



11<sup>th</sup> Annual

# HR AFRICA SUMMIT

incorporating the **HRD EXPO**

## ***Metal to the HR Pedal ~ HR's role in driving growth within an organisation***

Always keeping ahead of industry evolutions; the 11<sup>th</sup> Annual HR Africa Summit, incorporating the HRD Expo, will be hosted from 27 to 31 October 2014, at The Forum, The Campus, Bryanston, Johannesburg.

The event focuses on only *the* most relevant topics across the entire HR spectrum, while also touching-on and addressing pertinent HR challenges, many are facing in the world of work today.

Gillian Smith-Ismail, Human Resources Director at UTi ~ for Africa and the Middle East, is one of the top industry speakers, not-to-be-missed. We asked her to share her thoughts and experiences, on how to build a truly integrated business ecosystem, where HR is invited to participate in driving growth within the organisation.

Says Smith-Ismail, "The movement of HR to the Top Executive team, which makes strategic decisions for the company, is currently taking place. However, we can all attest to the fact that this movement is just too slow. I believe this could be due to a number of reasons:

- HR is not involved enough in business: Can you say you know the pain-points of your business leaders? Do you know what keeps top management up at night?
- There are still doubts as to whether HR has the commercial understanding of the bigger business.
- HR has not transitioned from an administrator role ~ to being a Strategic Partner.
- HR strategies are too often stand-alone activities; shouldn't we get to a point where all our strategies and activities are closely aligned to business strategies?

"We need to constantly up skill ourselves and keep our foot on the pedal, so that we can positively contribute to our businesses, our profession, as well as the economy. We need to

understand our place within the structure; understand our capabilities as subject matter experts; be aware of ourselves and also be sure of our own story.

“My key lessons learnt include:

- I have learned that everyone gets motivated by different things and as HR, we need to be aware of the similarities and differences in things that motivate people. Once you know how to tap into that, you are indispensable.
- I have learned that you need to be aware of your own set of values and your peers' set of values ~ so that you are able to navigate around them.
- I have learned that members of a Top Strategic Team, are not necessarily motivated by money, but by elements that talk to their core beliefs. Emotional maturity is thus also a critical characteristic, and the requisite for being part of such a team.
- Develop close relationships with Business Leaders.
- Ensure that the Senior Executives' team ~ operates and works as an effective team.
- Impress your leadership team with recommendations / suggestions on how the organisation can be prepared to implement strategy.
- Push to be included on the Board of Directors.
- Focus on the right topics.
- Take initiative.

“There are a number of benefits for playing an integral role in any management team, but we cannot be complacent enough to think that this does not take a lot of work on our part. Ultimately, I concur with the CEO of Euro Disney, Philippe Gas, when he outlined: *'For me, human resources are the nuts and bolts of the business.'* So let's rise to the challenge and ensure that there is movement in the right direction,” concludes Smith-Ismail.

*The 11<sup>th</sup> Annual HR Africa Summit, incorporating the HRD Expo, promises the following:*

- First-class speakers: Leading HR professionals will share their extensive knowledge and powerful insights; furthermore ~ speakers will also host lunch tables whereby delegates can select a table and be afforded the one-on-one opportunity to engage with a favourite speaker ~ 'off-the-record'
- Networking and business generation: In addition to a new mentoring session, as well as powerful speed networking sessions; delegates can connect with the industry via Twitter and LinkedIn ~ throughout the event

**Register today!**

**\*\*\*\* TO REGISTER:**

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