

Tackling the 4th Industrial Revolution

"It is our duty to ameliorate the undesirable consequences of this 4th Industrial Revolution for our communities. Our staff, students and stakeholders must reap the benefits of this change by participating in it and being protected from the long-term adverse effects of exclusion," said Dr Enoch Duma Malaza at his inauguration on 25 August 2018.

Just as Y2K was the buzzword of the late 1990s, the 4th Industrial Revolution (Web 4.0) is the new buzzword of our times. Whether we fear, embrace or reject Web 4.0 depends on the circumstances we are faced with. An unskilled worker may find his skills obsolete and redundant while a professional still has some time to embrace the changes that Web 4.0 will bring to his or her job and adapt to it.

Our logic behind focusing on the 4th Industrial Revolution during our 7th Empowered Administrators Conference was the need to strengthen office professionals with a sense of what the Web 4.0 will entail in order for them to remain relevant. In summary, we looked at what it is and where their preparations, strengths and acumen would need to be improved.

Sandile Mahlaba, from Microsoft, presenting at the EAC

Some Web 4.0 topics tackled:

Data curation:

Patricia Badenhourst, librarian at MUT, explained the meaning of 'curation' by highlighting it with practical examples. "Content curation will enable office professionals to provide relevant and credible data with speed," she said. She demonstrated Google Drive as one of the tools that can assist office professionals in curating their documents and making them easily accessible for information retrieval and sharing.

The wonders of Office 365:

- Online collaborations: Real time co-authoring in MS Office Suite (Excel, Word, PowerPoint). Here office administrators were equipped with time-saving skills which would enable them to save time while awaiting comments from line managers, co-managers or colleagues by working on a document in real time regardless of where they are.
- Optimising the use of office apps for group chats: A real-time Whatsapp group was created by the facilitator without even taking the phone numbers. This app is very handy, even for lecturers when they develop class contact lists.
- Turning OneNote items into Outlook calendar events: By using this app, office professionals can convert notes to tasks on their calendars and even send minutes taken in OneNote by email.
- Retrieving the right version of a document: The co-authoring feature of Office 365 has made it even easier to retrieve the right version of a document and see who made what changes, including the time and place.
- Crypto currencies: These are the currencies of the future, and this topic was a new introduction to EAC 2018. In time, some office professionals may need to conduct the business of their units using crypto currencies. It is therefore relevant for them to know what lies ahead in terms of monetary exchange.



Jessie Nolela has been attending the EAC for years

EAC veterans share words of wisdom with delegates

The 2018 Empowered Administrators Conference (EAC) will always be remembered for giving the office administrators a platform to voice their views. The conference, which kicked off on 20 September 2018 at Durban's Waterfront Hotel, saw delegates painting a gloomy picture of the level of abuse experienced in most workplaces.

A panel of EAC veterans and experts gave possible solutions to the many challenges experienced by administrators. The panel included two MUT academics, Fiona Pillay of the ICT Department and Vaneshree Moodley of the Department of Office Management. The other panelists were Marlene Govender, CEO of Market Masters; and Nolwandle Mabaso and Jessie Nolela, both from Ithala Development Finance Corporation Limited.

It was interesting to note that some delegates also provided solutions to the issues. This was a clear indication of their high degree of empowerment. Nokulunga Nkabinde, a delegate from the Department of Education, advised delegates to seek help as soon as possible. "You need to stop abuse as soon as you can. Have a one-on-one discussion with your line manager," she said. Nokulunga has been attending the EAC for three years. She said that for her the EAC is always a new dawn. Each time she returns to the office after the conference, she has a host of new ideas and skills to pass on to others.

Sandile Mahlaba, a MUT alumnus, drove the message home when he gave the delegates a lesson on the development of technology. "I am just showing you how much the world is changing. You need to be digital transformation champions. If you do not lead the digital disruption of this era, the disruption will lead you. As office administrators you need to be the ones leading the 4th Industrial Revolution transformation in your organisations," he said. This was supported by Nokuthula Luthuli, the founder and Managing Director of Bloom Marketing.

One of the reasons for the success of the EAC is the support the conference enjoys from University Management. On the night of the EAC awards, the conference organisers were thrilled to welcome the chairperson of Council, Mr Morilane Morilane; various Council members; the Vice-Chancellor, Dr Enoch Duma Malaza; and the DVC: Teaching and Learning, Professor Marcus Ramogale. Dr Malaza was attending the EAC for the first time, while Professor Ramogale has been a familiar face at the event. The VC applauded the organisers of the EAC for their contribution in preparing the office administrators for the 4th Industrial Revolution.

Dr Malaza emphasised the importance of taking proper steps to adjust to the 4th Industrial Revolution. "We know that very soon there will be self-driven cars. We hope you will be able to acquire the new skills required for this phase in human history," he said.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT



The award winners

Women's leadership awards reinforce strategic partnerships

The year 2018 saw MUT presenting Women in Leadership awards to its female strategic partners for the first time. The event took place during the MUT Women's Day celebrations on 7 August 2018, and was a gathering of more than 200 women from the stakeholder groups that MUT needs in order to exist. Without their support, the University would fail to meet its value proposition. The event focused on women in the forefront of leadership, business, philanthropy and corporate social investment. The awards provided MUT a space to showcase the great work of strategic partners in positioning the MUT brand, as well as an opportunity to elevate the role of women in the different sectors of society.

Academic excellence is at the centre of MUT's existence. However, achieving excellence requires a good supply of quality students from local schools. For this reason the award for women in leadership was presented to Muntu Ntombela, the principal of Menzi High School. Muntu has spent her whole career striving for academic excellence. She has displayed strong leadership values both as deputy principal and principal of Menzi High School. Her school has received awards for six consecutive years during the Circle of Excellence awards. She achieved a 100% matric pass with 97% bachelor passes during her first year as principal, an achievement which earned her the award from MUT.

The Woman in Philanthropy award was presented to Nareshini Ranganthan, Director at the Environment Language Education Trust (ELET) to recognise her contribution in positioning MUT to donors. This has enabled the University to empower and increase the capacity of more than 35 schools in Umlazi Township. Through her various corporate social investment initiatives in the NGO sector, Nareshini has identified opportunities that resulted in MUT forming funding partnerships with more than seven corporate giants, which enabled the institution to strengthen stakeholder engagement ties with schools in the township.

MUT has a proud history of graduating more than 17 000 female students. These women are making an immense contribution to the South African economy in various spheres of business. For this reason, MUT presented a Woman in Business award to Joyleen (Joy) Mahanetsa, an MUT alumnus. Joyleen has an amazing track record and is well respected by industry stakeholders who do business with her organisation (Outsmart Outdoor Advertising), which she founded in 2006. A few weeks before receiving the award, she made a surprise visit to the Alumni Relations Office to present a donation towards building the entrepreneurial skills of a female MUT Marketing student.

In accepting the award, Joy said: "Thank you very much to my institution. It was a great pleasure meeting the MUT Vice-Chancellor and I thank you for the warm welcome. We really felt at home." She attributes her generosity to the wise words of former president, Dr Nelson Mandela, who said: "What counts in life is not the mere fact that we have lived. It is what difference we have made to the lives of others that will determine the significance of the life we lead."

'Living a healthy lifestyle in the workplace': Our people, our assets

Employee Wellness Day was a successful event held on 12 September 2018. The employees of MUT were motivated by the Theme "Living a healthy lifestyle in the workplace", and took time to undergo medical screening by professional nurses organised by certain Medical Aid Schemes. The good attendance was an indication that employees view their lives as a priority and they share the sentiment that a healthy lifestyle leads to increased productivity, an active mind and less absenteeism due to ill health. This programme is supported by the DHET which believes that moving employee health and wellness to a strategic level within higher education will benefit both institutions and the DHET.

"The employee health and wellness programme is crucial for the sustainability of MUT, therefore it must be embraced by management as one of its strategic goals," said Lizvi Masondo, MUT's Safety, Health and Environment Officer. Different service providers occupied Bozzoli Hall and offered a wide range of free services to MUT employees.

These included the Cancer Association of South Africa, Diabetic SA, the Discovery Medical Aid Scheme, Sizwe Medical Aid Scheme, an optometrist, Virgin Active, Sanlam, Old Mutual (which provided free medical screening for those who are not on medical aid, and offered financial advice), MUT Sports Club and finally, Zest.



Staff testing during Wellness Day