

UNDERSTANDING AND EMBRACING THE CHANGING ROLE OF THE PERSONAL ASSISTANT TO EFFECTIVELY ADDRESS THE COMPLEX DYNAMICS OF THE WORKPLACE



AGENDA

- ✓ First-things-First
- ✓ How far Does the Role of the PA go?
- ✓ Staying on top of your game

First-things-First

- **Yes, the Role of the personal assistant is ever-changing, and one needs to accept that and embrace it.**
- **The Personal Assistant is the heartbeat of the department if not the organization as a whole and plays a very integral part to the world of work, they can boost productivity, assist in on-boarding new managers, provide reverse mentoring, and act as the air traffic controller of an office, particularly for managers who travel frequently.**
- **Being a personal assistant means being a supporter of your line manager, in every way, including the strategic decisions she has to make, you need to be part of them**
- **It includes being involved in any other matters that come through your office; in short, you need to be up to date with all that happens in your office.**

How far Does the Role of the PA go?

- **Public Relations Officer:** Liaise with internal and external stake holders, board members etc.
- **HR Advisor to your Line manager:** Ensure that you are up to date with all HR policies, who summarises these to her when she has to approve HR related documents.
- **Marketing Officer:** Remember you are the face of your manager's office so every move you make says a lot about your office as whole. People can easily decide whether to do business with your office or not. – So, brand yourself perfectly and attract more business to your company or department.
- **Travel Organiser:** yes there are travel agents but in the end you are to make sure that everything is correctly done according to the travelling itinerary you have agreed on. Ensure that she has all relevant travelling documents she will need for that particular trip.

- **Events Manager:** co-ordinating events hosted by her, perfectly. Know where to get what, on time, to run a successful event.
- **IT Specialist:** My PC doesn't want to start properly, it gives an error message – Oh, it is because you have your memory stick on it, remove it and restart 😊
- **Messenger:** some of us are very lucky to have someone to run up and down for them, but there are certain things that will require that you to deliver them yourself. If you want to earn trust from your manager, please hand deliver all confidential documents yourself.
- **Problem Solver:** you may not always have an answer to all questions, but it won't kill you if you say so.

Staying on Top of Your Game

- **Calm and Professional:** A good Personal Assistant is unflappable and takes challenging circumstances in their stride (one at a time).
- **Walk the Talk (Doers):** Good communication skills are essential as a Personal Assistant often have to negotiate for time and resources for the organization to succeed in its programmes. In other words Pas are doers they just do not talk and hope for this to happen, they make them happen.
- **Technology Upgrade:** Keeping abreast with technological advancement is the key in transmitting and disseminating information. Personal Assistants need to know their way round a computer and the related software programmes in order to add value to the department. This includes social networks, they are now part of our daily lives.
- **Multi Tasking:** Personal Assistants do not limit themselves to their day to day duties they are involved in so many tasks e.g. procurement, tender processes, workshop planning, event management, current affairs.

- **Have love and passion of your work:** If you don't love what you are doing, you will always complain about it and make many mistakes in your work
- **Have good working relationship with your manager**
 - ❖ Find out how she wants her work to be done
 - ❖ Understand his role so that you can support her
 - ❖ This includes going through the minutes and the Agenda before she goes to the meeting, and pick up things that needs her action and bring those to his attention.
 - ❖ Always be on top of your game- be one step ahead.

- **Always deliver on time;** always be assertive and pleasant.
- Check your work thoroughly, so there are no errors
- Knowing what the relations between her stakeholders are.

First Group	Second Group
•Board members	•Family and friends
•Press	
• Organisation	
•Donors/funders/strategic partners/business	
•Politicians	

It is helpful to have a list of emergency numbers, like family doctor, schools, nanny, dentist, vet? You may never know.

- **Reduce clutter on her in-tray: deal with memos and requests that seek to deviate from policies and procedures**
- **Develop protocols for dealing with the office**
- **Communicate times for doing business with the office**
- **Communicate who does what, when, how**
- **Don't become a GATEKEEPER**
- **Make your boss available ONLY for issues that have nothing to do with the policy**

- **Office Ethics – doing the right thing, always.**
 - ❖ **Never leave your office early, just because she won't notice you left early – once you have a good working relationship, let her know when you will be out of the office, this will earn you a lot of trust from her**
 - ❖ **Never accept bribes from people who want you to do favours, and when it comes to offer a slot in the tight schedule, no, no, no.**

Behind every Successful Manager, stands a Competent Personal Assistant, and that is you!!!

THANK YOU

Q & A?