

Thriving in your career instead of merely surviving

Financial analysts have predicted that this year is going to be much worse than last year and consumers are bracing themselves for a tough time as food, electricity and fuel costs continue to increase. The good news is that there are strategies to keep your head above water, help you earn more and surge above rising costs.



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"People are financially aspirational, but despite having financial goals, many people often don't know how to achieve them. In order to increase your income or get promoted and increase your earning power, you have to improve both your skills and your work ethic," said the Academy of York's principal, Richard Leeming.

Financial guru, John Demartini stated that: "The clearer your picture of your present, the faster you can begin to grow your financial future," and it's sound advice first to review where you are before figuring out where you'd like to go. Goal setting is vital to achieving personal success, as setting goals allows you to choose the way you wish to navigate through life.

If you don't already know your own personal hourly rate, take the time to work it out. This is calculated by taking your net income (income after tax) and dividing it by the number of hours you work every month. The average South African works a 40-hour week, which tallies at 160 hours per month. So if your net income is R8000 and you work 160 hours, your personal hourly rate will then be R50 per hour. If your goal is to earn R100 an hour, then it's time to figure out how you can achieve that goal.

Be SMART

Whether you are setting a study, career or a financial goal, it is worthwhile to ask yourself four key questions that facilitate this process. For example, if your goal is: "I want to earn more", start by asking "How much am I earning now?" to gain an accurate snapshot of the present. Write this down and then ask yourself a second question: "How much do I want to earn?" It is important to give some thought to this, and remember that goals need to be SMART - an acronym that stands for: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-based. When asking yourself what you would like to earn, you need to be realistic.

Thirdly, ask yourself: "By when do I want to earn that?", which sets up a timeline to achieve your goal, and, last but not least, the fourth question is the most significant: "How am I going to achieve this goal?" Goals are not achieved by the stroke of a magic wand - they are the result of hard work, effort and dedication. The truth is you can only earn more if you improve your knowledge, work harder and smarter, and go the extra mile.

"In order to earn more, you either need to climb the corporate ladder or move to a higher paying job. For example, if you are a HR Administrator and aspire to be working at management level, by doing a HR

diploma, you can acquire the necessary skills to get there. You will never increase your income unless you raise your work ethic and your knowledge by learning - you must be willing to put in the necessary time and effort," added Leeming.

To accelerate your progress, you need to be a self-starter - someone who always looks for opportunities and then makes conscious decisions. Possessing an appetite for learning, exploring ways of doing things more effectively, as well as constantly applying the knowledge you have acquired will make you indispensable in the workplace.

In addition, effective communication and presentation skills allow you not only to build strong working relationships, but also to ensure those in senior positions recognise your personal contribution. By demonstrating determination, humility, honesty and empathy while delivering a high-quality performance, you can succeed.

"Failing to plan is planning to fail. By setting realistic goals, being results oriented and driven by a desire to excel, you can fast track your career. The well-known author of Rich Dad, Poor Dad, Robert Kiyosaki, said "Skills make you rich, not theories", so if your goal is to earn more in 2014, consider uplifting your skill set. The Academy of York offers over 70 courses in seven faculties that range from short courses to national certificates, diplomas and internationally recognised courses. Look towards where you're headed but concentrate on the here and now and every step you take will create the building blocks for a successful future," concluded Leeming.

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