

The future insurance professional must upskill to remain relevant

Upskilling is no longer something to be put aside for later, it must form part of every insurance professional's annual plan if the industry is to keep up with the changes ahead, and the demands of the ever-evolving consumer.



Thokozile Mahlangu

"We have observed in the past years a customer active on social media, whose world is as large or as small as they desire. One who has convictions about where their money can and cannot be spent, who observes the social commentary and social standing of various organisations and even dares to call on brands to speak up against injustice threatening to withhold their hard earned money should they refuse," says Insurance Institute of South Africa's CEO, Thokozile Mahlangu.

"This customer, as the young people say, is 'woke' and unless we wake up as the insurance industry, we may find because we were too rigid to bend, they found other ways to mitigate their risk," she says.

Unexpected pace

To remain relevant, the sector must do all it can to set alight, in as many industry professionals, the passion to learn. "We are only as good as the people who are already in our sector. It is up to us to want to know more and do better," Mahlangu says.

“We simply cannot go into the new decade blindfolded. Things are about to change and they may even change at an unexpected pace. We are already living in a time where many sectors across the world are reliant on robotics, artificial intelligence, the internet of things and many other concepts a lot of us have not bothered to wrap our minds around. Our self-imposed ignorance however, will not keep these things from coming. The wiser of us, industries and professionals, are already prepared or in the process of preparing,” she says.

“Gone are the days where curiosity is frowned upon. Only those who seek to know will learn, and in learning set themselves apart from the rest. It becomes apparent then that the transformation or even the pace of any industry is dependent on the speed at which its practitioners grasp the need to upskill for the future.”

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