



2025 CEO COMMUNIQUE

LITTLE IS MUCH PHILOSOPHY | 2025 YEAR OF APPRECIATION IN THE PROFESSION

SABPP CEO’s 2025 Message: A Year of Gratitude and Possibility

Welcome to 2025, a year that invites us to reflect deeply on why we are here and how we can make this year one of profound purpose and impact. Ask yourself, what is the reason you were granted the opportunity to step into this new year? What unique contributions can you make that the world would miss if you were not here today?

At the SA Board for People Practices (SABPP), we recognise the power of purpose-driven action, and over the years, our themes have reflected this commitment. In 2023, we declared the “Year of Professional Development”, focusing on empowering individuals to grow and fill their cups before pouring into others. In 2024, we embraced the “Year of Investing in the Profession”, encouraging meaningful contributions that fortify the future of the human resources profession.

This year, we boldly declare 2025 as the “Year of Appreciation”.

A Call for Gratitude

In recent times, we’ve often been overly critical of ourselves, our teams, our leaders, and even our nation. This year, we challenge you to shift the narrative. Let’s recognise the hard work, sacrifices, and resilience of the people around us. Let’s appreciate the small acts of kindness and the monumental efforts that often go unnoticed.

Appreciation is more than a gesture; it is a mindset. As a people-focused profession, we must learn to plant seeds of gratitude and nurture them into a rich harvest of connection, collaboration, and progress. This is the year to say, “thank you” and mean it. To look colleagues, clients, and stakeholders in the eye and express genuine gratitude.

2025: A Strategic Vision

The Year of Appreciation is not just a theme; it is a strategic pillar of our 202030 Vision. Our goals for 2025 are ambitious and aligned with the principles of growth, inclusion, and innovation.

Here is what we aim to achieve:

1. Driving the Appreciation Strategy

We will amplify stories of excellence through a Show-and-Tell initiative, culminating in a 2025 awards ceremony that celebrates remarkable contributions across the HR profession.

2. Deepening Professional Segmentation

We will expand our segmentation strategy, bringing HR Practitioners, HR Associates, and HR Technicians into the fold.

3. Rebranding the Profession

Through a dynamic campaign, we will refresh the SABPP brand and elevate the appeal of HR as a cutting-edge, impactful profession.

4. Maximising SABPP’s Resources

We will leverage the SABPP House to drive income, strengthen relationships, and enhance visibility.

5. Building Key Relationships

This year, we commit to connecting with 365 organisations, including academic institutions, nonprofits, state-owned enterprises, private entities, and other professional bodies.

6. Hosting Affordable, High-Impact Events

By organising accessible conferences and workshops, we aim to engage no fewer than 1,000 delegates while addressing critical industry challenges.

7. Investing in Insightful Content

We will create and share forward-thinking content that not only addresses current industry questions but also anticipates future challenges.

8. Enhancing the Profession’s Status

SABPP will lead efforts to set, research, and elucidate industry trends, ensuring the HR profession remains relevant and forward-looking.

9. Promoting Buffet Membership

As the future of SABPP membership, Buffet Membership will receive dedicated investment to provide maximum value to our members.

10. Empowering the Next Generation

We will prioritise the development of students, candidates, and young professionals, celebrating their achievements and promoting excellence.

11. Celebrating Audited Companies

Increased recognition for companies that undergo HR audits will remain a key focus.

12. Driving Professional Registration

This year, we aim to register at least 800 new members, strengthening the SABPP community.



What we expect from you

As members, your active participation is vital to our shared success. In 2025, we ask you to:

1. Share good news stories about people within your networks.
2. Appreciate others publicly or privately—be a source of encouragement.
3. Nominate deserving individuals for SABPP awards.
4. Open your organisations to SABPP presentations and initiatives.
5. Commit your organisations to HR Audits.
6. Encourage colleagues to pursue professional registration.
7. Support innovative ideas that keep SABPP at the forefront of industry excellence.

A Culture of Sincere Appreciation

Appreciation is not flattery—it is an authentic acknowledgment of value. As Dale Carnegie reminds us, *"Give honest and sincere appreciation. Be hearty in your approbation and lavish in your praise."* These words of encouragement can leave lasting impressions, lighting a path for others to follow.

Let us approach 2025 with a spirit of gratitude, remembering that the simplest acts of appreciation can transform lives and create ripples of positivity. Together, let's make this a year to remember—a year of meaningful connection, inspired leadership, and unparalleled growth for our profession and our nation.

Here's to 2025: The Year of Appreciation.

Warm regards,

Xolani L Mawande

SABPP CFC & CEO, SABPP

Snippets from *How to win friends and Influence People* by Dale Carnegie

SABPP - declared book of the year

Give honest and sincere appreciation. Be 'hearty in your approbation and lavish in your praise' and people will cherish your words and treasure them and repeat them over a lifetime - repeat them years after you have forgotten them.

Instead of condemning people let's try to understand them.
To know all is to forgive all.

Everybody likes a compliment. The deepest principle in human nature is the craving to be appreciated.

The difference between appreciation and flattery. One is sincere and the other insincere.

Try leaving a friendly trail of little sparks of gratitude on your daily trips. You will be surprised how they will set small flames of friendship that will be rose beacons on your next visit.

If you want to gather honey don't kick over the beehive. Criticism is futile because it puts a person on the defensive and usually makes him strive to justify himself. Criticism is dangerous because it wounds a person's precious pride, hurts his sense of importance, and arouses resentment. Any fool can criticise, condemn and complain - and most fools do. But it takes character and self control to be understanding and forgiving.

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