

UCT GSB brings leadership development expertise to Joburg

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The UCT Graduate School of Business is bringing its unique brand of leadership development to Johannesburg this August to give executives much needed tools to master the storm of current global business.

According to Mark Peters, director of the Executive Development Programme that will run at the Crown Plaza in Sandton from 18-31 August, a lot is expected of today's executives and they need a different set of tools and aptitudes to cope.

"Fast-evolving emerging markets mean executives must exercise all the strategy and focus of a storm chaser to survive the extreme conditions of global business," he says. "They must transform the management practices and strategies of their organisations to remain competitive."

"Like storm chasers, senior managers must venture into the thick of things when others fly to safety. Storm chasers survive and outwit the most extreme conditions in order to see what others cannot see, collect critical data, experience 'ground truths' in the face of tornadoes, firestorms and the odd pitchfork-wielding farmer."

Peters says that executives can hone their compasses and develop their organisations' ability to leverage core competencies by focusing on five key touchpoints of global leadership.

"The first is results," says Peters. "Dave Ulrich, professor of business administration at the University of Michigan School of Business and co-author of "Results-Based Leadership" argues that it is not enough to gauge leaders by personal traits like character, style and values. Effective leaders know how to connect these attributes to objectives that deliver results for employees, for the organisation, its customers and investors."

Secondly, executives must have the ability and capacity to *be comfortable with complexity and change*.

Martha Maznevski, Professor of Organisational Behaviour at the International Institute for Management Development in Switzerland, suggests in her research paper, "Managing Complexity in Global Organisations," that the leader of a complex organisation must, in order to minimise confusion, create and communicate understanding of the different roles managers, teams and business units play. Permanent communication is the leadership survival tool in complex organisations with an emphasis on "storytelling" (interpreting context and meaning, and investing in relationships), rather than merely transferring dry facts or ultimatums.

"We have not yet come across a company having mastered global complexity," she says. "Although no company may ever master complexity completely, it is possible, using these principles, to at least navigate through complexity and even to take advantage of it."

Peters says the third key touchpoint of global leadership is broadening awareness and understanding of *management in expanding emerging markets and complex management environments* in order to identify, prioritise and confront the unique economic, political and business risks that organisations face in unpredictable developing markets.

Fourthly, creative and innovative leaders of the future will know that *systematic methods, combined with out-of-the-box thinking*, can deliver impressive performance for their organisation.

Lastly, the executive of tomorrow must learn to unlock the power of all-important *reputation management*, a new skill that continues to confound many organisations grappling with an age of instant communication in which nothing is confidential

and an organisation is effectively laid bare to client and consumer.

Peters says that the programme addresses each of these five touchpoints - and more - in order to enable participants to become adept at intelligently using personal and external resources to boost their own and their organisation's performance even in turbulent times.

"All good leaders-come-storm chasers know that turbulence is invisible. It is not always possible to know why wind direction changes suddenly, or be aware of the debris a storm has collected as it hurtles towards you. What the best do know, what they pin their lives on, is that a clear head, deeper insight and understanding, strong strategy and an instinct borne of continuous learning and out-of-the-box thinking, drastically increases their chances not only of survival, but of mastering the storm," he says.

The Executive Development Programme runs from 18 to 31 August in Johannesburg. For more information please contact Tracy Kimberley on 021 406 1336 or visit www.gsb.uct.ac.za/ExecDev.

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