



FROM THE CHAIR'S OFFICE

In this, my final foreword as Chair of the Department of Industrial Psychology, I look back not only on the past six months but on the last seven years in which I had the privilege to serve in this capacity.



Firstly, congratulations are in order. I am delighted to introduce Prof Crystal Hoole, who has been appointed as the new departmental chairperson from 1 July. I know that she will enjoy the same support and encouragement that I have received during my time in the Department. I am looking forward to what the future holds, and believe the best is yet to come under her leadership.

In this edition, we celebrate our graduates and our top achievers of 2023. As a Department, we are also pleased to announce that our social impact project – the High School Career Guidance Project (HSCGP) – a joint initiative between the Department of Industrial Psychology and the Department of Psychology – was recently acknowledged with a Social Impact award bestowed by Stellenbosch University.

It is very hard to encapsulate my experience of the past few years in just a couple of sentences.

There were many highs and lows, of which the most heart-breaking was probably the passing of our esteemed colleague, Marius Meyer, who had, among other things, been instrumental in the launch of our Postgraduate Diploma in Strategic Human Resource Management. This programme was the pilot project for Stellenbosch University's hybrid learning strategy and is now in its fourth year.

During this time, we also had to navigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on teaching and learning.

I was left humbled by the commitment and resilience of the Department's core academic and support staff, as well as its students, and amazed by their innovative approaches and ability to excel despite challenges and obstacles.

The Department also stepped in when the University needed a pilot project to drive the concept of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), and now offers four online modules as part of a professional certificate in Strategic Human Resources Management (Read more on P10).

I will reiterate something I learned early in my career, which I have often said: If you want to go fast, go alone. But if you want to go far, go together.

The staff and students of the Department of Industrial Psychology have showcased their passion for this discipline over and over again, and it has been an honour and privilege to lead the Department. Thank you for the opportunity to have worked together as a wonderful team of colleagues who are not only experts in their respective domains but also caring and passionate human beings who have made the last seven years of my academic career a most rewarding and memorable experience.

"A journey, after all, neither begins in the instant we set out, nor ends when we have reached our doorstep once again. It starts much earlier and it is really never over."

Prof Aletta Odendaal retires as chairperson of the Department

An eye for an opportunity, an appetite for change, an appreciation of the importance of teamwork and an identity rooted in Industrial Psychology.

These are only some of the elements that have characterised Prof Aletta Odendaal's career – a career that started with degrees in Social Work and Psychology and a job at a company that sold correction fluid; a career that did not end when she stepped down as Chair of the Department at the end of June and retires from Stellenbosch University (SU) at the end of 2024.

Initially employed as a public relations officer at Tipp-Ex South Africa, Aletta then moved to Distillers Corporation as training manager, after which she returned to university to obtain her honours and master's degrees in Industrial Psychology and register, firstly as a psychometrist and then as an industrial psychologist in 1999. The rest, as they say, is history.

She embarked on her IP journey by starting her own practice, focusing on psychological assessment, measurement, leadership development, and leadership/executive coaching, and became what she refers to as a "pracademic" – an academic anchored in the science with an active practice – in 2008 when she joined the University of Johannesburg.

Her practice became dormant when she was appointed as Chair of the Department of Industrial Psychology at SU in 2017 and she refocused all her energy on tackling new challenges and opportunities.

"My philosophy has always been: 'If you don't buy a ticket, you can't get a ride'. I was quick to investigate how an opportunity could be utilised to the Department's advantage and who had to be involved to ensure success. I surrounded myself with the skills and expertise of others, and our collective passion and commitment drove the process. I always aimed to create an enabling environment, focusing on each person's strengths, and we often achieved amazing outcomes that sometimes even exceeded my expectations. I am really proud of what we have achieved together over the last seven years."

When Stellenbosch University wanted to initiate its hybrid learning strategy, Aletta suggested that the pilot project be situated in the Department of Industrial Psychology. This led to the creation of the Postgraduate Diploma in Strategic Human Resource Management, which is now in its fourth year.

Aletta again seized the opportunity when the University

needed a pilot project to drive the concept of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs).

On the StellenboschX online platform, the Department now offers four online modules in the professional certificate in Strategic Human Resources Management (HRM), providing local and global learners access to an enriching and transformative educational experience.

With the second intake, approximately 12 200 participants enrolled for the modules worldwide with over 1 500 verified certifications. The StellenboschX offering has also become a feeder for the diploma in Strategic HRM and serves as recognition of prior learning for prospective students who do not meet the admission requirements for the diploma.

Aletta believes that "the role of departmental chairperson is becoming more and more important in the changing academic landscape. The University determines the strategic direction, the faculty interprets that strategy, but the departments are ultimately responsible for implementing the strategy.

"You have to craft a workspace that is as pleasant as possible to grow and create opportunities to get together and connect. This is one of the things I will surely miss. When we work, we work, but when we socialise, there is a pleasant collegiality, trust and openness. This helps us to rise above our challenges and to be resilient no matter how difficult the situation.

"I decided early in my career: 'If you want to go fast, go alone. But if you want to go far, go together'," she says. "Everything that this Department has achieved is the result of everyone working together and for this I am extremely grateful."

According to Aletta, she's been very fortunate in her career, with many opportunities to accelerate her professional and academic growth.

Her energy was devoted not only to academic pursuits. She also served as president of the Society of Industrial and Organisational Psychology of South Africa (SIOPSA) and was the founding member of several interest and regional groups, including the interest group for coaching and consulting psychology.

Internationally, from 2010 to 2024 she served on the council of the International Test Commission in different roles including Secretary-General and President. She

is stepping down as Past-President at the July ITC conference in Granada, Spain. She remains committed to contribute and serve to promote effective, valid and fair testing and assessment practices in South Africa.

With retirement on the horizon, she isn't making any long-term plans, but she would like to continue focusing on research on coaching psychology and she has some ideas about developing a short course on this topic. Aletta will also still be available to supervise postgraduate students.

For her, the best part of academia has been the pleasure of seeing students develop professionally and as individuals.

"As the university supervisor, you are involved in their professional journey from internship to registration, and when they send a photograph of their registration certificate, I always reply: 'Hello colleague, welcome to the profession.'"

She looks back on her career with satisfaction and joy.

"Are there still things that I want to do? Yes. I don't think you will ever reach a point where you can say you've achieved everything you wanted to achieve. I think it's good that there is still something to work for. I will keep on dreaming and transforming my dreams through action."

From July to December, Aletta will be on a research leave. The new chairperson, Prof Crystal Hoole, joined the Department at the beginning of May and officially stepped into the leadership role on 1 July.

Aletta's message to her successor is: "Don't follow existing paths; create your own pathway. You've got a stunning team, ready to go with you wherever you will enable them to go. Shoot for the stars and I know that you will reach whatever you set yourself to achieve."



Department welcomes new chairperson

Prof Crystal Hoole took over from Aletta on 1 July after serving as departmental head of the University of Johannesburg's Department of Industrial Psychology and People Management for the past three years.

Cystal joined UJ in 2015 after working in the corporate environment for ten years, during which she held several

managerial positions. She feels she is better equipped for the academic world after obtaining industry experience.

"I delivered my inaugural lecture in 2021 and started thinking about meaning and purpose. If you keep on doing things in the same way, you won't get different results."

The opportunity to move to Stellenbosch University offered a new challenge and a complete lifestyle change.

She and Aletta were colleagues at UJ but Crystal explains that, although their thinking is similar, they have different management styles.

"She has laid a foundation for me to build on. I would like to strengthen this foundation and add to it. I hope that she will be proud of what I will achieve in my time here. It's been a blessing to have been able to work with her for two months."

Crystal's research interests focus on employee wellbeing, decent work, organisational effectiveness, and leadership.

Employee wellbeing will be foremost as she navigates her first few months in this new position.

"The demands on academics have increased significantly over the past few years. Traditionally the focus areas were teaching, learning, and research, but there are many other demands now. Wellbeing is increasingly becoming an issue and it has to be addressed in the workplace.

"As a leader, you have a significant impact on employee wellbeing through the environment you create. Do you give enough support, is it an enabling environment, is there a good work-life balance, do people feel they are engaged in meaningful work? If you are passionate about something, you will immediately feel better about it."

She is optimistically excited about the immediate future.

"I think it's going to be different and one should never underestimate a new challenge. Every place is unique and I need to identify how I can use and build on my experience."

International visitor loves SU and SA

During the first semester, a PhD student from Germany visited the Department of Industrial Psychology to, among other things, work on an article about the competencies of small business owners in South Africa with his supervisor, Dr Francois van der Bank.

Max Weldert is currently busy with his PhD in the Psychology of Entrepreneurship Unit at the University of Münster. The focus of his research is the wellbeing of entrepreneurs.

"Various factors influenced my decision to come to Stellenbosch University. There was a good thematic fit with my supervisor, Dr Van der Bank, who also conducts research in the field of entrepreneurship. My girlfriend also wanted to do her semester abroad in Stellenbosch as part of her master's programme. As we have two small children, we embarked on the adventure as a family."

Max's girlfriend, Sibila Santiago, is enrolled for a Master's degree in International Marketing and Sales at the University of Applied Science in Münster.

This is Max's second academic visit to South Africa. In 2015, he spent a semester at the Nelson Mandela University in Port Elizabeth. Since then, he and Sibila have visited twice as tourists.

The young family had no trouble settling in Stellenbosch, and they were very busy, juggling their academic responsibilities with childcare. While Sibila attended lectures, Max worked on his doctoral thesis and collaborated with the Department of Industrial Psychology on joint projects.

Max was also given the opportunity to present a guest lecture on intercultural communication.

"The exchange with other international students was very interesting for me, but I also really enjoyed the informal exchange with colleagues from the Department. On the whole, the academic system seems to be very similar to that in Germany. However, I was



very impressed by the scope and academic level of the bachelor's and master's theses of Stellenbosch University's students."

Although the research here in South Africa in the form of a planned joint article is in the early stages and will extend beyond his stay in Stellenbosch, Max still shared some of his thoughts on the importance of entrepreneurship in this country.

"Due to the high unemployment rate among young people in need, the alternative career path of starting one's own business is becoming increasingly popular. Entrepreneurship, therefore, has the potential to sustainably improve the country's economic situation. In addition, in recent years Stellenbosch University has made a name for itself as a pioneer in the field of entrepreneurship and has launched various initiatives, such as the Stellenbosch University LaunchLab (Innovus)."

He will take with him to Germany a "change of perspective that will stay with me for a long time, serenity, and a good mood".

"We love South Africa more than anything. My girlfriend is Mexican, but she says that if we ever emigrated, it would be to South Africa. We were able to travel around the country a bit before our research stay, but we also enjoyed Stellenbosch, the vineyards and the surrounding area. We like the nature, the friendliness of the people and the peace and quiet, and we are guaranteed to be back again."

High School Career Guidance Project honoured with Social Impact award

The High School Career Guidance Project (HSCGP), a joint initiative between the Department of Industrial Psychology and the Department of Psychology to provide resources for career exploration, was recently acknowledged with a Social Impact award bestowed by Stellenbosch University (SU).

The awards ceremony celebrated the power of civic engagement and the exceptional contributions of staff dedicated to societal betterment, spotlighting projects that extend SU's mission beyond academia and showcasing the University's commitment to fostering meaningful partnerships and driving positive change in diverse spheres of life.

The HSCGP originated in 2019 from a need to provide support for Grade 9 learners when choosing their subjects for the Further Education and Training (Grade 10-12) phase of their schooling. In addition to the Life Orientation (LO) curriculum, LO teachers recognised that supplementary information, support and resources could be valuable to learners when making this important decision.

The project developed as a community engagement initiative, based on a community-based participatory action research model. Its expenses were funded by the Rupert Foundation and a Social Impact grant received from SU. Since the project's inception, the total number of learners assisted per year has ranged from 1 400-2 200. The Western Cape Education Department (WCED) has also expressed an interest in rolling this initiative out to all schools in the province.

What is also remarkable is the project managers' reaction and subsequent adaptation in 2020 due to the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Restrictions placed on personal contact forced the project to adapt from a workshop-based delivery format to a self-directed format, resulting in the development of the Self-Directed Career Guidance (SDCG) booklet, available in English, Afrikaans, and isiXhosa. Since its introduction in 2020, revisions have been made to the Grade 9 booklet from the feedback received from LO teachers, and it is currently in its 4th edition.

In addition to the SDCG booklet, other resources were also developed. These include a website, YouTube channel and help desk. A Facilitator's Guide was also created for LO teachers to use during contact sessions with learners.

Dr Michelle Visser, one of the project leaders, stated that they were surprised and honoured by this award.

"The people involved don't do it for acknowledgement. They are driven by a passion and need to make the world a better place."

Although the initial phases of the project focused mainly on the SDCG booklet for Grade 9 learners, it has since become evident that support for Grade 10-12 is also necessary. In 2022, Gerrit Louw, an alumnus of the Department of Industrial Psychology and a practising industrial psychologist, embarked on a research-based investigation to establish what additional resources could benefit Grade 10-12 learners. Stemming from his findings, a Self-Directed Career Guidance booklet for Grade 10 learners was developed and piloted in 2024.

The pilot sessions with Grade 10 learners were facilitated by Industrial Psychology postgraduate students and interns under the supervision of senior psychologists, thereby creating opportunities for aspiring industrial psychologists to gain valuable experience.

In addition to the Grade 10 booklet, there are plans to develop resources for Grade 11 and 12 learners. The project has been developed on and functions according to three important pillars of higher education, being teaching, application and research. It is envisioned that the project will continue to develop resources that could supplement the LO curriculum of Grade 9-12 learners. The purpose of this will be to help learners gain a better understanding of how to develop and build their careers in the world of work.



In attendance at the Social Impact Awards evening were Prof Nico Koopman, Vice-Rector: Social Impact, Transformation and Personnel, Prof Aletta Odendaal, Chair: Department of Industrial Psychology, Dr Michelle Visser, project leader, Prof Tony Naidoo, project leader, and Dr Leslie van Rooi, Senior Director: Social Impact and Transformation.

Becoming an IOP – a tough but rewarding journey



For Rachel Scrooby – who is barely six months into her professional career after completing her internship in January – the memories of her journey to this goal are still fresh.

Registering as an Industrial and Organisational Psychologist (IOP) is the culmination of several steps that must be successfully

navigated. A prospective IOP must obtain undergraduate, honours and master's degrees, after which an internship must be completed. The final hurdle is passing the Board Exam, which Rachel wrote and passed in June.

She began her journey at Stellenbosch University in 2018 by registering for and obtaining a BCom degree in Industrial Psychology, after which she was accepted into the BCom Honours (Industrial Psychology) programme and graduated cum laude. Rachel completed the first year of her master's coursework in 2022 and her thesis in 2023 (during her internship at Absa), graduating in March 2024.

In January 2024, after completing her 12-month internship, Absa offered her permanent employment as an HR generalist in the Human Capital Function.

"My work involves a lot of travelling to various branches across Gauteng South and supporting more than 1 100 frontline banking staff – sales consultants, tellers, customer service clerks and branch managers – to name a few. This is one of the most complex environments from a branch sales perspective.

"I am passionate about the work that I do because I can apply psychological principles in the workplace context to optimise employees and promote holistic wellbeing. Organisations need people, and as an IOP I am perfectly positioned to help, support and guide people to be, and feel, at their best in the workplace."

While now finding great satisfaction in her work, studying Industrial Psychology wasn't Rachel's first choice. That is why she appreciates the career clarity she obtained during her studies.

"Through the psychology and IOP lectures, I found my

passion for Industrial and Organisational Psychology which has led me to where I am today. I am so grateful for the lessons, challenges and opportunities that have steered me to a profession that I love!"

Rachel discovered that applying for an internship was quite challenging.

"It was important for me to develop resilience and self-confidence and take accountability for my career, which meant applying for as many internship programmes as I could. I had to navigate many rejections and go through scary application processes where I really questioned my ability. The application process with Absa was intimidating but I remember getting the call that I had been successful... It was one of the most rewarding moments of my journey."

She describes the internship as a hectic but amazing experience.

"As I worked through my internship, I realised that the role of an IOP, particularly in a large corporate organisation, is a role that enhances and brings so much value to the HR space. Bringing our knowledge of behavioural science and psychological principles to HR-dominated ways of working means that we can impact the holistic wellbeing of organisations and optimise people more effectively than traditional HR processes, procedures and practices."

She states that the Department of Industrial Psychology was extremely supportive throughout her studies, particularly during her internship.

"I am especially grateful to my research supervisor, Prof Gina Görgens, who continually encouraged and guided me through my research and assisted me in completing my thesis in a very busy year. My internship supervisor, Prof Aletta Odendaal, was also influential during my journey. She encouraged and asked me many thought-provoking questions, further advancing my overall internship experience.

"I am extremely grateful and appreciative of these contributions to my personal and professional growth. Their influence is a testament to the collective and collaborative journey to becoming an IOP. I could not have done it without them."

Top Achievers

The Department of Industrial Psychology congratulates **Marike Bester** for being the Department's top master's student in 2023. Student **Chelsea Smyth** achieved top marks in the Industrial Psychology honours programme, and **Christelle Jacobs** was awarded the 2023 Marius Meyer Top Student Award in the Postgraduate Diploma in Strategic Human Resource Management.



Effectively balancing coursework, research demands, and personal commitments was challenging, but nothing stopped **Marike Bester** from obtaining her master's degree in Industrial Psychology.

As an aspiring industrial psychologist, this was an important step in her journey.

"The process of applying for internships added another layer of complexity. It required careful time management and decision-making in prioritising my efforts."

Marike's decision to study Industrial Psychology arose from recommendations based on career guidance assessments.

"Upon conducting further research, I realised this career had my name written all over it," she adds.

"Industrial psychologists provide crucial support, motivation, and guidance to individuals, helping them become their best selves. Even amidst the fourth industrial revolution, where many careers are being replaced by AI, this profession remains indispensable and highly valued."

She is currently busy with her HPCSA-accredited internship at ATA Training.

"I am gaining hands-on experience in applying the theoretical knowledge I acquired during my studies. I am learning so much daily and am fortunate to be surrounded by the best colleagues."

"I plan to complete my internship and pass my board exams within the next year. In the long term, I aim to establish my own practice as a registered industrial psychologist. Before pursuing this goal, I am eager to gain valuable experience by learning from leaders in the field."

She feels extremely grateful and blessed to have been named the top master's student in the Department. Looking back on her time at Stellenbosch University, she mentions the Department's staff as the one aspect she appreciated most.

"I loved interacting and learning from them. I will always remember the love and support I experienced throughout my studies."

Her advice to students who might be considering a master's degree is to make sure that it is the right choice for them.

"If it is your passion – you should definitely do it. I think it is one of the most fulfilling careers to pursue. But it is a long road, so just make sure it is for you. There are great opportunities even without a master's degree."

Chelsea Smyth, the top honours student, agrees that even at this level, finding a good work-life challenge was challenging.

"A fellow student once said: 'We'd better practice what we preach'. As students, we have the opportunity to craft the type of life that we want for ourselves while the stakes are still relatively low. During my honours year, I had to learn to focus on my own process, progress and balance. Comparison is the true thief of joy, especially if you constantly think that someone may be working while you are taking time off or that someone else is

miles ahead. We all run our own race. I was brave enough to take on Consumer Psychology as an extra module. It was a deeply enriching module, with 12 students from three different departments in a flipped classroom approach format. Although some may



say it stole from my time, I believe it added depth and insight to my learning experience."

Chelsea's ultimate goal is to register as an industrial psychologist, and she is currently busy with her master's degree in Industrial Psychology.

"I truly appreciate the intentionality and sincerity of our lecturers and admin staff. I always joke, saying that industrial psychologists are 'people-oriented people'. This is evident in both the small interactions and big meetings. I am incredibly grateful to the lecturers for taking the time to get to know me and for creating incredible opportunities that far exceeded my expectations."

She feels humbled and grateful for this accolade.

"I see it as a beautiful confirmation that I am exactly where I am meant to be."

Her advice to younger students is to stay true to themselves, whatever this may entail.

"Your studies are such a precious time to truly discover who you are, what makes you tick and what brings you joy. Run towards those things. Your ideal life will look significantly different from that of your friends. Embrace and celebrate that. You have the power to create the life you would like to lead, so pursue things that make you grow personally and professionally."



Christelle Jacobs, Senior Learning and Development Practitioner at We Buy Cars, was the top performer in the Postgraduate Diploma in Strategic Human Resource Management (HRM).

In her role at We Buy Cars, she manages a variety of projects

with various stakeholders, including SETAS, within the learning and development sphere. These include learnership and apprenticeship programmes, shorter skills development courses, management development courses, and internal training programmes. In addition, she serves as the company's secondary Skills Development Facilitator (SDF).

"As I believe strongly in the adage 'Knowledge is power', I wanted to deepen my understanding of the field. To address this, I decided to further my education and expand my knowledge base in HR."

She describes the Postgraduate Diploma in Strategic HRM as a well-designed, comprehensive, and holistic programme that has provided her with a solid knowledge base in learning and development, which underpins all her work.

"Furthermore, as I work in a specialised area of HR, the course enhanced my understanding of other HR domains. This broader knowledge has been very beneficial in navigating and managing overlapping areas

within HR, allowing me to approach my role with greater competence and confidence."

The journey wasn't easy.

"I chose to enrol as a full-time student and complete the course in one year, which made balancing work, family life, and studies quite challenging. However, the support provided by my family, peers and lecturers was extremely beneficial. A highlight for me was visiting Stellenbosch for two weeks during the year. This opportunity to engage with each module's lecturer and my peers offered a great advantage and enriched the overall learning experience."

The most significant impact the course has had on her approach to both her job and any new project is the shift in her thinking and planning towards a more strategic mindset.

"Previously, my focus might have been more technical or operational, but now I approach every task with a broader perspective, considering long-term goals and overall organisational strategy. This strategic outlook allows me to align my efforts more closely with the company's objectives, ensuring that each project not only meets immediate needs but also contributes to our long-term success."

She always strives for excellence and is deeply honoured and grateful to have received this recognition.

"Having studied at various tertiary institutions, I must say that Stellenbosch University has exceeded all my expectations. I highly recommend this course to anyone in the HR field looking to gain comprehensive knowledge, especially from a management perspective, as it incorporates a strategic approach throughout."



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GRADUATES 2023: Master's degrees completed

Bester, Marike. Leadership development assessment: current landscape in South Africa and future needs. Study leader: Dr Francois van der Bank

Coetzee, Debbie. The readiness of HR practitioners to address the influence of the Fourth Industrial Revolution on employee wellbeing: An exploratory study. Study leader: Prof Aletta Odendaal

Kleynhans, Yolika. Task significance and deviant workplace behaviour: the moderating effect of the dark triad in a military context. Study leader: Prof Deon de Bruin

Macnab-Holding, Cuan. Exploring employees' subjective experience of psychological empowerment after adopting AI technology. Study leader: Dr Samantha Adams

Motsamai, Edwin. The effect of emotional intelligence, resilience and person-environment fit on flourishing at South African army infantry school. Study leaders:

Dr Lindiwe Masole and Dr Oscar Mthembu

Nxumalo, Gugu. The moderating role of the perceived organisational support on the effect of the leader-member exchange relationship and power distance on occupational stress among employees in a military training unit. Study leaders: Dr Oscar Mthembu and Dr Piet Bester

Rose, Courtney. Development and empirical testing

of a structural model of Presenteeism with job insecurity as a focal variable. Study leader: Prof Gina Görgens

Scheepers, Clarissa. Exploring the influence of safety knowledge on employee safety behaviour within the manufacturing industry. Study leader: Mr Tendai Mariri

Scholtz, Kelly. Evaluating the influence of board characteristics on human capital disclosure using the SABPP HR reporting framework. Study leader: Dr Mpho Magau

Scrooby, Rachel. Psychological detachment and psychological wellbeing: explicating the role of recovery self-efficacy, neuroticism and affective rumination. Study leader: Prof Gina Görgens

Segoe, Mbalenhle. An investigation of adult learner engagement in a blended learning environment. Study leader: Dr Samantha Adams

Sulon, Robyn. The relationship of vocational interest-environment congruence with academic achievement and persistence in undergraduate engineering students. Study leader: Prof Deon de Bruin

Takeyo, Macdonald. The light and dark sides of high-performance work systems: a study on employee wellbeing and job performance in South Africa. Study leader: Dr Jacques Pienaar

BPsych intake of January 2024

Stellenbosch University's BPsych Equivalence Programme forms an important part of aspiring psychometrists' journey and is targeted at postgraduate students in the broader field of Psychology who are interested in becoming professional (independent practice) psychometrists.



The following students were part of the January intake:

Front: Zarah Desai, Juan Lombard and Ra'eesah Amsterdam. **Second row:** Timothy Morgan, Casandra Snyman and Anniska Fourie; **Third row:** Timothy Solomon, Relebohile Jantjie, Liezl Muller, Susan Sander, Elmaré Dreyer, Chloe Meyer and Lauren du Plessis. **Back row:** Security guard, Sihpesihle Ngwevela, Glenda Teefo, Riana Nel, Yvonne Kok, Celeste Adams, Courtney Coetzee and Elizmia Lorentz.

Impact of incentive schemes on productivity

By Dr Mpho D. Magau



Employee participation in the financial performance of organisations is essential to stimulate motivation and increase productivity. Measured in terms of the number of sales or sales per employee, or value added per employee, or employee service outputs, productivity accounts for the net output minus inputs in the production process and largely depends on the quality of human capital, job satisfaction and commitment, as well as individual performance.

Employees are often encouraged to achieve greater levels of workplace contribution and productivity if they receive monetary or non-monetary incentives. Hence the Chief Human Resource Officers (CHROs) and Remuneration Committees (REMCOs) must prioritise incentive scheme-induced employee productivity.

When contemplating the optimal introduction of such schemes, the CHROs and REMCOs should consider affordability, trade union involvement, business performance, and intrinsic and extrinsic motivators. In fact, incentive schemes incorporating extrinsic/monetary incentives (performance bonuses, profit-sharing, stock options or any cash amount paid to employees) and intrinsic/non-monetary incentives (autonomy, job rotation, flexible job) ignite employee performance output that creates shareholder value.

To this effect, Van Zyl and Magau (2024) determined that employee productivity spillovers increase with greater company sizes, higher profitability levels, the introduction

of greater levels of monetary-based incentive schemes (especially for unionized employee segments), and the allocation of incentive schemes to the middle-aged employee grouping (35-55 years), as well as higher-skilled employees.

The percentage difference between monetary- and non-monetary-based incentive schemes on employee productivity ranged from 1.3% to 0.6% in Gauteng, 0.6% to 0.3% in the Western Cape, 0.6% to 0.5% in the Eastern Cape, and 0.3% to 0.1% in the Northern Cape. Thus, the successful implementation of these incentives requires a broad-based performance management system linking profitability, monetary- and non-monetary-based incentives to employee productivity, while also considering trade union involvement.

It is a well-established fact that trade union membership influences collective bargaining outcomes such as employee participation in profit sharing, and thus lack of transparency in the introduction of incentive schemes could be met with total rejection or opposition from the employee representatives.

Therefore, trust-based labour relationships play a fundamental role in the successful design and implementation of incentive schemes aimed at inducing employee productivity to maximise profitability. This is even more paramount in hybrid workplaces characterised by vast employee expectations and volatile business environments.

Department enters second year of open online learning

Interest in the Department of Industrial Psychology's open learning offering has been climbing steadily since its inception in 2022 with enrolments for the most popular course – Introduction to Human Resources (HR) leadership and HR management strategies – reaching 8 150 enrolments in the second intake (since 4 July 2023). Total enrolments for the second intake exceed 12 200, while there are 1 548 verified certifications. The course remains open until 28 February 2025.

Other available courses are "People analytics and reporting", "Diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) interventions" and "A strategic approach to talent management".

Learners can also enrol for the Professional Certificate in Strategic Human Resources Management, which includes all four courses, graded assessments, and a verified certificate.

Courses can be audited free of charge or students can

choose to receive a verified certificate for a small fee. The courses drew enrolments from 175 countries, with the most interest coming from India, South Africa, and the United States of America. For more information, please visit: Stellenbosch University | edX.

The Department of Industrial Psychology was the first department at SU to embrace the concept of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs).

Prof Aletta Odendaal, outgoing chair of the Department, congratulated the following lecturers for their continuous involvement: Dr Mpho Magau, Dr Jacques Pienaar, Dr Shayne Roux and Menanteau Beukes.

"These courses create excellent international visibility and branding not only for the University but also for the Department. We have huge appreciation for your dedication and commitment to excellence, and the Department is proud of what you have collectively achieved."