

Leadership skills and addressing talent shortages key for project management in 2011

Issued by [UCT Graduate School of Business](#)

9 Mar 2011

New research released this month has identified the top global project management trends for 2011 - the key themes for this year include building the project manager's influence, and accelerating new leadership and communication skills.

The survey of a global panel of consultants and senior executives run by ESI International showed that "Leadership skills will be the PM's critical success factor". The study suggests that leadership skills, such as critical thinking, crucial communication and organisational change management will be strategically imperative project management competencies to master for the contemporary business environment.

The survey reveals a second major trend for this year - there is a war on for project management talent and visionary retention strategies and skills development will play a bigger role in curbing poaching.



"Despite local businesses feeling positive about this year as the recession is largely considered to be over, things have changed, and the challenges above exist and need to be addressed," says Dennis Comminos, who directs the Strategic Project Management short course at the UCT Graduate School of Business in March. The course develops high level project management skills in SA.

"One thing is clear, we're all in a new phase of doing in 2011, and this will require business and government to step up their game to deliver results," he added.

Businesses in SA may have struggled in 2010, but have an opportunity in 2011 to take a more strategic approach to their projects. Comminos points out that selecting the right projects will be vital if companies want to achieve post-recession growth.

"South Africa has a shortage of skilled strategic project managers - these are project managers who are critical and creative strategic thinkers, and they focus on business and strategy, and not only on methodologies and standards," said Comminos, who is an international author and lecturer in project management.

And it's not just business that can improve on projects. Ill-chosen projects, poorly selected investments, and a lack of strategic project management skills are also what stand in the way of government meeting its mandate to the people.

Finance Minister Pravin Gordon, quoted in a recent *Financial Times* article, said that "with clear timelines and goals, SA does have the capacity to deliver," but explained that, "provincial, municipal and national departments have been unable to translate aspirations into concrete programmes."

The UCT GSB course, run by the School's Executive Education unit, is a unique programme that aims to alleviate the shortages of high level project management skills in SA. The programme is designed to equip experienced project managers with the concepts and skills to enable them to drive value from the execution of strategy through strategic projects and programmes.

"This course is by no means an introduction to project management. It is much more senior-level than that. Though one will get the traditional knowledge through the course, the approach in this course shifts focus and tries to stimulate critical thinking as well as encourage delegates to ask truly probing questions about leadership, governance, management, decision-making, ethics and trends," said Comminos.

Co-presenting the course with Comminos is Chris van der Hoven, lecturer in innovation at the Cranfield School of Management, and together they bring many years of experience and acute insight in project management, especially in the form it should take in today's business world.

A foundation course, Project Management - A Business Approach, is also being offered in April 2011.

The Strategic Project Management (SPM) course will run from 28 March to 1 April. Applications close March 16. For more information contact Mario Pearce on 021 406 1268. SMS "SPM" for the strategic course or "Project" for the foundation course to 31497.

- **UCT GSB'S Executive MBA ranked Top 5 globally for gender diversity** 19 Oct 2023
- **African startups take centre stage in local accelerator programmes** 17 Jul 2023
- **Inaugural Africa Impact Summit to showcase how impact investing can transform the continent** 5 Apr 2023
- **Take your startup to the next level! Join the e-Track programme** 1 Mar 2023
- **UCT GSB conference to share insights on how to do business in Africa** 6 Dec 2022

[UCT Graduate School of Business](#)



The University of Cape Town Graduate School of Business (GSB) is recognised as one of the best business schools in the world. Its innovative approaches to teaching and learning and commitment to relevance and social impact set it apart from most.

[Profile](#) | [News](#) | [Contact](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Facebook](#) | [RSS Feed](#)

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>