

New UCT programme unlocks self-knowledge in HR people

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Human Resources Practitioners will have a unique opportunity to harness valuable personal insight while sharpening their practical HR skills on a brand new programme launching at the UCT Graduate School of Business (GSB) this September.



The Human Resources Practitioners Programme (HRPP), run by the Executive Education unit at the UCT GSB, offers an intense two-week journey into HR that aims to help graduates maximise their workplace experience and grow as HR leaders.

According to Dave van Eeden, designer and director of the new programme, the power of the course is the innovative way in which personal development and practical knowledge are woven together to develop people in a holistic way.

"HR practitioners have a role that demands personal credibility and a relationship of trust with their clients, being management. With a greater self-awareness and knowledge of their own strengths and weaknesses, they are in a better position to develop and sustain the important relationships needed for their role in steering human resources," he explained.

Van Eeden cited, for example, the importance to line managers that HR leaders are trustworthy, conscientious with sensitive information, and offer valuable and credible insight to the business's leadership. HR professionals who lack credibility, therefore, may find themselves excluded from the strategic participation they need to have to help their organisations succeed.

The focus on personal knowledge is supported by a recent international Human Resource Competency Study at the University of Michigan Business School, which ranked personal credibility as one of the highest HR competencies linked to performance. Complementing this personal credibility thread, the programme will tackle critical knowledge and skills of the professional Human Resource function within the context of HR strategy.

Over the two-weeks, participants will cover modules on a range of HR capacities such as system diagnosis skills, facilitation skills, employee relations, people development, HR metrics, and compensation.

"The focus will be on systemic thinking - an approach that allows for the logical and meaningful linking of theory and practice. It's about seeing how everything within the HR role fits into HR strategy and how this in turn fits into the big picture of the business strategy and creating value for the organisation," said van Eeden.

Van Eeden has 30 years of Human Resource management experience in a variety of sectors, including the sugar manufacturing, chemical, retail, and consumer goods industries. He has been the Executive Director of Human Resources at the University of Cape Town since July 2001.

He is a Board member of the Education, Training and Development SETA, and teaches on the AngloGold-Ashanti Leadership Programme at the UCT GSB.

The HRPP is one of a number of new courses on offer from Executive Education at the UCT GSB this year. Executive Education was recently recognised for its high quality short programmes with a top ten rating in the Executive Intelligence Unit's 2005 global survey.

The programme runs from 10 - 22 September and is a residential programme. Candidates will be required to apply by 28 July and be accepted onto the programme. Contact Shireen Brown on (021) 406 1370 for details.

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