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## From Vision to Reality: Sam Nujoma and Junias Erasmus on Building a Knowledge-Based Economy

# From Vision to Reality: Sam Nujoma and Junias Erasmus on Building a Knowledge-Based Economy

By Junias Erasmus

Empowering the Namibian youth through career education is an essential pillar of national development, as it directly influences economic growth, reduces unemployment, and fosters entrepreneurship. Career education must be strategically aligned with industry demands to ensure that graduates possess the relevant skills required in the labor market. Namibia, like many developing nations, faces the challenge of a widening gap between academic qualifications and employable skills. This calls for a robust framework that integrates vocational training, higher education, and entrepreneurial development to equip young people with both theoretical knowledge and practical expertise.

Sam Nujoma, Namibia's founding president, has consistently championed the need for education as the cornerstone of national progress. His vision for a knowledge-based economy underscores the importance of equipping the youth with skills that drive industrialization and economic self-sufficiency. Similarly, Junias Erasmus, a management scientist, scholar, and operational researcher, has emphasized the critical role of strategic career education in fostering resilience and adaptability among young people. Both leaders advocate for a system that not only prepares individuals for traditional employment but also encourages innovation and self-employment.

Career education must evolve beyond conventional academic instruction and integrate hands-on experience, digital literacy, and entrepreneurial training. By forging stronger partnerships between educational institutions and industries, Namibia can create a workforce that



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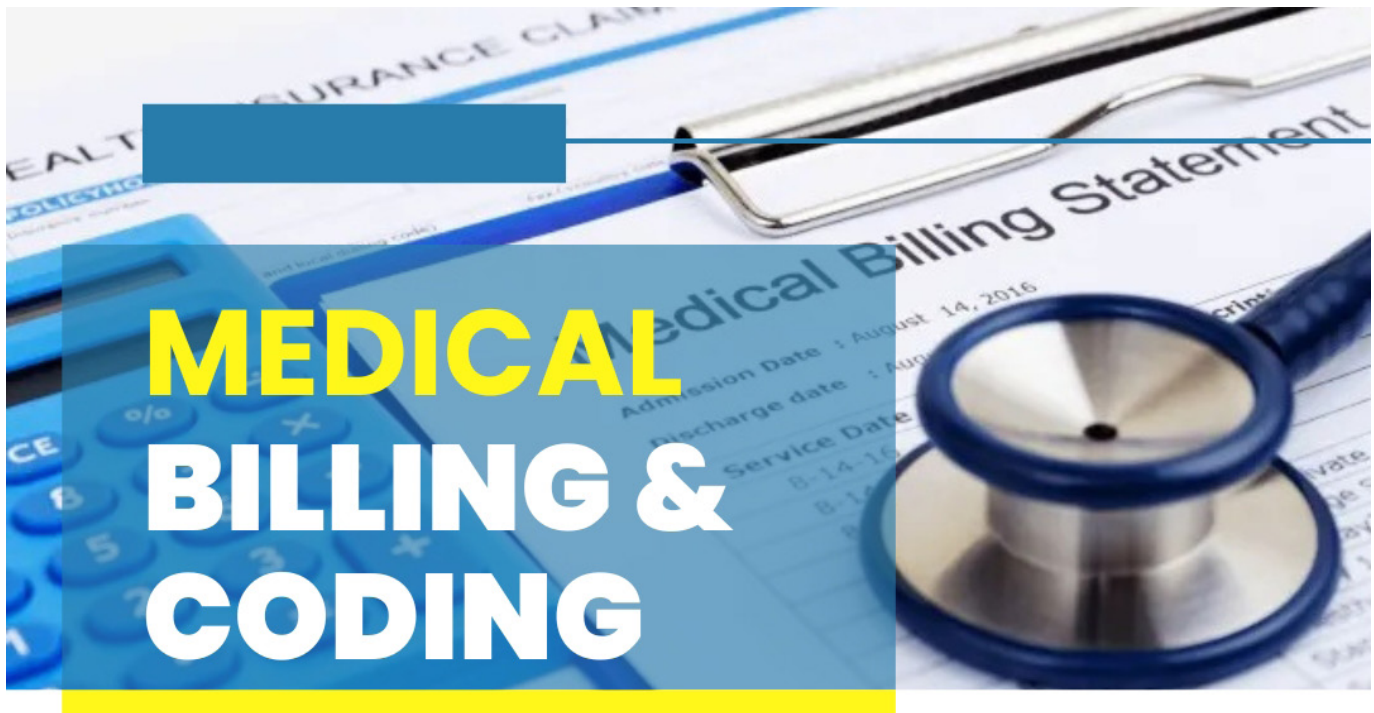


meets the evolving demands of various economic sectors. Technical and vocational education must be prioritized alongside university degrees to provide diverse pathways for success. Entrepreneurship should also be at the core of career education, empowering young Namibians to create their own opportunities rather than relying solely on formal employment.

To transform vision into reality, Namibia must invest in policies that promote industry-aligned curricula, mentorship programs, and access to capital for young entrepreneurs. Sam Nujoma envisions an education system that not only imparts knowledge but also cultivates practical problem-solving skills, fostering self-reliance and innovation. Junias Erasmus, with his research-driven approach, advocates for a dynamic education model that continuously adapts to global technological advancements and market needs. Their combined perspectives highlight the necessity of a structured, yet flexible, career education system that responds to both national priorities and global economic shifts.

By embracing this progressive approach, Namibia can cultivate a knowledge-based economy that thrives on innovation, self-reliance, and global competitiveness. A well-structured career education system will ensure that the Namibian youth become architects of their own futures, driving the nation toward long-term prosperity. The alignment of career education with industry demands, coupled with entrepreneurial empowerment, will reduce youth unemployment and stimulate economic diversification. With the right policies and investments, Namibia can transform its workforce into a catalyst for sustainable development, ensuring that its young population contributes meaningfully to the country's growth and global positioning.

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The initiative, launched by Itah Kandjii-Murangji, the minister of higher education, technology and innovation, aims to bridge the qualification gap in the country's vocational education system and align training programmes with evolving labour market demands.

## Task force inaugurated to oversee transformation of VTCs into TVET colleges

Staff Writer

Namibia has taken a courageous step in reforming its Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) sector with the inauguration of a task force dedicated to transforming state-owned Vocational Training Centres (VTCs) into fully-fledged TVET colleges.

The initiative, launched on Thursday by Itah Kandjii-Murangji, the minister of higher education, technology and innovation, aims to bridge the qualification gap in the country's vocational education system and align training programmes with evolving labour market demands.

Kandjii-Murangji stressed the significance of this transformation in tackling structural unemployment and fostering economic growth.

"Transformation and classification of TVET in Namibia stand central in our aspiration of becoming an industrialised society. We must be agile and responsive in developing an efficient,

effective, and sustainable TVET system, aligned with the current and future skills needs of the labour market," she said.

The minister added that Namibia's TVET system is currently well-established up to Level 3 on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), but it suffers from what the minister described as a missing middle.

According to Kandjii-Murangji, this gap in qualifications from Levels 4 to 6 limits the career progression of TVET graduates and restricts their access to higher-skilled and higher-paying job opportunities.

"The lack of qualifications at Level 4 to 6 leaves the labour market excessively polarised, hampering qualification progression and articulation, as well as social mobility," she explained.

The minister acknowledged that Namibia's TVET system has been slow to fully respond to the growing demand for skilled labour in critical sectors despite some state-owned vocational training centres already offering higher-level qualifications. She reiterated that a concerted effort was required to enhance





*Picture, just for illustration*

both the quality of TVET graduates and the overall system's responsiveness to industry needs.

To address these challenges, a newly established task force will conduct a comprehensive assessment of existing VTCs to identify strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for improvement.

Kandjii-Murangi said the team is also expected to develop a strategic plan for transitioning selected VTCs into specialised TVET colleges capable of offering training at Levels 4 to 6.

The minister explained that this would be done in accordance with Regulation No. 7498 of the Vocational Education and Training Act, Act 1 of 2008.

"The task force, comprising TVET, labour market, industry, and research experts, will engage key stakeholders, including educators, students, and industry representatives, to ensure broad-based input and consensus," she said.

Their responsibilities will extend to curriculum development, aligning training programmes with market demands, and establishing quality assurance mechanisms.

According to Kandjii-Murangi, the task force is also expected to benchmark best practices and propose a model that enhances employer interest in TVET graduates, thereby strengthening both the education sector and workforce development.

She reiterated the importance of stakeholder collaboration, particularly with industry players, to ensure that the transformation effort leads to tangible employment opportunities for graduates.

"Industry participation and support stand central in this endeavour. It remains vitally important that industry assists in generating opportunities that our TVET graduates can access across a range of sectors," she said.

The minister added that with Namibia's emerging energy sector, advancements in technology, and lingering economic

effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, the need for a restructured TVET system has never been greater.

She said that Namibia must adapt to these realities by ensuring that its workforce is equipped with relevant skills.

"With the impact of the coronavirus pandemic still lingering, increasing automation of jobs, and the pace of technological change, as well as expectations for higher-level TVET skills emanating from our country's emerging energy sector, it is needed now, more than ever," she said.

The task force, chaired by Professor Francis Sifiso Nyathi of the Namibia University of Science and Technology, has been given ten months to complete its work.

According to the minister, progress reports will be submitted periodically, with key deliverables reviewed at each stage.

She added that the Namibia Training Authority (NTA) will provide administrative, logistical, and financial support to facilitate the successful execution of the assignment.

Kandjii-Murangi expressed confidence that the initiative would enhance the country's educational framework and uplift the TVET sector.

She urged the task force to embrace the platform as an opportunity for meaningful engagement and innovation.

"The Ministry deems this Task Force a platform for finding innovative solutions; a platform to evaluate and take stock of the work we do; a platform for improvement," she said.

She added that the transformation of VTCs into specialised TVET colleges is a decisive step towards building a more skilled, competitive, and adaptable workforce.

"The success of this initiative will depend not only on government and institutional efforts but also on strong partnerships with industry to ensure that TVET graduates have the skills and opportunities needed to thrive in a rapidly evolving job market," she said.



# Namibian engineers undergo wind turbine training in SA

Windwise Turbines Namibia (Pty) Ltd has sent its first group of five Namibian engineers for a six-month wind turbine training programme at the SARETEC wind turbine training centre in Cape Town, South Africa.

“Upon completion, these professionals will play a pivotal role in installing and maintaining the first Windwise turbines in Namibia, ensuring a highly skilled, locally driven workforce in the renewable energy sector,” the company said.

The company stated that the engineers will receive hands-on training with full-scale turbines, gaining practical experience in wind turbine installation, maintenance, and operations. “Windwise Namibia’s workforce is engaged in producing highly complex structures that require extensive technical expertise.

The training at SARETEC allows the Namibian engineers to gain hands-on experience with full-scale turbines, enabling them to master wind turbine systems under real-world conditions.” Windwise Turbines Namibia, the country’s first wind turbine manufacturer, is committed to localising production and employment.

“The company’s strategic growth model ensures that as projects scale up, so will employment opportunities for Namibians. Over the medium term, Windwise Namibia expects to employ a workforce comprising more than 95% Namibians, including middle and upper management positions,” the company said.



*Upon completion, these professionals will play a pivotal role in installing and maintaining the first Windwise turbines in Namibia, ensuring a highly skilled, locally driven workforce in the renewable energy sector.*

Windwise Turbines Namibia’s initiatives align with Namibia’s Green Industrialisation Blueprint, which identifies wind turbine production as a strategic sector for investment.

According to the blueprint, Namibia aims to create a robust environment for green energy industries, generating employment and fostering technological innovation. Windwise Turbines Namibia is an independent company utilising 100% German technology from its sister company, Windwise GmbH. It plans to manufacture wind turbines with rotor diameters ranging from 141 to 175 metres, designed for stable power generation with high-capacity factors.





# Capricorn Foundation Invests N\$2.6 Million in Education Projects

Over the past four months the Capricorn Foundation has invested N\$2.6 million in various educational and training projects, focusing on infrastructure development, study materials, teacher training, and addressing rural-urban education disparities in Namibia.

The investment is in line with the Foundation's commitment to enhancing educational opportunities and promoting social and economic development across the country. Education is a key focus for the Capricorn Foundation and an essential part of social and economic development. *"As a Connector of Positive Change, the Capricorn Foundation takes pride in bringing about meaningful transformation through projects and programmes across Namibia. By investing in education and training, we empower Namibian learners, setting them on a path toward career success and personal development,"* Veripura Muukua, Capricorn Foundation Coordinator said.

The funding has been allocated to several key educational projects listed below.

The funded projects include:

- **DRC Women's Community – ECD Project (Swakopmund):** This project focuses on empowering women in the DRC community by providing them with education and skills development opportunities, enhancing their socio-economic status. The project also educates 140 children aged 4-6 from impoverished households and also ensures they have a healthy meal daily. The Capricorn Foundation committed N\$300,000 towards the ECD Centre.
- **Amos Meerkat Syllabus (AMS):** The Amos Meerkat Syllabus The project gives children in isolated and rural areas the chance to get ready for school through ECD. AMS reaches 5235 children and 263 teachers nationwide. Capricorn Foundation committed N\$582,000 to support the project by printing the school materials.
- **One Economy Foundation:** The Foundation funds various educational projects that use education and skill-building initiatives to enhance socioeconomic development. Capricorn Foundation donated N\$300,000 to help support and empower young Namibians through the #BeFree Youth Campus.

- **Hatika Adult Education Centre:** The Centre was founded in 2019 and offers reasonably priced education and skill development to people living in informal settlements. The project uses literacy programmes and vocational training to advance socioeconomic development for 100 adult students. Capricorn Foundation committed N\$28,774.
- **EduVision:** The project is concerned with improving the quality of education by using technology to reach a larger audience and creative teaching strategies. Capricorn Foundation committed to adopting two schools for a second year, Pioneer Secondary School in Schlip and C. //Oaseb Senior Secondary School in Gibeon, with a total contribution of N\$670,000.00 (N\$335,000 per school) to improve online learning access.
- **Karstveld Academy:** The project was established in Grootfontein in January 2021 and is committed to elevating Namibia's educational standards through academic and cultural excellence. The Capricorn Foundation committed N\$412,450 to Karstveld Academy towards bursaries for six Grade 11 learners covering school and hostel fees for the 2025 academic year.
- **Meerkat Learning:** Also known as Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL), this nationally endorsed initiative enhances numeracy and literacy skills among primary school learners. With the N\$300,000 funding from the Capricorn Foundation, the programme will expand its reach and impact, benefiting 10 schools, 200 teachers, and 1000 learners across the Kunene Region.

*"The Capricorn Foundation's support goes beyond financial contribution towards projects. We believe it is pivotal for the Foundation to remain relevant and address the communities facing the most challenges and dire situations. Our recent visit to the Meerkat Learning Project in Khorixas and the Education Director for the Kunene region, Mrs. Sophia Frederick, was a testament to that. Such engagements are key to understanding the situations on the ground and faced at regional levels and discussing opportunities for collaboration",* added Veripura Muukua, Capricorn Foundation Coordinator.

# BoN's STEAM programme reaches 480 learners across eight schools

The Bank of Namibia (BoN) says it has successfully implemented its Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics (STEAM) programme in eight secondary schools, benefiting 480 learners.

The initiative aims to equip students with future-ready digital and problem-solving skills.

BoN Deputy Governor Leonie Dunn emphasised the programme's role in fostering innovation among Namibian youth.

"Since the inception of this programme, the Bank has successfully implemented our STEAM programme in eight secondary schools across different regions of our country. A total of 480 learners have benefited from these much-needed future-fit skills," she said.

Dunn said the programme has led to practical innovations by learners, addressing real-world challenges.

"The most remarkable innovation I have seen was from a student in the south who designed a concept to detect food contamination, helping prevent poisoning in her community. Another student developed an automated door-locking mechanism to address security concerns and extreme cold affecting homeless individuals," Dunn noted.

The initiative prioritises rural and underserved communities, ensuring equitable access to digital literacy and technology.

"In urban areas, children have access to robotics and coding programs. But if I am a learner in a remote village like Kurunkuru, how do I access these opportunities? The Bank of Namibia's STEAM project ensures that rural learners are not left behind in the digital revolution," she stated.

BoN has partnered with key stakeholders, including the Ministry of Education, Minds in Action and Eduvision Namibia, to expand the programme reach.

"Technology is evolving rapidly, and while school curricula cannot change overnight, financial sector players like us must step in to bridge these gaps. That is why the Bank of Namibia is working closely with the Ministry of Education to enhance the curriculum with practical, future-focused learning," Dunn explained.

The program aligns with the bank's broader goal of preparing the Namibian workforce for a knowledge-based economy.





“As we transition into what I call the Fifth Industrial Revolution, Namibia’s economic future depends on a workforce that is technologically adept and ready to compete on a global scale,” she said.

Calling for broader collaboration, Dunn urged financial institutions to support the initiative.

“We have reached 480 learners, but how many more need this opportunity? There are over 900,000 school-going children in Namibia. Imagine if more commercial banks and strategic partners joined this initiative, how many more young minds could we empower?” she asked -BoN



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THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

# How Storytelling Transforms Training

In the world of training and professional development, the challenge is often the same: how to ensure that learners not only absorb information but also retain and apply it in meaningful ways. Traditional methods of instruction—facts, figures, and rote learning—are often insufficient in creating lasting impact. This is where storytelling comes in, transforming the way training is designed and delivered. By weaving stories into training programs, organizations can foster deeper engagement, enhance understanding, and drive behavioural change.

Storytelling is a powerful communication tool that has been used for centuries to share knowledge, inspire action, and build connections. At its core, storytelling resonates with the human brain in ways that raw data cannot. Studies in neuroscience reveal that when people listen to stories, multiple parts of their brain are activated, making the experience both emotional and memorable. Stories help learners relate to the material, making it easier to grasp complex concepts and apply them to real-world scenarios.

For training, this means that incorporating storytelling can turn abstract ideas into relatable experiences. Instead of presenting a long list of leadership qualities, for instance, a trainer could tell the story of a leader who navigated a crisis, demonstrating those qualities in action. The narrative provides context, making the lessons not just educational but also inspiring.

Training programs often aim to inspire employees to adopt new skills, embrace organizational values, or change behaviours. Storytelling is particularly effective in this regard because it goes beyond logic and appeals to emotion. When people hear a compelling story, they are more likely to empathize with the characters and internalize the lessons.

For example, a training session on diversity and inclusion could present statistics and policies, but a story about an employee's experience with workplace discrimination would leave a stronger

impression. The narrative can spark empathy and motivate learners to reflect on their own behaviours, making the training outcomes more impactful.

Storytelling also nurtures creativity and innovation in learners. When trainers use stories to pose challenges or dilemmas, they encourage participants to think critically and explore solutions. This method, often referred to as scenario-based learning, places learners in the shoes of decision-makers, making the training more interactive and engaging.

For example, a customer service training could involve a story about a difficult client interaction, leaving the learners to brainstorm solutions. By involving participants in the story, they not only learn the theoretical aspects of customer service but also practice applying them in a safe and imaginative setting.

Storytelling has the unique ability to transform training from a mundane exercise into a captivating and impactful experience. By engaging both the hearts and minds of learners, storytelling ensures that the lessons go beyond the training room and find application in the workplace.

Organizations that embrace storytelling in their training programs can foster deeper connections, improve learning outcomes, and drive long-term behavioral change. In a world where engagement is key to learning success, stories remain one of the most effective tools for inspiring and educating employees.



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## THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

# Will AI Take My Job?

## The Truth Behind the Hype and What It Means for the Future of Work

By Stantin Siebritz

If you've been reading the headlines, you might think we're on the brink of a real-life "Terminator" scenario—machines rising up to take over all our jobs. Dramatic, right? But while AI's capabilities are impressive, the reality is more nuanced than the sensational headlines suggest.

How Good Is AI at Replicating Human Intelligence?

AI's progress in recent years is impressive. Algorithms can spot patterns in data that humans might miss. They can generate text that sounds remarkably human and even create images that look professionally designed. But here's the kicker: AI's abilities are fundamentally tied to the data it's fed.

- **Data-Driven:** Machines learn by identifying patterns in huge datasets. They can produce "knowledgeable" outputs—but only within the scope of what they've been trained on.
- **Context Matters:** Outside those datasets, AI can stumble. Without the right context, you end up with answers or content that might sound confident but can be factually wrong or, at best, very generic.
- **The Human Factor:** True intelligence often involves adaptability, creativity, emotional understanding, and cultural nuances—dimensions where humans still hold a definitive edge.

So, if you're imagining a Jetsons-style future where a robot butler can replace your job in every sense, keep calm: we're not quite there yet.

### Reality vs. Hype

**You've heard the headlines:** "AI will revolutionize everything!", "AI is coming for your job!" Yes, AI garners a lot of media attention, and for good reason. It is powerful technology with real potential. However, it's also commonly overhyped:

- **Shiny Tech Syndrome:** Companies parade AI solutions like the new kid on the block in an 80s teen movie (think "The Breakfast Club" meets "Revenge of the Nerds"). But under the spotlight, you might find many AI tools that still rely heavily on human guidance and oversight.
- **Incremental Gains:** Much of AI's current success lies in doing specific tasks really well, like analyzing data, automating repetitive processes, or generating quick content. This is evolution, not necessarily revolution.

### AI as a Tool, not a Replacement

AI should be viewed as an enabler; a power tool you bring out to tackle tasks that are repetitive, mundane, or data heavy. In fact, it's often the most repetitive jobs that face the highest replacement risk. But this can be an opportunity rather than a dire threat:



- **Boost Productivity:** By offloading routine tasks to AI, humans can focus on complex problem-solving, creativity, relationship-building, and strategy.
- **Upskilling for the Future:** In Namibia, across Africa, and around the world, learning how to use AI effectively can set you apart. Acquire new skills that let you partner with AI rather than compete against it.

Think of it like Maverick from "Top Gun": He has the reflexes and instincts to pull off maneuvers a computer might calculate but can't feel. The plane's instruments (technology) help him fly better, but they don't replace him. If you have that mindset, you'll be primed to take advantage of AI instead of letting it pass you by.

### AI's Limitation: The Lack of Soul

Certainly, AI can churn out essays, code, or even write short stories in seconds. But try asking it to capture the depth of human emotion, cultural nuance, or personal struggles, and you might get something that's close...but not quite there.

### Why?

- **Emotional Connection:** Empathy, passion, and soul aren't just marketing buzzwords. They're human qualities that machines can genuinely not replicate.
- **Deep Context:** AI can approximate emotional content by processing linguistic patterns, but it doesn't feel it, and we have seen how people can sense that difference.

### The Advertising Industry as an Example

The 2024 Coca-Cola AI-generated Christmas ad looked visually stunning: a reimagined take on their 1995 classic ad. Yet, for many viewers, something was off. "Soulless," said some. "A cheap copy," said others. What's missing? That intangible human spark. The original 1995 ad wasn't just about snow and Santa; it was about evoking warmth and nostalgia. The new one, despite technical brilliance, felt more like Iceman; precise, cool, and efficient, but lacking the spontaneity and heartfelt connection audiences resonate with.

Adidas took things up a notch with their AI-generated ad which blurred the lines between reality and virtual. It was sleeker, more believable, and less robotic. Yet even then, there was some invisible thread absent: the subtle eye contact, the unique personalities, and that intangible "vibe" that only human involvement can truly give.

### Will AI Replace Human Jobs?

The truth is that there is no doubt that AI is getting better. It will replace certain roles and tasks, but that portion is smaller than the doom-and-gloom headlines suggest. The truth of the matter is:

- **Human Input Is Essential:** AI often requires human oversight to guide it, refine its outputs, and inject that emotional or creative spark that data alone can't generate.
- **Not a Mass Replacement:** As long as human insight, creativity, and emotional intelligence are needed, AI can't fully displace entire professions.
- **Embrace the Change:** The unknown can be scary, but harnessing AI as a tool can make you more efficient and valuable. If you can wield AI effectively, you're less likely to be replaced by it.

### Embrace, Don't Fear

AI is here to stay, and it's going to keep getting better, like a sequel that finally meets expectations (we're looking at you, "Terminator 2"). Indeed some jobs, particularly those rooted in repetitive, replicable tasks, will face the greatest risk. But for most fields, AI is a tool: an avenue to streamline workflow and boost creativity, not a harbinger of mass unemployment.

If you're worried, take a deep breath and remember:

- **Upskill:** Learn how to use AI and become the human driving force behind these algorithms.
- **Stay Adaptable:** Industries evolve, just think about how many jobs changed with the rise of the internet and mobile phones.
- **Leverage Uniquely Human Qualities:** Emotional intelligence, critical thinking, storytelling, relationships will always set us apart from any machine.

In the ever-evolving world of technology, being the savvy human at the controls, leveraging AI's power and injecting it with your passion, intuition, and distinctly Namibian or African flair, is how you stay ahead. Therefore, rest assured your job might change, but it's far from game over.

Top Guns movie fans will recall that "we feel the need - the need for speed", but it's ultimately our humanity that puts us in the pilot's seat.

### Note to the Editor:

*Stantin Siebritz is the Managing Director of New Creation Solutions, a software engineer and an Artificial Intelligence specialist.*



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## THOUGHT LEADERSHIP



# Healing from offense and workplace bullying: Reclaiming your power

By Loide Nantinda

The corporate world, while often a place of ambition and achievement, can unfortunately also be a breeding ground for offense, bullying, harassment, and even abuse. These experiences can leave deep wounds, impacting not only our professional lives but also our mental and emotional well-being. Healing from these experiences is crucial, and it requires a multi-pronged approach. Let's look at practical communication tips and strategies to ameliorate such challenging situations.

Understanding the Impact Workplace bullying, harassment, and abuse can manifest in various forms: verbal abuse, intimidation, exclusion, unreasonable workloads, undermining, and even physical threats. The impact can be significant, leading to anxiety, depression, sleep disturbances, decreased productivity, and even post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). It's vital to acknowledge the severity of these experiences and understand that you are not alone. Strategies for Healing Navigating workplace bullying and harassment is a complex and deeply personal journey that requires careful consideration and a proactive approach. The experience of being bullied or harassed can leave



a lasting impact, making it essential to address these issues thoughtfully to foster a healthier work environment. The first step in this process is often acknowledging and validating your feelings.

Recognizing the emotional turmoil caused by such experiences is crucial. It's important to allow yourself to feel these emotions without judgment, as this validation can be the foundation for healing. Seeking support can also be a pivotal move. Sharing your experiences with someone you trust, whether it's a friend, family member, or a professional therapist, can provide a safe space for processing your feelings. This support network can assist you in developing effective coping strategies and remind you that you are not alone in your struggle. Documentation plays an essential role in managing workplace bullying. Keeping a detailed record of every incident, including dates, times, specific actions, and any witnesses, can empower you if you choose to take further action. This meticulous account not only serves as a reference but also reinforces the seriousness of the situation. Setting boundaries is another vital strategy. Reflecting on which boundaries have been crossed enables you to take proactive steps to protect yourself.

This might involve limiting interactions with the individual causing harm or asserting your right to a respectful workplace. If necessary, don't hesitate to involve human resources or a supervisor to ensure your concerns are taken seriously. In the midst of these challenges, focusing on selfcare is paramount. Engaging in activities that bring you joy and relaxation, such as exercise, meditation, or spending time with loved ones, can significantly contribute to your emotional well-being. Nourishing your mental health is essential for recovery and resilience. Reframing negative thoughts is also critical in combating the

self-blame that often accompanies bullying. Challenging these thoughts and replacing them with positive affirmations can help restore your self-esteem. Remember, the behavior of the perpetrator is not a reflection of your worth. If the emotional impact of workplace bullying becomes overwhelming, seeking professional help is a wise decision. A therapist or counselor who specializes in trauma can provide the guidance and support needed to navigate your feelings and experiences.

Effective communication is integral in addressing bullying and harassment. Staying calm and assertive can make a significant difference in how your message is received. Using "I" statements to express your feelings can foster understanding, as it focuses on your experience rather than placing blame. Additionally, being clear about your boundaries reinforces your expectations for respectful treatment. Documenting all communications related to the situation is crucial, as it creates a record that can be referenced if the need arises. Reporting the issue to HR or a supervisor is an important step if the behavior persists. Familiarizing yourself with your company's policies regarding bullying and harassment, as well as any legal protections, can empower you to take informed actions. By incorporating these strategies into your approach, you can begin to reclaim your sense of safety and well-being in the workplace. Navigating these difficult experiences is undoubtedly challenging, but with the right tools and support, you can create a path toward healing and empowerment.

*\*Loide Nantinda is a seasoned communications coach professional and storyteller with expertise in corporate communications, change management, project coordination and stakeholder engagement.  
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next issue: 3 March 2025



## EDUCATION



# NUST offers scholarships to over 100 students at Eenhana and Lüderitz campuses

In a move to expand access to quality education in all corners of the country, the Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST) has availed a special funding opportunity to students who enrol at the Eenhana and Lüderitz campuses. The funding opportunity is a direct investment into our communities to better the lives of 140 students, specifically those enrolled in the following programmes:

- Introduction to Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (InSTEM) bridging course (one year)
- Bachelor of Logistics and Supply Chain Management Honours (one year)
- Master of Sustainable Energy Systems (two years)

Through this opportunity, 100 students will receive free access to the InSTEM bridging course at NUST's Eenhana and Lüderitz campuses. Additionally, 30 students will be awarded scholarships in the Bachelor of Logistics and Supply Chain Management Honours programme at our Lüderitz campus, while 10 students will obtain a scholarship to pursue the Master of Sustainable Energy Systems programme, also offered exclusively at our Lüderitz campus.

This opportunity is further available to NUST students currently registered for these programmes who are willing relocate to Lüderitz or Eenhana. In this case, their

registration and tuition fees will be fully refunded.

### About Eenhana and Lüderitz campuses

The Eenhana campus was established to support Namibia's development priorities by expanding services to rural areas and reducing the cost of access to higher education for rural communities. Meanwhile, the Lüderitz campus was established to provide industry-relevant education to Namibia's coastal region, supporting sectors such as marine engineering, logistics, and energy sustainability.

### Debt reprieve

Furthermore, the University has announced a debt reprieve for students facing financial constraints in paying their registration fees across all programmes. This initiative aims to ensure inclusivity by offering payment plans to affected students, making the reprieve more sustainable and offering wider access to registration. Registration across all campuses has been extended and will now close on Friday, 21 February 2025.

NUST encourages all prospective students to visit their campuses and regional centres for registration purposes.

*The Department of Corporate Engagement and Internationalisation  
communications@nust.na*

EDUCATION



# Amy sees herself going places

For most, a scholarship means financial relief. For Amy Andrew, a second-year Business and Information Administration student at NUST, it is more than that – it means empowerment and independence.

Growing up in Schlip, a small settlement in the Hardap Region, Amy faced challenges, from limited resources to societal misconceptions. This is because she was born with a visual impairment that limited her mobility and affected her quality of life, but she remained optimistic.

"I never believed in the word 'disabled'—we are all just differently abled," she says. Her determination and academic excellency caught the attention of the Rössing Foundation, which awarded her a N\$200 000 sponsorship covering a scholarship, a laptop with assistive software, and telescopic glasses. "The telescopic glasses have given me a new level of independence. When I heard I could potentially qualify for a driving licence, I was overwhelmed with joy," she shares. At NUST, Amy found support. "From my lecturers ensuring my study materials were accessible to classmates treating me as an equal, I have felt supported every step of the way," she said.

Maria Immanuel, Rössing Foundation's Liaison and Community Development Manager,

pledged further support for Amy, stating that she will be given the opportunity to undergo the Rössing Foundation Internship Programme, gaining invaluable experience for her future. Looking ahead, Amy envisions herself as a Chief Executive Officer in real estate and development company, driving transformative projects. Her advice to others? "Your struggles do not define you; your perseverance does."

Dr Donovan Zealand, NUST's Director of Student Services, praised the impact of the collaboration, stating that "a truly great university leaves no student behind." This is one of a number of collaborations that the University is involved in, aimed at bettering the lives of less-privileged students. -*NUST Department Of Corporate Engagement And Internationalisation*



**To all the Grade 11 and 12 learners,  
see you at NUST!**

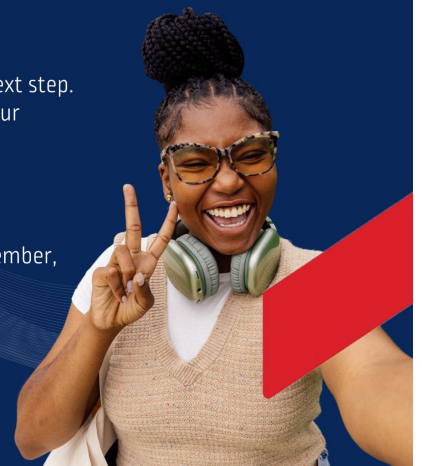
The results are in, and now it is time for the next step. We are ready and excited to welcome you to our campuses.

Congratulations on passing your exams!

If the outcome is not what you expected, remember, this is just one chapter in a bigger story.

Give it another try!

[www.nust.na](http://www.nust.na)





# Young woman claims the corporate world is full of exclusion and gatekeeping

**Xolile Mtembu**  
Digital Journalist, IOL News

Working in corporate may seem glamorous, but appearances can be deceiving. Nobuhle Radebe, a digital communications specialist claimed that she has experienced the darker side.

She opened up about how she was excited to join the corporate world as a black woman but, was met with a myriad of challenges that forced her to exit the space.

"As a young black woman, I entered the corporate world with ambition, resilience, and the belief that women, especially black women, would uplift and support each other. But what I encountered was a reality that is rarely spoken about: gatekeeping by women in positions of power," she said.

Radebe added that the most difficult barrier she faced was not external bigotry or a lack of chances; it was resistance from women who had already ascended the ladder. Instead of mentorship, there was exclusion, competition and no collaboration, she claimed.

The career-driven woman went on to say that there was a scarcity mindset, the assumption that there is only room for one or two women at the top which divides women and holds them back.

By lifting and climbing together, women can create generational change, she added.

She told IOL that once instance of such discrimination was when she was six months pregnant. "Despite joining at an incredibly busy time and receiving no training, I adapted quickly to the company. My manager eventually scheduled training, but by then, I was starting to find my feet.

"After one particular meeting, she pulled me aside and said, 'Remember that you're pregnant, and you don't want that to affect your staying here.' Her words caught me off guard. When I first shared my pregnancy news, both she and HR were excited and assured me that it wouldn't be an issue. But now, it was subtly being used against me."

In *The Black Girl's Guide to Corporate South Africa*, a woman shared with author Lindelwa Skenjana that: "Black men benefit from racial diversity, while white women benefit from gender diversity. The whole world is busy patting itself on the back for 'progress' and no one is realising that there is someone not in the room: black women."

Radebe also claimed that a white employee before her, who was pregnant with twins, was praised for working until she went into delivery.

"Yet, despite my strong performance backed by documented 40-hour workweeks and efficiency I was given the option to leave by the end of the month under the guise of 'not meeting company standards.' I had only been at the company for four weeks. Which is so insane for me to comprehend."

While the accounts of the women in *The Black Girl's Guide to Corporate South Africa* demonstrate that it is possible to survive and prosper in this environment, the fact is that for



*Nobuhle Radebe entered corporate South Africa with big dreams but, they were dashed when she realised they came at a cost.*

most black women, it comes at a cost, said For Women in Law.

"It comes with not being able to arrive and be your authentic self, feeling invisible, undermined, watching while someone takes credit for your ideas, being stereotyped and labelled as angry, aggressive and hard to work with," explained the group.

Radebe's exit from corporate filled her with new purpose to be a beacon of light and safe haven for other women. She has devoted herself to creating environments that empower and encourage women, especially mothers, in both their personal and professional lives.

In a report by StatsSA in 2024, the country's working-age population grew by nearly six million, increasing from 35,3 million in the second quarter of 2014 to 41,3 million in 2024's second quarter. Despite this rise, gender disparities in the working-age population remained relatively stable across provinces over this period.

"Self-employed women were more likely to be in the informal sector, while self-employed men were predominantly in the formal sector. An analysis of business size revealed that men were more likely to own companies with 20 or more employees, while women were more likely to operate as sole proprietors," said StatsSA.

Additionally, management roles in the public sector are still dominated by men, while women's presence has increased, particularly in middle management.

The percentage of women in middle management (MMS) jobs increased from 45.2% in 2019 to 46.4% in 2023, while senior management (SMS) posts increased from 42.4% to 45.2% during the same period. -IOL