



The Office Of The Principal and Vice - Chancellor

PROF MS MAKHANYA, PRINCIPAL AND VICE CHANCELLOR

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

SPECIAL APPRECIATION OF GRANDUANDS: UNISA

TALENT TENACITY IMPLEMENTATION REVIEW AND

GRADUATION CEREMONY

KGORONG BUILDING

16 August 2019

- Programme Director
- Our Executive Director of Human Resources, Mr Zweli Dlamini
- Members of Unisa executive and extended management
- Ms Lynette Naidoo, Talent Management Specialist and colleagues from the talent management unit
- Our guest speaker today, Ms Reshma Mathura, Executive Director of Finance
- Ms Marlinie Ramsamy, CEO of Franklin Covey SA

- Unisa staff and students
- Members of student and labour formations
- Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen
- and our most important guests this afternoon – our graduates

A very warm welcome to this exciting and rewarding Talent Tenacity Implementation Review and graduation ceremony.

I doubt that there has ever been a time in our relatively short democracy when leadership has been in the spotlight to the extent that it is right now - and for good reason. We are faced with Herculean challenges as a nation, which will require inspired and tenacious leadership in all spheres; leadership that moves decisively beyond the populism and rhetoric that currently defines and shapes so much of what we are doing, to a situation where we not only ask: “What kind of leadership will best suit our continent, our country and, for our purposes today, our university?” to where we actually do something about it.

That is why I am so pleased about this initiative. It is programmes such as our Talent Tenacity Programme, that are “doing something about it” and contributing to a new cohort of higher education leaders who are well equipped and trained to take up the reins of leadership into a very uncertain future. It is exciting to realise that 54 participants who are in the succession talent pool across sectors

in levels P5,6, 7 are being prepared for their next role through the development of their leadership skill and mindset.

The UNISA Talent Tenacity programme was launched in June 2018, and aimed to inculcate in those identified in the talent pool, the mind-set, skill-set and tool-set that would enable them to achieve their KPA's whilst leading the organisation towards its vision to be The African University shaping futures in the service of humanity. It is particularly gratifying to note that the four modules of the programme focus on:

- improving personal effectiveness;
- inspiring and building trust within the organization;
- developing a clear vision and strategy at a departmental level that is aligned to UNISA's overall vision, mission and strategic objectives; and,
- executing the strategy and unleashing the talent of team members.

The programme was structured to ensure that a bulk of the learning happened after the workshops, through an experiential process of applying the required mindset, skill set and tool set in daily activities. To that end, the participants were assembled into syndicate groups and were required to establish accountability partners, making commitments on how they were going to implement the learning within their teams.

Well, they have done so, and successfully it would seem! This post implementation session and ceremony aims to review how the syndicate teams have performed in implementing the skills and tools that they were exposed to during the programme in their work environment, what impact this had in their respective departments and the extent to which return on investment on this programme has been achieved.

We are aware that over the past 12 months, participants have had to juggle their time and daily work obligations to attend workshops and syndicate meetings. They have also committed to championing the implementation of the new behaviours in line with UNISA's vision to be *The African University shaping futures in the service of humanity*. Today in their presentations we will see and hear first-hand, the return on investment and we will reciprocate by acknowledging their inputs and endeavours and by certifying them for the successful completion of the Talent Tenacity Programme.

I must also note and acknowledge that this leadership programme was developed and offered in partnership with Franklin Covey Leadership Development and we are delighted indeed Ms Ramsamy, that you are with us today, to also enjoy the fruits of this collaboration. Ms Ramsamy, ladies and gentlemen, is the CEO

of Franklin Covey SA. We thank you sincerely for your own contributions and those of the Franklin Covey Institute.

Let me conclude by reminding us all that when I became the Vice-Chancellor of Unisa I shared my vision of leadership with the university community. I subscribe to Servant Leadership, whose basic tenets are fundamental to what we are doing here at Unisa. Allow me to share with you [that]:

“The servant-leader is servant first... It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. That person is sharply different from one who is leader first, perhaps because of the need to assuage an unusual power drive or to acquire material possessions...The leader-first and the servant-first are two extreme types. Between them there are shadings and blends that are part of the infinite variety of human nature.....the difference manifests itself in the care taken by the servant-first to make sure that other people’s highest priority needs are being served. The best test, and difficult to administer, is: Do those served grow as persons? Do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants? And, what is the effect on the least privileged in society? Will they benefit or at least not be further

deprived?....A servant-leader focuses primarily on the growth and well-being of people and the communities to which they belong. While traditional leadership generally involves the accumulation and exercise of power by one at the “top of the pyramid,” servant leadership is different. The servant-leader shares power, puts the needs of others first and helps people develop and perform as highly as possible.

It is my wish for all of you that as you grow and develop your leadership skills and abilities and you rise in your personal and career development, you will carry in your hands and your hearts those who you lead and serve, so that they too may grow as persons, exemplary employees and indeed, future leaders themselves.

On behalf of our university Council, leadership, staff, students and stakeholders, I would like to congratulate you on the successful completion of the course and I would like to acknowledge in advance, the work that has gone into the presentations. I trust that each one of you will grow in stature and efficacy as leaders in our Unisa community.

I thank you.