

The great transition



A while ago, there was a status circulating on social media platforms of the youngest Ministers appointed to the government of Finland and young woman at that, their ages ranged between 32 to 34, quite a disposition relative to the prior regimes. This just goes to show that the universe is evolving. What seemed to be impossible, is becoming the way of living.

Organisations must wake up to the realisation that the expected age for executives has just dropped with the introduction of new skills and the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) dispensation. Gen Y's are creators by nature and agile enough, making it easier for them to adapt to the needs required in the era of 4IR. Therefore, even for HR professionals or those in a position to hire, they need to revise how they profile a job to attract the right people, for the right positions, more so, those who will be engaged with the task at hand regardless of age.

Generation Y, referred to as Millennials, is becoming a popular age group progressing into executive and senior management level. They now occupy what was considered positions for persons over the age of 40. Recently, most organisations are grooming their pool of Gen Y as part of their succession planning into positions of power and influence. This means a huge shift for organisations in terms of how they now need to strategize their growth going forward and most probably this is owing to the most common transition to 4IR that most organisations are beginning to understand that it is here.

In the beginning of the 4IR, at first, most thought it would be an era that takes another decade.

Unfortunately, we are waking up to the realisation that 4IR has arrived and sadly we did not quite prepare adequately for it. Decisions currently made are almost seen as a shock in relation to what the status quo used to be. Those decisions need to be aligned in order to maintain competitive advantage.

In the past, promotions were awarded not only as a result of performance but on the basis of loyalty to

the organisation. It would seem that maturity or readiness for a promotion to more senior roles was linked to age, the younger ones would be seen to be a little immature or not ready for senior positions. This led current youth to opt for entrepreneurship/ self-employment in order to reach those levels and that meant most organisations lost great assertive individuals due to the norm that was set by history. 4IR era has unboxed Gen Y's and in that, I believe that many possibilities lie ahead. We have become more appealing to the market because of our agility and therefore we all have a chance to make the possibilities into the realities of what we believe Africa to be in the future.

Gen Y's by characteristics aim to lead and also leave a legacy, this reminds me of a song by Beyoncé "I was here" that I always play to remind myself as to why I do what I do as a leader, listen to the lyrics of this song and you will understand what I mean.