

Businesses need to be transparent during the difficult times

By [Tshepiso Seopa](#)

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The inaugural Melcrum Corporate Communication Management Summit is currently underway at the Rosebank Crowne Plaza Hotel in Johannesburg.



The two day conference, from 3-4 June 2009, is organised by Melcrum, an international corporate communication research, publishing, online networking and training company, specialising in internal communication.

The aim of the conference is to help communicators to create awareness, increase understanding and develop best practice in corporate communication within organisations and in the broader business communities in South Africa. And also to share insight and key learning's from companies that have developed internal communication as an essential enabler to achieve business sustainability.

The programme includes a number of case studies, from leading local and international blue-chip companies such as Standard Bank, Liberty, Murray and Roberts, Mercedes-Benz, MultiChoice, MTN, Pick n Pay, and Sappi Limited.

An opportunity for internal communicators to prove their value

The first presentation on the programme by Darren Briggs, who is the director of the UK-based Flametree Communications, spoke on traits of successful communicators in the 21st century. Briggs said that, the current global economic crisis provides an opportunity for internal communicators to demonstrate their value to organisations, and help to change the mindset by being coaches and to encourage the employees to go an extra mile.

Briggs spoke on the importance for businesses to be transparent, open and honest during the difficult times. "It is not about the communicator but the audience. Show empathy and engage the workforce in coming up with solutions," says Briggs.

Well-organized internal communications structures benefits organisational efficiency and also help with increased employee motivation. Sharing insight and key learning on how companies have developed internal communication as an essential enabler to achieve business sustainability.

“In organisations where leaders communicate and actively support the company's vision and values, there are less number of employees who are seriously thinking of leaving. Whereas in organisations where leaders that do not communicate and actively support the company vision and value employees are dissatisfied with the company and don't feel a strong sense of belonging,” said Briggs.

Briggs said that the role of internal communicators is to:

- Help and listen to opinions and ideas
- Clarify messages
- Create context
- Learn from the others
- Understand their audiences

ABOUT TSHEPISO SEOPA

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