

Why 'Excellence' should be at the top of our national agenda

 By [Douglas Kruger](#)

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Oprah said that the best answer to racism was personal excellence. The concept can be taken even further. Personal excellence is the solution to a great many things, one of which is the catastrophically damaging labour unrest currently choking our economy into negative growth.

Yes, it's strike season in South Africa, again. Or *still*.

Far too often, our labour unions seem to exist at the opposite end of the spectrum to 'Personal Excellence.' They started as a good idea: Representation for workers in the face of exploitation; but the pendulum seems to have swung too far the other way and the bullied have become the bullies. Rather than encourage personal excellence, our unions appear to protect incompetence, promote violence and instil a culture of entitlement beyond merit.

Top performers live differently

Experts and icons, specialists and high-level achievers live and think very differently. For starters, group-think is out for them. Rather than desiring the camaraderie and protection of a group of people with the same skill level, experts endeavour to stand out from the crowd and distinguish themselves by raising their skill.

They are constantly growing, constantly improving themselves, constantly becoming 'worth more.' Their value does not need violent representation. It speaks for itself.

Excellence renders striking unnecessary

Because of this dynamic, high-level performers also do not need to strike. Their expertise is so valuable that the market comes to them. They charge what they want and get it, because they are worth it.

US speaker and author Randy Gage summed it up: 'If you are a commodity, they will shop you on price. If you are the icon, they will build the event around you.'

Most labour unions could become redundant if South Africa's leaders promoted individual excellence. Instead, we have seen a continual lowering of educational standards to ensure that 'everyone passes.' This is the opposite of excellence-mentality. It says, 'mob is right,' rather than, 'pursue excellence and deserve reward.' If that remains the culture promoted from our top-leadership down, we should expect to see a marked rise in striking in our future, as the class holds the teacher

ransom and demands higher marks across the board, ignoring the prospect of studying harder.

Energy aimed at the wrong goal

Imagine if our striking workers put the same energy into continuing education as they did into trashing public streets. Imagine if their leaders put the same energy into encouraging personal development among their membership as they do into encouraging the destruction of viable businesses and facilities.

It is almost impossible to change the beliefs of others. But you can pursue your own excellence. You can raise your own value. You can make the choice to increase your income through self-improvement, rather than violent demands of more compensation for the same value of labour.

Your thinking determines your reality. True experts choose personal excellence over group-think or entitlement. Raise your own value and the very notion of a strike becomes ridiculous.

ABOUT DOUGLAS KRUGER

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