

Transforming the MAC industry through education

 By [Beverley Klein](#)

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On Thursday 9 June in Cape Town and on 13 June in Johannesburg, the Red & Yellow School hosted information sessions to address the changes and updates to the B-BBEE Sector Code for the South African Marketing, Advertising and Communications (MAC) industry. BEE is focused on transformation, and that's exactly what the Charter is setting out to achieve.

Dionne Kerr, CEO of Siyakha Implementation Partners, gave a thorough presentation on the importance of transformation, BEE and creating a country that is filled with opportunities. The venue was fitting, as Kerr stated that the marriage between transformation and education is key, and change is important from both a national and industry perspective.



Kerr then moved to the topic of localisation, and how this speaks to more than simply BEE and really is the undercurrent that drives transformation legislation. Localisation focuses on three key areas: local content, capacity building and job creation.

The MAC industry on both agency and client side, needs to examine all the aspects of their business, and identify ways in which to engage local manufacturers and suppliers, instead of leveraging international companies.

Localisation stays true to the “Proudly South African” ideal; one which agencies need to adopt in order to invest in development and ultimately succeed.

The issue around education

Education plays a major role in our development on a personal and professional level. It gives us knowledge, skills and confidence to pursue our future careers, as well as provides us with the necessary life skills we need to succeed. However, South Africa is faced with the enormous challenge of providing adequate employment opportunities to educated and skilled youth, which, when unavailable, leads to despondency. South Africa has the third highest youth unemployment rate in the world, and this needs to change.

Socio-economic development is a wonderful thing, giving the youth a chance to study and gain experience at top colleges in South Africa – but it's more than just a once-off investment. Paying for tuition is not enough, as there are still the costs of

transport, accommodation, food and so on to consider when investing in young South Africans. The philosophy around education needs to change to ensure that students are settled and able to sustain themselves (and their families if necessary) during their studies, or they run the risk of being forced to drop-out due to a lack of funds.

Education to drive transformation

Katharina Scholtz, head of academics at Red & Yellow, updated us on some of the skills development programmes taking place. Skills development matters, because it offers us meaningful, sustainable ways to invest in transformation and accumulate B-BBEE scorecard points. While it can't completely replace aspects of the scorecard like ownership and management control, investment in skills and socio economic development in the form of education add considerably to a long term transformation strategy.

Skills development can be designed and rolled out internally (for existing staff) and externally (for suppliers, small enterprises and those looking to enter the industry). This can be done through short interventions such as workshops, medium term solutions like online and blended course programmes and longer term investments such as learnership funding, bursaries for degree and diploma candidates or part-time bursaries for existing employees.



At Red & Yellow, the focus is on offering solutions that demonstrate the philosophy of investing in the whole student, not only while they're studying but also once they've graduated and are seeking employment or work experience. While the formal qualifications do matter enormously, their transformation focus is on practical skills and work readiness. The Red & Yellow Springboard Programme is a great example of this, and has seen 43 graduates and 32 currently completing their workplace internships through the programme. Learners who complete this programme successfully could enter into a Red & Yellow diploma, extended degree programme or be absorbed into the industry. Of course, this is dependent on continued holistic support from the industry in terms of funding, mentorship and the creation of job opportunities for interns.

Without this proper support, these candidates will fail to thrive, they will not accumulate the skills and experience they need, will struggle to integrate socially and professionally and ultimately this will threaten our transformation efforts. The MAC

Charter updates focus on this, which means that businesses within the industry can address the changes through investing in education.

Businesses need to understand the MAC Charter updates in order to play an active role in industry transformation through education and socio economic development initiatives.

Get in touch with Red & Yellow to discuss how we can help you achieve your transformation and education goals.

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ABOUT BEVERLEY KLEIN

Beverley Klein is the editor of the Marketing Media South Africa section on Bizcommunity.com. With a background in journalism and historical studies, she's dived into the world of industry news, curating content, writing and interviewing thought leaders. She's often spotted in a forest on the weekend and rarely seen without a camera. Follow @BevCPT.
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