

How to turn good business into excellent business

Issued by [UCT Graduate School of Business](#)

2 Apr 2014

Making the leap towards excellence in business does not require above-average intelligence or even a degree in business says Professor Walter Baets, Director of Africa's top business school. All that is needed is to pay closer attention to the value that you add to society.

The South African business landscape is characterised by a lack of inspired leadership and a fear of innovation, which is hampering growth and holding back many companies and organisations from achieving outstanding successes and making a much-needed difference to society.

This is the opinion of Professor Walter Baets, Director of Africa's top business school, the University of Cape Town Graduate School of Business (UCT GSB). Professor Baets says too many CEOs and managers seem to lack the ability or motivation to truly make a difference to communities desperately in need of change and improved services.

"People are always worrying about the bottom line, there seems to be only an interest in profit. We don't seem to understand that when we pay more attention to the other lines, then the bottom line will follow. When we add value, then the other lines fall in place," says Professor Baets.

Baets is the co-convenor of a masterclass at the UCT GSB called The Excellence Leap, aimed at any kind of manager or CEO, even politicians or community leaders, who may be doing a good job at their company or organisation but want to take the next step of adding value. "Perhaps they feel there is more potential in the company; they see an opportunity to do more but don't necessarily know how to get there."

Erna Oldenboom, Baets' co-convenor says the programme is not a leadership programme as it is not about becoming a better leader. Instead it is a unique masterclass for anyone who has ever thought, or felt, that there must be a way to do what they do better - and with more meaning. "An intensive two-day process, it takes delegates on a tour de force through complexity theory, quantum mechanics, neural networks and living systems biology. It gives them a penetrating insight into themselves and their organisations, and equips them with a practical tool to assist them in lifting their performance to the next level - to make, in short, the excellence leap," she says.

The Excellence Leap is an executive education course at the UCT GSB. "Our programmes are designed to address unique challenges in specific organisations, they offer participants the opportunity for authentic development, enabling them to make their organisations more viable and to deliver exceptional value," says Kumeshnee West, acting director of executive education at the UCT GSB.

"If you don't know where to go, you can go anywhere and every road is a good enough road," says Professor Baets. "The course's two days will ensure that participants choose the right road to excellence, he says.

It is important for participants to come with an open mind and a willingness to explore new ways or ideas otherwise they won't learn anything, he adds. "What you get out is what you are willing to put in. If you are willing to challenge yourself and the accepted ways, then this specific course is extremely useful. You will learn to really look at yourself and your business and see things you never saw before," says Professor Baets.

For more information about the Excellence Leap Masterclass please contact Sharman May on +27 (0) 21 406 1248?or email sharman.may@gsb.uct.ac.za.

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