

ACCOUNTANCY SA

Volume 17, No. 1 • Winter 2014

ISSN 1608-9968

Career Suite

Leadership in the financial sector



The new high performance manager

Requirements of the final IFRS financial instruments



Vusi Nkabinani

QUALIFYING AS A CA(GA) AT 52

"The board exam was the only thing I had ever failed at and I decided I was no longer going to allow it to defeat me. It was time to level the playing field."

INTEGRATED REPORTING

- INVESTORS AND INTEGRATED REPORTING
- THE 101 OF INTEGRATED REPORTING
- THE LESSONS LEARNED, BENEFITS GAINED, AND VIEWS DEVELOPED
- A NEW ERA IN CORPORATE GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT



IT'S HARD TO STOP ONE PROTEST LET ALONE 25 000* OF THEM IN JUST THREE YEARS

Accounting and Finance

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WEALTH ADVISOR



INVESTMENT FRAMEWORKS

Mike Lledo CA(SA) is the CEO at Consolidated Financial Planning

An all too common strategy for investing is “let’s pick the brightest star in the investment universe and make quick profits”. Consequently, “buy-high sell-low” stories are legion.

Clients frequently ask me about tank containers and yes, there still seems to be a market for them. Or people want “hot tips” – is this a good time to buy property, or gold, or a particular share? And what about ETFs and index trackers? I’m a firm believer in the old saying, “if it’s too good to be true, it probably is”, and Tannebaum, Fidentia, Sharemax are just a few examples of investments plundered.

Though investors think they understand the risks of their own behaviours, they still fall prey to the greed impulse. This is why even when markets rise, investors frequently fail. A successful approach to investing is in fact the simplest. Ask yourself the following questions,

- What do I need the money for – a home; children’s education; retirement; “toys for boys”?
- Can I readily afford to lose this money?
- If it’s speculative, am I prepared to accept that it’s a gamble? Like betting on the roulette table or horses, whether I win or lose at least it was fun.
- But if not, I need to consider:
 - o What is my objective? Possibly providing for a child’s university education?
 - o What is the time frame? Maybe 15 years, in which case let time and compounding work for me.
 - o Do I need to protect against inflation? Inflation’s a reality so I need at least CPI.
 - o Do I have the stomach for volatile returns? If not, a “real return” or guaranteed strategy would suit me best. Therefore, I need investment experts to identify appropriate asset classes and construct a portfolio of these assets with best of breed investment managers. Don’t forget to continually reassess and optimise the investment.
 - o Am I prepared to risk my capital being stolen by a Bernie Madoff? If not, I need regulated structures such as a unit trust protected in terms of the Collective Investments Control Schemes Act (CISCA) and Financial Services Board (FSB). Retirement products are also governed by Regulation 28 of the Pension Funds Act. Under both, the underlying asset classes – shares, bonds, cash, property, and stipulated alternative investments – are carefully regulated. They tend to be “boring”, but remember all those investment scams and you’ll better understand that “boring is good”.

So, as accountants we spend our lives in practice or commerce creating goals and operating within frameworks. We have checks and balances. We have plans. And we still have flair and entrepreneurship. Let’s keep that approach going to achieve our investment objectives. □

PUBLIC SPEAKING TRAINER



SPEAKING TO ACKNOWLEDGE

Dineshrie Pillay CA(SA) is a business owner and public speaker trainer

At some point you are going to be asked to speak in praise. This might take the form of a speech at a wedding, birthday, farewell, retirement party, or Christmas party. Owing to its perception of simplicity, most people don’t prepare in advance for this type of speech and end up ruining an otherwise potentially good moment to acknowledge someone. Here is my advice for your next acknowledgement speech.

You first need to realise that an acknowledgement speech is meant to be inspirational and not merely a recap of what has happened during the year (Christmas speech) or what the person has done in the past. Start your speech by first working on your opening and conclusion.

Think of a positive statement, a quote, an unknown fact or a story that will make people think. You could end your speech either with an inspirational thought or you could get your audience to rise and join you in a celebratory toast.

Secondly, acknowledge the event or the occasion that has brought people together. Whilst this might seem obvious – by making this statement, you are preparing the audience for your message to come.

Thirdly, spend some time selecting material appropriate to the occasion. For a Christmas speech that aims to acknowledge team effort, think about two or three memorable highlights for the year. It is sufficient to simply mention the event, then talk about the specific challenge and how it was resolved. For a speech praising an individual, think about the top two or three qualities that make that person unique.

Illustrate your point with some stories that everyone can relate to. End this part of your speech noting some lessons learnt from the year gone by (Christmas speech) or lessons you have learnt from a particular person.

The fourth step is to personalise your message. For a Christmas speech, think about what the past year has meant to you – acknowledge the team for their involvement. For individual praise, think about how that person has impacted your life in some way. This part of the speech is where you express your gratitude to your team or to the individual as you reflect on the significance of the year gone by or the individual on your personal life. For best results, keep your emotions in check and definitely aim to deliver your speech whilst you are sober!

Finally, stay in command as you deliver the speech. Your timing should be around 4–6 minutes – so you definitely want to rehearse and practise. Because of its personal nature, avoid reading the speech – it will lose its impact and relevance. Controlled breathing, eye contact and natural confidence will ensure your success of delivery. □