



LEADERSHIP EMPORIUM

9th CESA Young Professionals Sustainability Imbizo
**Humanising the Workplace: An idea whose time
has come**

Speaker: Dr. Ngao Motsei

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Humanising the workplace is becoming more critical especially in the pandemic-induced virtual world of work

P.S. Employees are not just email addresses and faces on a Zoom or Teams meeting

The biggest form of inhumanity in organisations

Workplace bullying



The multiple faces of bullying / inhumanity in the workplace

Physical aggression	Verbal bullying	Relational aggression	Mobbing, group bullying	Institutional bullying
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal insults • Threats, intimidation (both verbal and non-verbal) • Rude interruptions • Treating people as if they are invisible • Damning sarcastic jokes • Humiliation • Public shaming 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shouting • Interruption • Opposing everything said, suggested, done by the target • Name calling • Ridiculing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social manipulation aimed at damaging target's professional reputation • Fabricated stories where target has no "right of reply" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ganging against a target • Premeditated. Typically, the target is seen as posing a threat to the bullies' goals • Consistent plotting on putting the target at his/her place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When bullying is entrenched and accepted as a way of managing people • Bullying culture

The multiple faces of bullying / inhumanity in the workplace

Bullying through abuse of legal processes	Organisational bullying	Pressure bullying	Corporate bullying	Cyberbullying
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Threats of laying disciplinary charges • Instituting baseless investigations to teach target a lesson • Maligns target and taints name due to power imbalance • Clandestine investigations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occurs when organisation is thrust into turmoil, or externally induced turmoil • Back-stabbing and jostling for positions during major organisational change • Blame culture • Scapegoating environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undue pressure to perform under impossible circumstances e.g., unrealistic timeframes, unconducive conditions • Last minute urgent deliverables with same timelines • Threats of insubordination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When the biggest bully is the top leader • Top leader's behaviour gets emulated and cascades throughout the organisation • Commanding leadership style 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of social media and other technology platforms to intimidate, harass, humiliate, or micromanage • There is an intention to hurt

Cyberbullying is on the rise with the advent of working virtually

Shares similar features as workplace bullying, except that it happens through technology and is not face-to-face

- Targets are subjected to perceived negative acts conducted over technology, e.g. phone, e-mail, social media

Forms of cyberbullying: emerging trend of bullying through emails

- E-mails with unreasonable expectations
- Expectations to be online at all times
- Delegation of work to be done with unreasonable timelines
- E-mails distributed to parties not involved in the issue at hand, i.e. copying the 'whole world', sometimes blindcopying to cause humiliation

Remote working and cyber bullying

- Technology enables information to reach a broader audience lighting fast
- The anonymity of blind copying renders the extent and reach of the abuse faceless
 - The rumours, character assassination, spread widely, sometimes without the knowledge of the target
 - Destroys personal and professional image unbeknownst to the target
 - No place to hide. Abuse can be relentless and carry on 24/7
- WhatsApp groups
 - False information and acts of intimidation spread quickly
 - Even when recalled or deleted, the damage is done



Humanising the Workplace

...through empathy, courage
and values-based leadership

Why the need for humanity in the workplace?

- Collapse of personal and professional boundaries highlighted
 - Need to support employees holistically
 - Need for empathy, boundaries, and resilience
 - Need to bring our whole selves to work
 - Human-centric work
 - Work-life harmony
- Leadership implications
 - Listen more to employees' different needs
 - Recognise their personal life circumstances not just their professional lives
 - Humanise performance management processes
 - Encourage collaboration
- The **future of work** is here
 - Need to relook 'old' ways of doing things
 - Create environment for genuine feedback
 - Build psychological safety
 - Humanity at work is the foundation for psychological safety and a healthy company culture



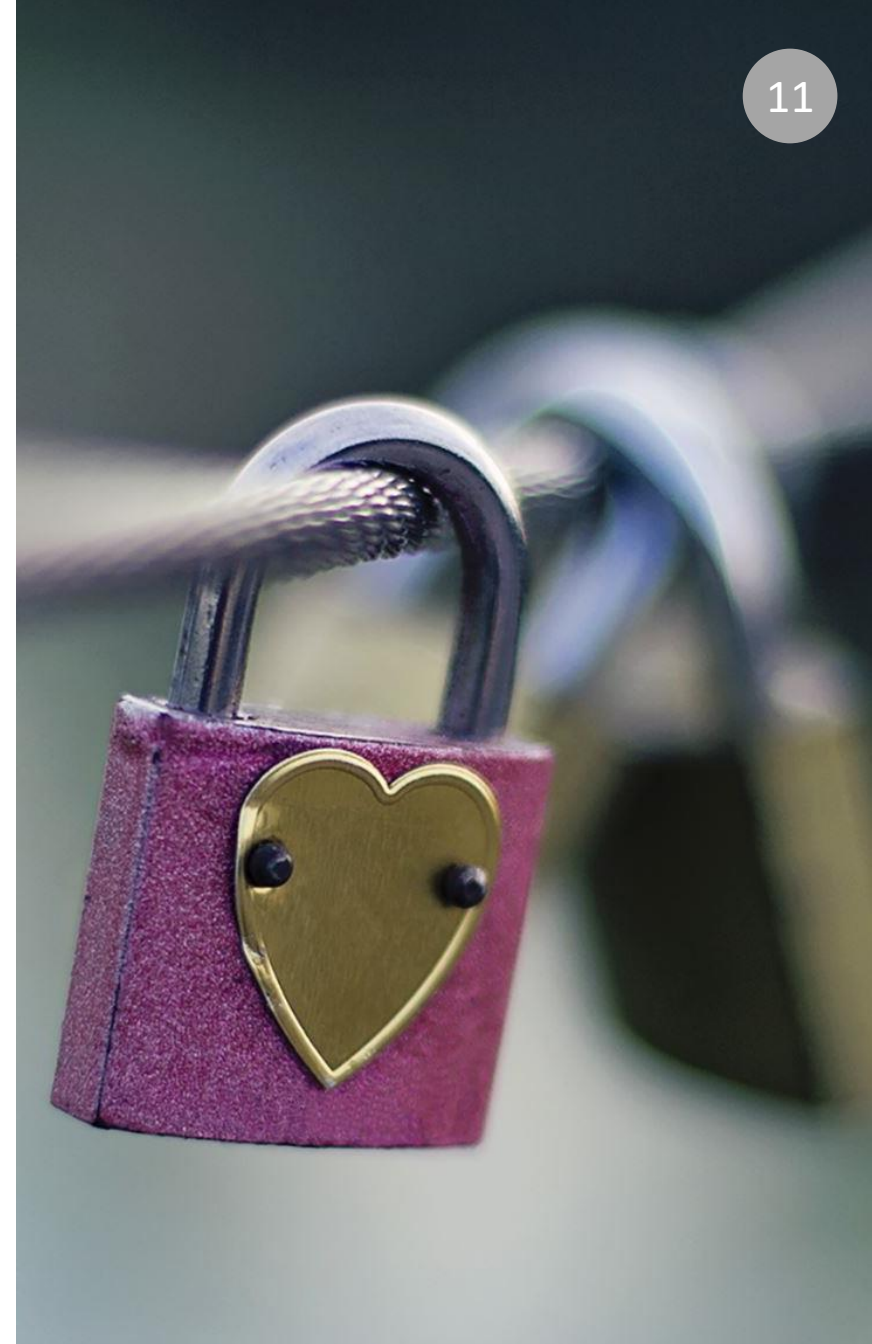
Leadership implications for humanising the workplace

- Invest in attending to employees fears and emotions
 - Open self to being vulnerable
 - “People don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care”
 - Becoming self-aware; developing your EQ
 - Not shy away from tough conversations
- Accountability
 - Own your mistakes, apologise, and make things right
- Values-based leadership
 - Clarity on own core values
 - Own values should be clear and crystalised:- **North Star**
 - What are your three most important values
 - Beliefs that are most dear and close to your heart and fill you with a sense of purpose?



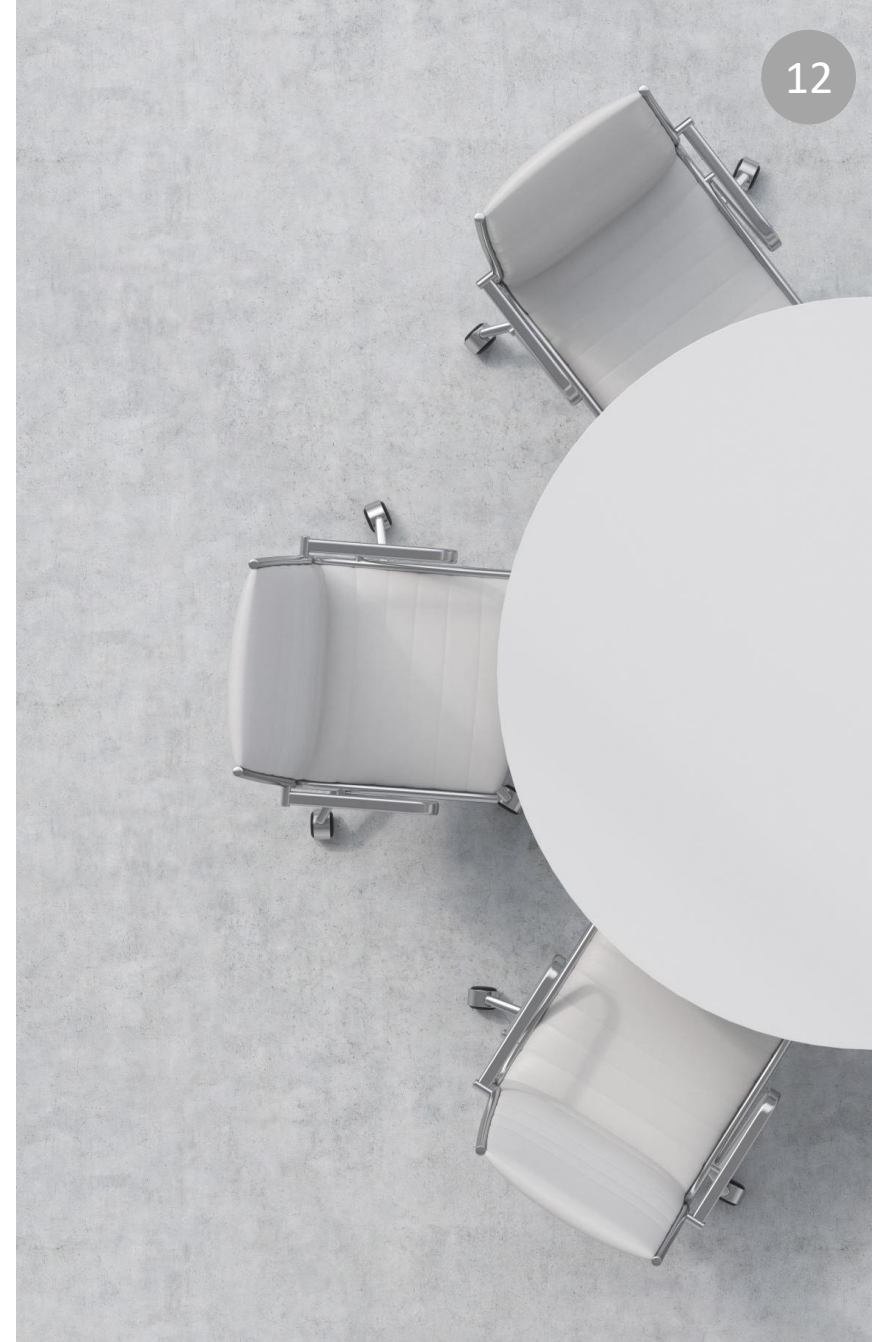
Translate your values to behaviours

- Define three or four behaviours that support your values
- Value #1_____
- Three behaviours that support your value
 - Three behaviours that often 'trip' you and make you behave outside your value
 - Example of a time when you were fully living this value
- Value #2_____
- Three behaviours that support your value
 - Three behaviours that often 'trip' you and make you behave outside your value
 - Example of a time when you were fully living this value
- Your support
 - Who is your network of support?



Concluding remarks

- The future of work is here,
- Humanising the workplace is a precursor to creating psychological safety
- Leadership is an expression of who we are, what values matter most to us
- Your employees are not just e-mail addresses and pictures in Zoom or Teams meeting
 - They have real hopes and fears
- It takes courage to lead with humility and vulnerability
- Workplace bullying is a threat to humane workplaces



Contact Us



Let's Connect

ngaom@leadershipemporium.co.za
082 414 7935

...

Co-Work@Midstream, Mount
Quray Road, Midlands Office
Park West, Midstream Estate



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EMPORIUM