative affecting the business bottom-line. The leadership in every business must ensure the well-being of their employees to maximize productivity. The laxity by the leadership normally affects the mindset and the productivity of their employees. It is often said that employees are your greatest assets , but do we see our employees holistically? Or are we just looking at them in terms of what they are delivering? If we really want to care for the entire person, then we must acknowledge the fact that people work to earn a living. It is wise for the leadership to inculcate a spirit of productivity in the employees by treating them well and ensuring that they get the information at the right time to make informed decisions about the business. Employees should be empowered to act on things that can affect the business and be treated as equals to be productive. It is also important to note the effect that the pandemic had on the productivity and mindset of the employees and therefore, employees need serious assistance to come out of these challenging times through employees assisted programs.



BNPC staff attending to a client during the Mindset Change activation at the Gaborone Main Mall.

A creative mindset

Never has the adage “Creativity is the mother of invention” been truer than in the world of entrepreneurship. Think of various entrepreneurs who have come up with numerous inventions that have changed the world. Each of these ground-breaking inventions would not have come to fruition if it was not for healthy doses of creative senses.

Even if one is not in the “creative” industry, creativity is needed for entrepreneurial success and for the success of any business. The mind of an entrepreneur is always looking for novel ideas and innovations. The basic life cycle of any entrepreneurial product stems from the conception of an idea followed by turning that idea into a viable product or service.

One of the benefits of being the **leader** is that one gets to express their creativity each day and within the business and makes relevant changes on regular basis. Even if you’re not in a creative field, per se, working out ways to optimize your business operations is a creative act. During the pandemic the entrepreneurs developed various products that could be used such as hand sanitizers, clearly showing that their minds are at work to find lasting solutions to the challenging situation.

Communication

Communication is the act of giving, receiving, and sharing information, in other words, talking or writing, and listening or reading. Good communicators listen carefully, speak, or write clearly, and respect different opinions. Business communication

is the process of sharing information between people within and outside a company. Effective business communication is how employees and management interact to reach organisational goals. Its purpose is to improve organisational practices and reduce errors. It is critical to timeously communicate with the audience well so that the business does not suffer. Failure to communicate will adversely affect the business as decisions will be made at the wrong time with little information.

In conclusion, mindset change affects all people in the business environment and entrepreneurial mindset positively affect the way things are and improve productivity. For any business to survive there is need to think like entrepreneurs, share information timeously and allow that creative mindset. Life is a challenge and only those who view these challenges as stepping stones will make it.

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BNPC'S ADVANCED LEADERSHIP AND MINDSET CHANGE PROGRAMME

By Gaone Bogatsu

BACKGROUND

The President of Botswana, in his reset agenda speech in 2021, outlined key challenges facing leadership, productivity and mindset change. In collaboration with World Economic Forum, the

Botswana National Productivity Centre (BNPC) annually releases the Global Competitiveness Report. The report has, for about a decade, rated poor work ethic as the number one (1) problematic factor for doing business in Botswana. The same finding was revealed from the BNPC's 'Botswana Quality Workforce Report', 2010. In 2018, the BNPC together with Batho-Pele consultants carried out 'Work Ethic Investigation' study and the results outlined that leadership contributes significantly to this poor work ethic problem. To close this gap, the BNPC in partnership with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) developed a leadership and productivity programme that brings about real mindset change in the public and private sectors at national, sectoral, organisational and community level called Advanced Leadership and Mindset Change. The programme also addresses the Vision 2036, which highlights the National Transformation Strategy to ensure that Botswana is globally competitive and achieves a high-income knowledge-based economy.



Participants pose for a group picture after successfully completing the BNPC Supervisory Development Programme.

OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAMME

Advanced Leadership and Mindset Change programme is designed to assist participants improve in leadership, instil growth mindset in the organisations they lead as well as equip them with competencies needed to drive successful organisations.

The programme is expected to assist leaders to:

- a. *Describe the qualities of effective leadership skills they possess and the ones they lack.*
- b. *Determine their gaps on the dimensions of Emotional Intelligence.*
- c. *Understand leadership styles and when to apply each style.*
- d. *Apply tactics of leading people through change, endings, neutral and new beginning.*
- e. *Assess how factors of the external environment affect their leadership.*
- f. *Improve in the area of stakeholder engagement.*
- g. *Explain important aspects of leading the way forward such as building shared vision, networking, resolving complex problems, and facilitating change effectively.*
- h. *Identify gaps and make improvements using a Business Excellence model.*
- i. *Solve real work situations using their knowledge and past experiences.*

PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

The model design is based on a working definition of leadership that is congruent with the government's aim for mindset change: transformational leadership that is resilient, self-aware, self-confident, ethical, emotionally intelligent, inspires and earns the respect of followers. The programme provides opportunities to explore personal mindsets and transformational leadership styles in three(3) modules – Leading self, Leading others, and leading the way forward. Each module is followed by an Action Learning that involves small groups working on real issues, using the knowledge and skills of the participants combined with skilled questioning, to produce fresh ideas and reinterpret familiar concepts.

1. Leading self

This module is about a leader's self-introspection, self-awareness, appreciating strengths and weaknesses, avoiding blame, and improving on weaknesses and leveraging on strengths. The aim of the module is to promote leaders' positive thinking, involving life skills and enhanced self-confidence and personal resilience; to promote leaders who inspire and earn the respect of followers, who are ethical and personally accountable and champion innovation. The module covers topics such as Qualities of a good leader, Emotional intelligence, Leadership styles and application, Mindset (growth and fixed) and Personal development-ideal self.



2. Leading people

The module deliberates on the impact of leadership on individuals, progresses through teams and the role of leadership and mindset in creating high performing teams; that have collective emotional intelligence, are accountable for delivery and focus clearly on results. The module covers topics such as Leading teams, Transformational leadership, and Leading people through change (the change curve -endings, neutral and new beginnings).

3. Leading the way forward/organisation

This module builds on leading self and leading teams and takes the concepts of leadership qualities, styles, growth mindset etc into leading the way forward. This involves ensuring the Vision 2036 and the Reset Agenda are articulated in a meaningful way for all actors and stakeholders. The session includes some tools and techniques that can be used for identifying the future and strengthening the ways in which transformational leaders can shape it.

ROLL-OUT

The target group was leaders from Local Government, comprising of, but not limited to; Deputy Town Clerks, Senior Assistant Council Secretaries, Assistant Council Secretaries, Head of Departments, Management Analysts and Performance Improvement Coordinators.

WAY FORWARD

The programme was a pilot project from the UNDP, and Ministry of Local Government was selected. The programme is intended to be rolled out to other government entities.



Former Public Service Programme Acting Manager & Consultant, Mr Bernard Maphangela who recently retired.

MAPHANGELA RETIRES

Long time BNPC Public Service Programme consultant and strategy expert, Mr Bernard Maphangela has called it a day and transitioned into retirement after serving the organisation for many years. He left the employ of the organisation effective January 31st 2023. A holder of an MA (Human Resource Management) University of Botswana 2007, BA (Economics and Public Administration) University of Botswana 1986, and a Post Graduate Diploma (Economics) University of Sussex, England UK, 1992, Maphangela has served BNPC as a strategy consultant for 18 years, since joining the organisation in 2004. Ben began his career as a Bank Clerk at Standard Chartered Bank in Orapa from 1981-1982. From 1986 – 1988, he worked as an Assistant Economic Planner at the Francistown Town Council where he assisted the Council Economic Planner in preparing Town Council Plans and preparation of project memoranda for funding approval from Ministry of Finance and Development Planning. From 1988 – 1990 he was an Economic Planner assisting the Senior Council Economic Planner in preparing Town Council Plans and preparation

of project memoranda for funding approval from Ministry of Finance and Development Planning. Maphangela also liaised with all ministries and other departments including, the private sector in the Francistown Urban Planning. In 1993 he moved to the SELEBI PHIKWE TOWN Council and in 1996-1998 he worked as a Senior Economic Planner leading the team that prepared the First Selebi Phikwe Urban Development Plan (UDP I). Thereafter, he joined the Kweneng District Council as a Principal Economic Planner coordinating Kweneng (The second largest district in Botswana after Central) district development planning. He also served as the representative of all District Planners in the National Planning Steering Committees. In 1999-2000 he worked for Bank of Botswana in the Economic Research Department, collating economic trends issues and assisted the Ministry of Finance and Development in aggregation of same for use. From 2001-2004, Maphangela joined the Ministry of Local Government at headquarters where he worked as a district development coordinator, coordinating all district development plans alignment into national plans. He also worked as the Performance Improvement Coordinator assisting all Ministry departments on performance issues and driving the Ministry strategy.

His career with BNPC started in 2004 where he has worked as a strategy consultant to date. It was at BNPC that Maphangela immersed himself in strategy development and review with much success. He was involved in the strategy review and development in various local authorities, including the Lobatse Town council. He has also been involved in the strategy review and development at NAFTRC, BURS, Botswana Post, BORDIS and Ministry of Labour. During his time with BNPC, Maphangela was also involved in training and capacity building in Balanced Scorecard, Change Management, Team Building, Leadership, Mindset Change, Performance Management System and Smart Work Ethics. Many organisations and government departments have benefitted from Maphangela's wealth of experience, with several turning around their fortunes.

Maphangela has also acted on several occasions as the Acting Manager for the Public Service Programme at BNPC. A highlight of this phase of his tenure would include leading the BNPC team in assisting the Botswana Post to develop their strategy from 2020-2023 and assisting BURS to review their 2014-2019 strategy and then develop their 2019-2023 strategy. Many other organisations, including the private sector have been positively impacted by BNPC interventions under Maphangela's stewardship. BNPC has indeed been blessed with Maphangela's contribution and the organisation is truly excited for him as he enters into a new chapter in life and celebrate his commendable service. Please join me in thanking Maphangela for his contribution and leadership at BNPC, and do take time to congratulate him on his accomplishments and upcoming retirement. He has made many friends during his time with BNPC, and I know he will appreciate the opportunity to have each of you celebrate this new season ahead with him.



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