

PHAKAMA

February 2024

EMPOWERMENT UPDATES | STORIES | INTERVIEWS | REVIEWS | RESOURCES

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10 things that exam results reveal about you!

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10 skills that will be in demand in the future

Phakama Magazine seeks to enhance individual, group and community access to career development information.



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Editor's Note

The new year is finally here bringing with it new opportunities and challenges.

We are in the season of resolutions, an opportune moment to reset and refocus our energies.



As you work your way through the first months of the new year, we wish to let you know that we've got your back.

Our pledge is to support you through an exciting array of features and resources to keep you fueled for the ups and downs that the year may bring.

As always we wish to ensure Phakama Magazine meets your needs, that's why we want you to connect with us and share ideas on what you would like to see in the magazine.

In this edition, we have put together some articles to jump start your journey into the year.

Wishing you all the best!

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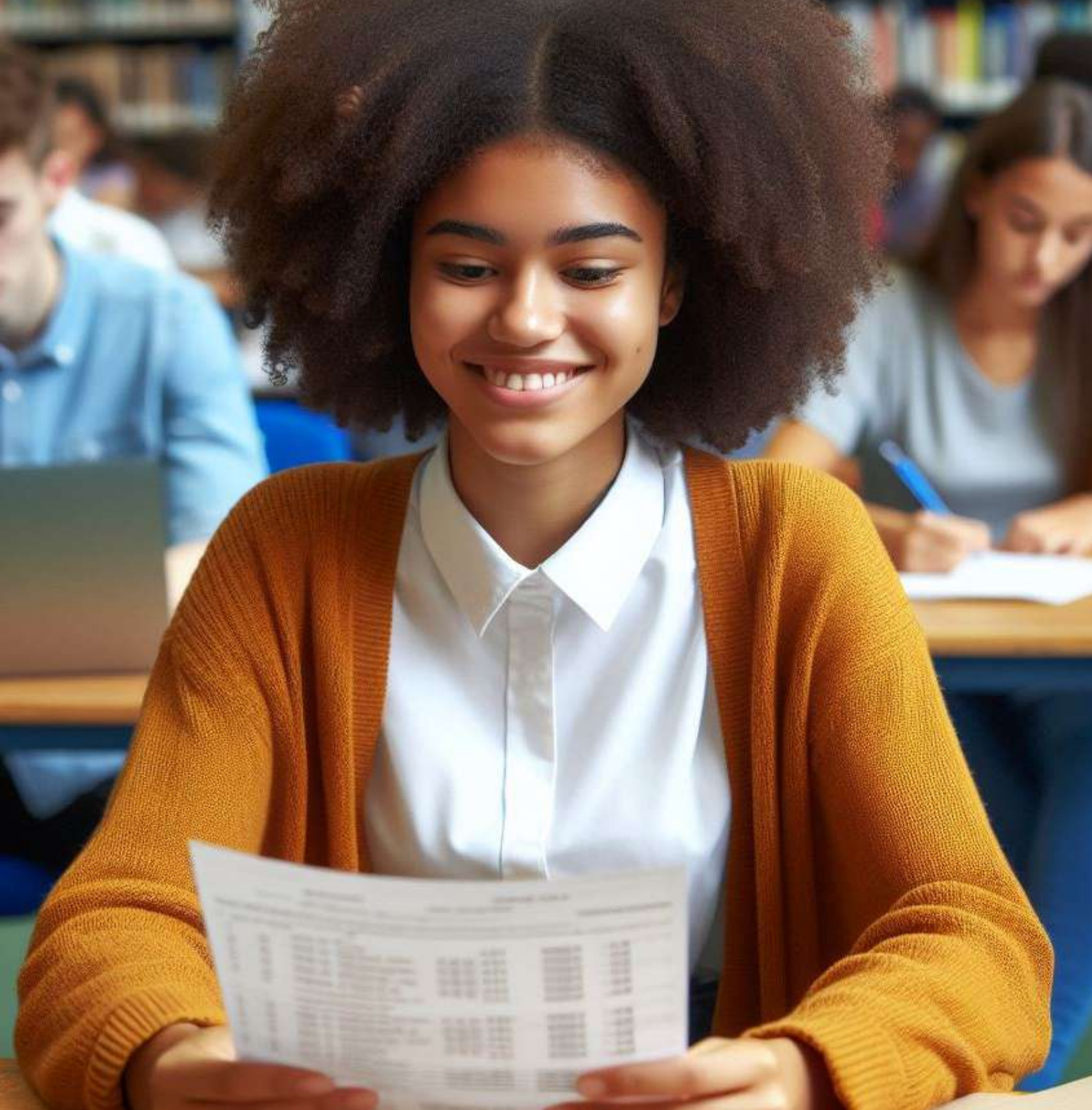
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10 THINGS THAT EXAM RESULTS REVEAL ABOUT YOU!

Exam results are not just symbols on a paper. They can tell you a lot about yourself, your strengths, your weaknesses, and your potential. Here are ten things that exam results reveal about you:



1

Your level of preparation. Exam results reflect how well you prepared for the test, how much you studied, how effectively you reviewed, and how confident you were. If you scored high, it means you did a good job of planning and executing your study strategy. If you scored low, it means you need to improve your study habits and skills.

2

Your areas of interest. Exam results show what topics you are more interested in and passionate about. You are likely to perform better on subjects that you enjoy and find meaningful. If you scored high on a subject, it means you are curious and motivated to learn more about it. If you scored low on a subject, it means you are less engaged and enthusiastic about it.

3

Your strengths and weaknesses. Exam results highlight what skills and knowledge you have mastered and what areas you need to work on. You can use your exam results to identify your strengths and weaknesses, and use them to guide your future learning goals. For example, if you scored high on math, it means you have good logical and analytical skills. If you scored low on writing, it means you need to improve your grammar and vocabulary.

4

Your learning style. Exam results indicate what kind of learner you are and what methods work best for you. You may be a visual learner, an auditory learner, a kinesthetic learner, or a combination of these. You may prefer lectures, videos, books, or hands-on activities. You may learn better alone or in groups. By knowing your learning style, you can choose the most suitable and effective ways to study and learn.

5

Your personality traits. Exam results reveal some aspects of your personality, such as your motivation, confidence, perseverance, and resilience. If you scored high, it means you are driven, self-assured, persistent, and adaptable. You can overcome challenges and cope with stress. If you scored low, it means you may lack motivation, confidence, perseverance, or resilience. You may give up easily or feel overwhelmed by difficulties.

6

Your career aspirations. Exam results can help you explore your career options and interests. You can use your exam results to narrow down your choices and find out what professions suit your skills, abilities, and passions. For example, if you scored high on science, it means you may enjoy careers in medicine, engineering, or research. If you scored low on languages, it means you may struggle with careers that require communication or translation skills.

7

Your academic potential. Exam results can predict your academic performance and success in the future. They can give you an idea of how well you can handle higher levels of education and more challenging courses. If you scored high, it means you have a high academic potential and can excel in any field of study. If you scored low, it means you have a lower academic potential and may need extra support or guidance.

8

Your self-esteem. Exam results can affect how you feel about yourself and your abilities. They can boost or lower your self-esteem and self-confidence. If you scored high, it means you are proud of yourself and your achievements. You believe in yourself and your capabilities. If you scored low, it means you are disappointed in yourself and your performance. You doubt yourself and your potential.

9

Your goals and values. Exam results can reflect what matters to you and what motivates you to learn and grow. You can use your exam results to evaluate your goals and values, and see if they align with your actions and outcomes. For example, if you scored high on social studies, it means you value diversity and justice in society. If you scored low on ethics, it means you may need to reconsider your moral principles.

10

Your feedback skills. Exam results can teach you how to give and receive feedback effectively. You can use your exam results to learn from your mistakes and successes, and to appreciate constructive criticism. For example, if you scored high on art, it means you have a good sense of aesthetics and creativity. If you scored low on feedback, it means you may need to improve your communication and listening skills.

Proverbs 16:9

"We can make our plans, but the Lord determines our steps."



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STOP
TRYING.



FOUR CAREER PATHS FOR O AND A LEVEL GRADUATES

If you have completed your O and A level exams, you might be wondering what career options are available for you. There are many paths you can choose from, depending on your interests, skills and goals. Here are some of the most common and popular career paths for O and A level graduates:

Higher education: You can pursue further studies in a university or college, either locally or abroad. You can choose from a wide range of courses and degrees, such as engineering, medicine, law, business, arts, etc. Higher education can open up many opportunities for you in the future, but it also requires a lot of commitment, hard work and financial investment.

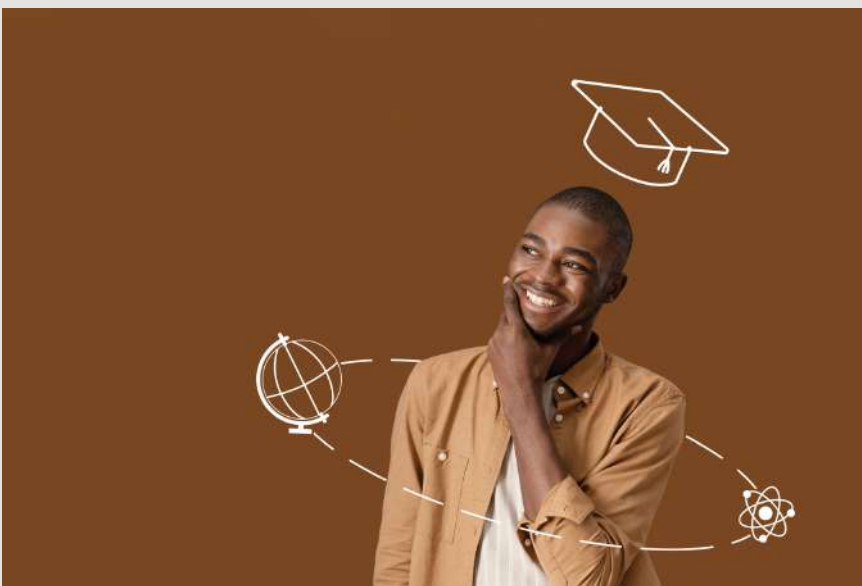


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Vocational training: You can enroll in a vocational or technical course that teaches you specific skills and knowledge for a certain profession or trade. For example, you can learn how to be a chef, a mechanic, a nurse, a plumber, etc. Vocational training can help you gain practical experience and qualifications that are in demand in the job market, but it may limit your options for further education or career advancement.



Apprenticeship: You can work as an apprentice for an employer who will train you on the job and pay you a salary. You can also attend classes or workshops to learn the theoretical aspects of your trade. For example, you can be an apprentice electrician, carpenter, hairdresser, etc. Apprenticeship can help you earn while you learn and develop your skills and confidence, but it may take longer to complete and require more supervision and guidance.



Employment: You can look for a job that suits your qualifications, interests and abilities. You can work in various sectors and industries, such as retail, hospitality, tourism, banking, etc. Employment can help you gain independence and income and build your network and reputation, but it may also pose challenges such as competition, stress and uncertainty.



Whatever career path you choose, remember that it is not a permanent or fixed decision. You can always change your direction or explore new opportunities along the way. The most important thing is to follow your passion and potential and make the best use of your O and A level qualifications.

A man in a white shirt and dark pants is sitting on a window ledge, reading a book. The background is a window with a view of a building. The text is overlaid on the image.

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PAGE OF
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A GOOD ONE.”**

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Topics to be Covered

- Making sense of Exam Results
- Decision making for A level, University, College or Apprenticeship
- University & Scholarship Application Tips
- Post O & A level career options



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**A CAREER AS A
RESEARCH SCIENTIST
Q&A WITH
TINASHE CHIKOWORE**

While doing his A levels, Tinashe Chikowore got fascinated by Nutrition. Today he is a research scientist whose work focuses on the interaction between genetics and lifestyle. In this Q&A with Thando Nkomo (TN), Tinashe (TC) shares insights on his career journey and the qualifications and skills needed for someone to be a research scientist.

TN: Please tell us about yourself and what you do?

TC: Thank you so much I am a research scientist based at the University of Witwatersrand. My research focuses on the interactions of our genes and lifestyle. Simply put, I am interested in understanding for example why it is that people of the same family may eat from the same plate but have different weights. So, I enjoy looking into the clues from our genes to explain the puzzling scenarios, or in other words I work to really see whether diabetes runs in families or just that no one runs in these families.

TN: Interesting. Where did your journey into scientific research begin?

TC: I was a bit of a late bloomer...I was initially not aware of research. I started off wanting to be a pharmacist, but I did not get the required 13 points. While doing my A levels I became a vegetarian and when I went to varsity I was keen to know more about Nutrition. Then one day one of lecturers asked us to design nutrition related research projects. This then sparked this interest and I proceeded to post grad leading to my PhD. In short sometimes it's difficult to know what your career will be, do not pressure yourself God will lead you into even if you are a late bloomer like me.

TN: What areas of scientific research have you found quite interesting to you and why?

TC: Nutrition and genetics are very fascinating. The great thing about research is there is too much freedom to explore a number of topics. Recently I have been working to develop polygenic risk scores that can help us to know when people are young whether they will develop diabetes. I am also fascinated by understanding why even in families that eat together girls are always fatter than boys.

TN: What would you say are your career highlights so far?

TC: I have been able to win a prestigious research grant to evaluate gene-lifestyle interactions in Africa. This has enabled me to publish high impact papers, present this work in international conferences, and visit and work with people from prestigious universities such as Harvard. We anticipate translating our work to hospitals such that this can benefit many in the future.

TN: Amazing. How important are scientific researchers in the world we live in today?

TC: Great question. COVID is a good example to use in responding to this question. We can see science is very important in helping to find answers and ways of providing effective treatments. It's just a pity that African countries do not prioritise this. That's why you could see that Africa never developed a vaccine. So we need to encourage many to get into scientific research.

TN: Looking back what were the major influences at primary or high school that shaped where you are today?

TC: Looking back, I was not an intelligent student and looking back there are some points of bad influence I need to highlight. Intelligence is in many forms. But sadly, the people who have strong memories are the ones that excel during primary and A level and those who learn by doing or great thinkers fail yet to be a great scientist you need to like thinking deeply about issues and enjoying asking the not so common questions. As I look back from my Form 4 class, only those average students who were deep thinkers were able to get PhDs but the crammers ended at undergrad. So in a nutshell please do not stress much about getting 20 points or many As. These are just good to get you to varsity. But postgraduate studies really need thinkers. If you are inquisitive please do not be deterred by low grades, your curiosity is what is required not cramming, and you can even one day work at Harvard through God grace.

TN: These are very interesting insights. Are there any people who have been quite influential in your career journey?

TC: This a good question. I have many. But maybe let me say that to be successful you need to be a people's person. I remember one good Professor who gave me a lift and he talked to me and showed me what he was working on and dropped me off at the bus station. I went home and told everyone that I sure need to be a Professor one day. My supervisors have mentored me very well and I am grateful for their guidance. I have also through God's grace have had people in my field who just like me and have opened doors for me to attend and present at international conferences in America.

I also am learning from them and eager to motivate others and just be nice. Being nice is what makes people excel. So if anyone of you happens to come to SA you can reach out, I can show you around Wits and what we do.

TN: For someone wanting to be a Scientific Researcher, what would they need to do...any particular subjects to pursue at A level and Post A level, what should one do in order to be a scientific researcher?

TC: Great question. Science is broad but we can focus on health research. You just need to have any two of these subjects at A level: Chemistry/Physics, Geography Biology and Maths. You can just enrol for varsity and do an MSc in a field of interest such as Nutrition, Physiology, Microbiology, Genetics etc You can then select a health topic that you will focus on in your PhD.

TN: What is your general advice to those following this conversation?

TC: Like I said earlier about the different types of knowledge. Most people who do Physics, Biology and Maths at varsity are made to look down upon themselves and to believe they will be teachers only because they failed to pass and get places to be medical doctors or pharmacists. But the truth is Physics, Biology, Maths and Chemistry are the strongest science degrees...Everything, talk of machine learning, data science etc is based on the principles derived from these core subjects. So no one should make anyone feel inferior. Please, even if you get into these degrees just be a thinker strive to pass...And as much as possible please try apply for MSc in South Africa, American or any leading European country...You are the cream that people are looking for.



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CAREERS IN PUBLIC RELATIONS: Q&A WITH HAZEL ZISANHI, PRESIDENT - ZIPR.

Hazel Zisanhi (HZ) is the President of the Zimbabwe Institute of Public Relations (ZIPR), which is one of the oldest public relations associations in Africa. In this Q&A with Nomathemba Zondo (NZ), she gives insight into the ZIPR, Public Relations as a career path and how aspiring Public Relations practitioners can benefit from the ZIPR as they build their careers.

NZ: Thank you so much for joining us on Phakama CareerTALKS. To kickstart this discussion briefly tell us about yourself.

HZ: Well, I'm a Zebra Queen, a Mum of three (one boy and two girls), I'm a go getter, I love travelling, sport and networking.

NZ: Lovely. You are also the president of the Zimbabwe Institute of Public Relations. What is the purpose of the Institute in as far as Public Relations is concerned?

HZ: The Zimbabwe Institute of Public Relations is a professional association that brings together people with interests in public relations practice, media and training. The primary aim is to improve their knowledge and skills in professional PR practice and principles.

ZIPR, is one of the oldest professional associations in Zimbabwe. The association assists old and new Public Relations Practitioners (PRPs) to keep abreast with the latest trends in the profession. It also offers a platform for PRPs to share ideas with reputable specialists. ZIPR is affiliated with the African Public Relations Association (APRA) and the International Public Relations Association (IPRA).

NZ: Many people often confuse public relations and marketing. What is the difference between the two?

HZ: Marketing and Public Relations are both important components of a company's communication strategy, but they function differently.

Marketing is a promotional activity that aims to promote products or services with the ultimate goal of driving revenue and sales. It encompasses a range of activities, such as advertising, sales promotion, placement strategies, and product development. In simple terms, it's about making people buy a product or service.

On the other hand, Public Relations is a communication activity that seeks to build and maintain a positive relationship between a company and its stakeholders. It has a range of activities, such as media relations, community relations, customer relations, crisis management, and reputation management. PR is more about shaping public perception, building trust, and establishing good relationships with the audience. Simply put, marketing focuses on selling, while PR focuses on building trust.

NZ: Interesting. So what qualifications are necessary for someone to become a Public Relations practitioner?

HZ: To become a public relations practitioner, there are certain skills and knowledge areas that are highly valued in the field. Here are some qualifications that can be helpful to have as a public relations practitioner as well as skills that will help you to excel in this industry:


Qualifications: A degree or diploma in Public Relations, Communications, Mass Communication or Journalism, Customer care and relationship management. A course in Diplomacy and Etiquette will be an added advantage.

Experience: Many employers in the public relations field look for candidates who have relevant experience, either through internships, entry-level positions, or other related work experience. Experience in related fields, such as marketing, advertising, or journalism, can also be valuable.

Writing and Communication Skills: Strong writing and communication skills are essential for success in public relations. Public relations practitioners must be able to write clear, persuasive, and compelling messages for a variety of audiences, as well as communicate effectively with clients, colleagues, and media contacts.

Strategic Thinking: Public relations practitioners must be able to think strategically and develop effective communication plans that support their clients' goals. They need to analyse information and data, identify key messages, and develop tactics that will resonate with their target audiences.

Relationship-Building: Public relations is a relationship-based field, so the ability to build and maintain relationships with internal and



external stakeholders and media is crucial. Practitioners must be able to collaborate with others and bargain successfully.

Industry Knowledge: Public relations practitioners must stay up-to-date with industry trends and changes.

NZ: Beyond qualifications, what skills are required for someone to thrive as a Public relations practitioner especially in this technological era where we have witnessed the emergence Artificial intelligence (AI) and Big Data?

HZ: The rise of digitalisation and artificial intelligence (AI) has revolutionised the PR industry in ways that were once unimaginable. In this era of digitalisation and AI, PR practitioners must adapt to new technologies, strategies, and methods to stay ahead of the curve.

Digitalisation has dramatically transformed the way people consume information and interact with brands. The rise of social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn has made it easier for individuals and organizations to connect with their target audience in real-time. Moreover, online news sources have replaced traditional print and broadcast media as the primary source of news for most people.

The impact of digitalisation on PR is significant. PR practitioners can no longer rely on traditional methods such as press releases, media relations, and event

sponsorships to communicate with their target audience. Instead, they must adopt a more holistic approach that includes digital marketing, social media, and influencer partnerships.

One of the significant advantages of digitalisation for PR is the ability to track and analyse data more effectively. PR practitioners can now monitor social media conversations, track website traffic, and analyse online engagement to gain insights into their target audience's behavior and preferences. These insights can help PR practitioners to develop more targeted and effective communication strategies that resonate with their audience.

Artificial intelligence (AI) is another technology that has transformed the PR industry. AI refers to the use of computer systems to perform tasks that would typically require human intelligence, such as natural language processing, data analysis, and pattern recognition.

AI has the potential to revolutionise the PR industry in several ways. For example, AI-powered chatbots can provide instant responses to customer queries, eliminating the need for human customer service representatives. AI can also analyse large volumes of data and provide insights into audience behavior and preferences, helping PR practitioners to develop more effective communication strategies.

Furthermore, AI can help PR practitioners automate routine tasks such as media monitoring and analysis, freeing up time for more strategic activities such as developing

communication strategies and building relationships with influencers.

NZ: Interesting indeed. How can aspiring public relations practitioners take advantage of the ZIPR in developing their careers?

HZ: Joining the Zimbabwe Institute of Public Relations can be a great way for practitioners to enhance their professional development and advance their careers. ZIPR offers opportunities to network. This networking can lead to new job opportunities, collaborations, and mentorship.

We offer professional development seminars, conferences, workshops, and webinars to help practitioners stay up-to-date on the latest industry trends and best practice. These opportunities can help practitioners enhance their skills and knowledge.

ZIPR also plays host to awards programs that recognise outstanding work in the field. Winning an award from a respected association can boost a practitioner's professional reputation.

ZIPR advocates and lobbies for laws and regulations that benefit the industry. By joining ZIPR, public relations practitioners can actively participate in its activities, gain valuable knowledge, skills, and connections that can help them grow their careers and succeed in the industry.

NZ: As we wrap up, what is your parting word of advice to those following this discussion today?

HZ: Well, my advice to a new public relations executive fresh out of college or university is that public relations is all about building relationships with your clients, the media, and other stakeholders. Take the time to get to know the people you work with and establish trust. Stay organized, PR involves managing many moving parts, from events and media outreach to crisis management and keeping track of deadlines and tasks to ensure nothing falls through the cracks. Stay up-to-date, know the media landscape. It has constantly evolved, so it's important to stay current with developments. Attend conferences, read industry publications, and seek mentorship to stay informed.

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Career Skills List

There is a big difference between a job and a career. Who will you be – a person with a job or a professional with a career? It depends on your skills, abilities, qualifications, and ambitions.



Communication Skills

- listening skills
- body language (eye contact, gestures with hands and arms)
- verbal and written communications
- being positive and patient
- being respectful and confident
- friendliness
- empathy
- respect
- feedback



Team Building Skills

- active listening and care for others
- collaborative skills
- building confidence
- patience
- support
- commitment
- helpfulness
- honesty



Interpersonal Skills

- self-control and self-confidence
- listening skills
- manners
- social awareness
- responsibility and accountability
- assertiveness
- diplomacy
- flexibility



Negotiation Skills

- listening skills
- analytical skills
- be professional and control your emotions
- be patient and respect the other side
- persuasive skills

Optimistic and Positive Thinking

01

Self-management Skills

- self-confidence
 - stress management skills
 - self-motivation
- These are some of the most powerful forces that drive you to do things, to learn and to develop your potential.



02

03

Decision-Making Skills

- the ability to gather and select information
- finding possible options and solutions
- selecting the best option
- analysis skills and ability to evaluate your plans



04

05

Leadership Skills

- proactive
- the abilities to inspire and motivate
- organizing skills
- being confident
- analytical skills
- conflict resolution skills
- delegation
- goal setting
- the ability to innovate
- planning



06

07

Time Management Skills

- prioritize your goals
- create a schedule
- use optimization tools
- make lists
- break large tasks into smaller tasks
- balance work and leisure



08

09

Creativity and creative thinking

- create new ideas and to turn them into reality
- innovation skills
- desire to learn and improve





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- Buffalo:** I have 5 O' levels but not proceeding to A'level
- Rhino:** I have 4 O' levels, and intending to supplement
- Leopard:** I have 3 O' levels, and intending to supplement.
- Lion:** I do not yet have O' levels

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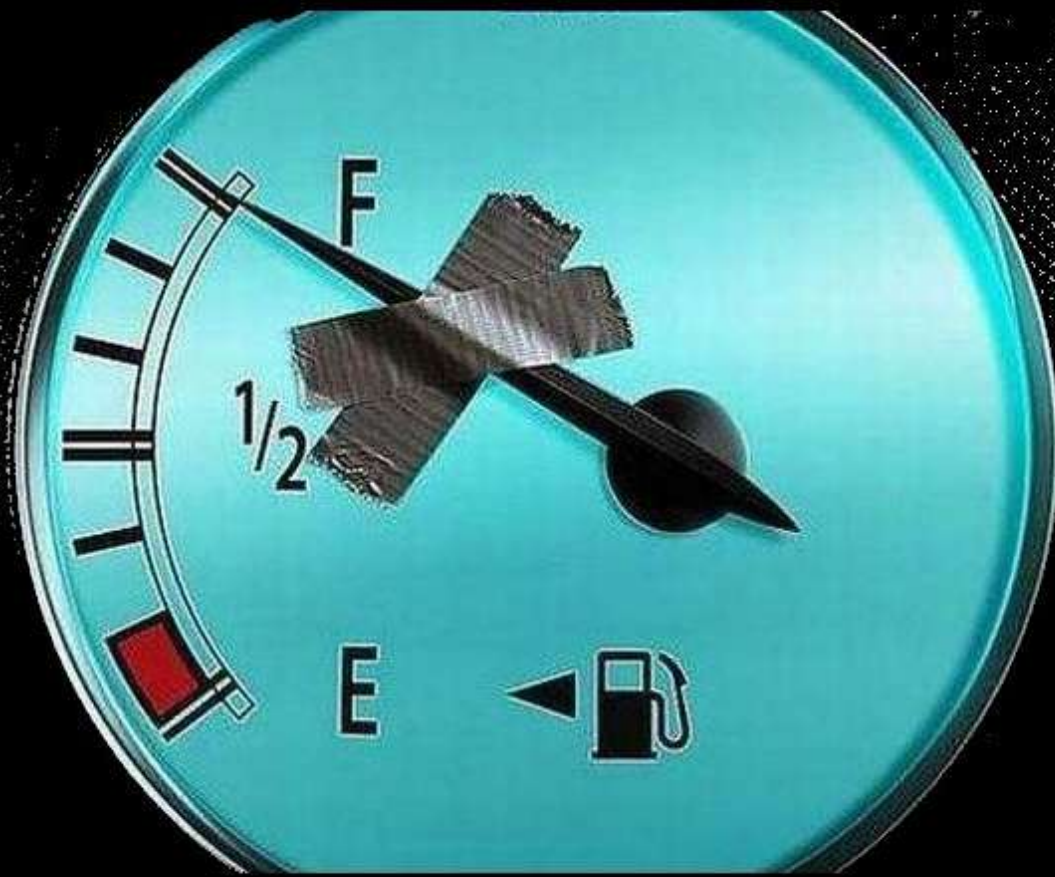
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10 SKILLS THAT WILL BE IN DEMAND IN THE FUTURE

The world of work is changing rapidly, and so are the skills that employers are looking for. According to various reports by the World Economic Forum, the Adecco Group, and other sources, some of the most in-demand skills for the future are related to technology, data, and digital transformation. However, these are not the only skills that matter. Soft skills such as problem-solving, self-management, and working with people are also essential for thriving in the evolving workforce.

According to insights from research and experts, here are 10 skills that are will be in high demand in the future:

1. Data Science & Cloud Computing: Data science is the field of extracting insights from large and complex data sets using various methods, tools, and algorithms. Cloud computing is the delivery of computing services such as servers, storage, databases, networking, software, analytics, and intelligence over the internet. Cloud computing goes hand in hand with data science, as it enables data scientists to access and process large amounts of data faster and more efficiently. Cloud computing jobs range from architects and developers to data scientists and analysts.

2. Artificial Intelligence (AI) & Machine Learning (ML): AI is the branch of computer science that aims to create machines and systems that can perform tasks that normally require human intelligence, such as reasoning, learning, decision making, and natural language processing. ML is a subset of AI that focuses on creating systems that can learn from data and improve their performance without explicit programming. AI and ML have applications in various domains such as healthcare, education, finance, manufacturing, entertainment, and more. AI and ML jobs include engineers, developers, researchers, analysts, and consultants.

3. Big Data Analysis: Big data analysis is the process of examining large and varied data sets to uncover patterns, trends, correlations, and insights that can help businesses make better decisions and optimize their performance. Big data analysis requires skills such as data mining, data visualization, data modeling, statistics, and programming. Big data analysis jobs include data analysts, data engineers, data architects, business intelligence analysts, and data scientists.

4. Digital Marketing & Strategy: Digital marketing is the use of digital channels such as websites, social media, email, mobile apps, search engines, and online advertising to promote products or services to potential customers. Digital marketing requires skills such as content creation, SEO (search engine optimization), SEM (search engine marketing), SMM (social media marketing), email marketing, web analytics, and digital strategy. Digital marketing jobs include digital marketers, digital strategists, SEO specialists, SEM specialists, SMM specialists, content writers, web designers, web developers, and web analysts.

5. Process Automation: Process automation is the use of technology to automate repetitive and routine tasks that can be performed by machines or software without human intervention. Process automation can improve efficiency, accuracy, quality, and productivity while reducing costs and errors. Process automation requires skills such as robotics process automation (RPA), business process automation (BPA), workflow automation (WFA), intelligent automation (IA), and automation testing. Process automation jobs include automation engineers, automation developers, automation testers, automation analysts, and automation consultants.

6. Business Development: Business development is the process of identifying new opportunities for growth and expansion for a business or organization. Business development requires skills such as market research, competitive analysis, lead generation, sales, negotiation, partnership building, and strategic planning. Business development jobs include business development managers, business development executives, business development consultants, and business development specialists.

7. Digital Transformation: Digital transformation is the process of using digital technologies to create new or modify existing business processes, products, services, and customer experiences. Digital transformation requires skills such as change management, project management, innovation management, digital literacy, and digital leadership. Digital transformation jobs include digital transformation managers, digital transformation consultants, digital transformation specialists, and digital transformation leaders.

8. Information Security: Information security is the practice of protecting information and information systems from unauthorized access, use, disclosure, modification, or destruction. Information security requires skills such as cybersecurity information security network security vulnerability assessment penetration testing risk management compliance auditing encryption and authentication. Information security jobs include information security analysts information security engineers information security managers information security consultants and information security specialists.

9. Software & Application Development: Software & application development is the process of creating software or applications that run on various devices such as computers, smartphones, tablets, wearables, and IoT (Internet of Things) devices. Software & application development requires skills such as programming languages (e.g., Python, Java, C#), frameworks (e.g., Django, Spring Boot), tools (e.g., Visual Studio Code), platforms (e.g., Android), and methodologies (e.g., Agile). Software & application development jobs include software developers, software engineers, application developers, application engineers, web developers, web engineers, mobile developers, mobile engineers, and IoT developers.

10. Internet of Things: Internet of Things (IoT) is the network of physical objects that are embedded with sensors, software, and other technologies that enable them to connect and exchange data with other devices and systems over the internet. IoT has applications in various sectors such as smart homes, smart cities, smart healthcare, smart agriculture, smart manufacturing, and smart transportation. IoT requires skills such as IoT development, IoT engineering, IoT architecture, IoT security, IoT analytics, and IoT management. IoT jobs include IoT developers, IoT engineers, IoT architects, IoT security analysts, IoT data analysts, and IoT managers.

These are some of the skills that are will be in demand in the future, according to research and experts. However, this list is not exhaustive, and the skills landscape may change over time. Therefore, it is important to keep learning and updating your skills to stay relevant and competitive in the future of work.



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Health and Fitness Ideas for 2024

With Phakama Fitness Bae

Hello, dear readers! Welcome to 2024, it's so exciting to know you are thinking about how to stay healthy and fit in the new year. As you know, health and fitness are not only about physical appearance, but also about mental well-being, emotional balance, and spiritual growth. That's why I have compiled a list of 10 ideas that cover all these aspects of wellness. Let's get started!

1. Start your day with gratitude. Gratitude is a powerful emotion that can boost your mood, reduce stress, and improve your immune system. Every morning, write down three things that you are grateful for in your life, and feel the positive energy flowing through you.

2. Drink more water. Water is essential for every function of your body, from digestion to detoxification. It also helps you stay hydrated, energized, and alert. Aim to drink at least eight glasses of water a day, and add some lemon, cucumber, or mint for extra flavor and benefits.

3. Eat more fruits and vegetables. Fruits and vegetables are rich in vitamins, minerals, antioxidants, and fiber that can protect you from diseases, lower your blood pressure, and regulate your blood sugar. They also fill you up with fewer calories, helping you maintain a healthy weight. Try to eat at least five servings of fruits and vegetables a day, and choose a variety of colors and types.

4. Move your body. Physical activity is vital for your health and fitness, as it strengthens your muscles, bones, and heart, burns calories, and releases endorphins that make you happy. You don't have to go to the gym or do a strenuous workout to reap the benefits of exercise. You can simply walk, dance, bike, swim, or do any activity that you enjoy for at least 30 minutes a day.

5. Meditate daily. Meditation is a practice that can calm your mind, relax your body, and enhance your awareness. It can also help you cope with stress, anxiety, depression, and pain.

You don't need any special equipment or skills to meditate. You can just sit comfortably in a quiet place, close your eyes, and focus on your breath, a mantra, or a positive affirmation.

6. Read more books. Reading is a great way to stimulate your brain, expand your vocabulary, improve your memory, and learn new things. It can also transport you to different worlds, inspire you with new ideas, and entertain you with captivating stories. You can read any genre or topic that interests you, whether it's fiction or non-fiction, romance or thriller, history or science.

7. Learn something new. Learning is a lifelong process that can keep your mind sharp, challenge your creativity, and boost your confidence. You can learn anything that you are curious about or passionate about, whether it's a language, a skill, a hobby, or a subject. You can take online courses, watch videos, listen to podcasts, or join a community of learners.

8. Connect with others. Social connection is essential for your health and happiness, as it provides you with support, comfort, and joy. You can connect with others by spending

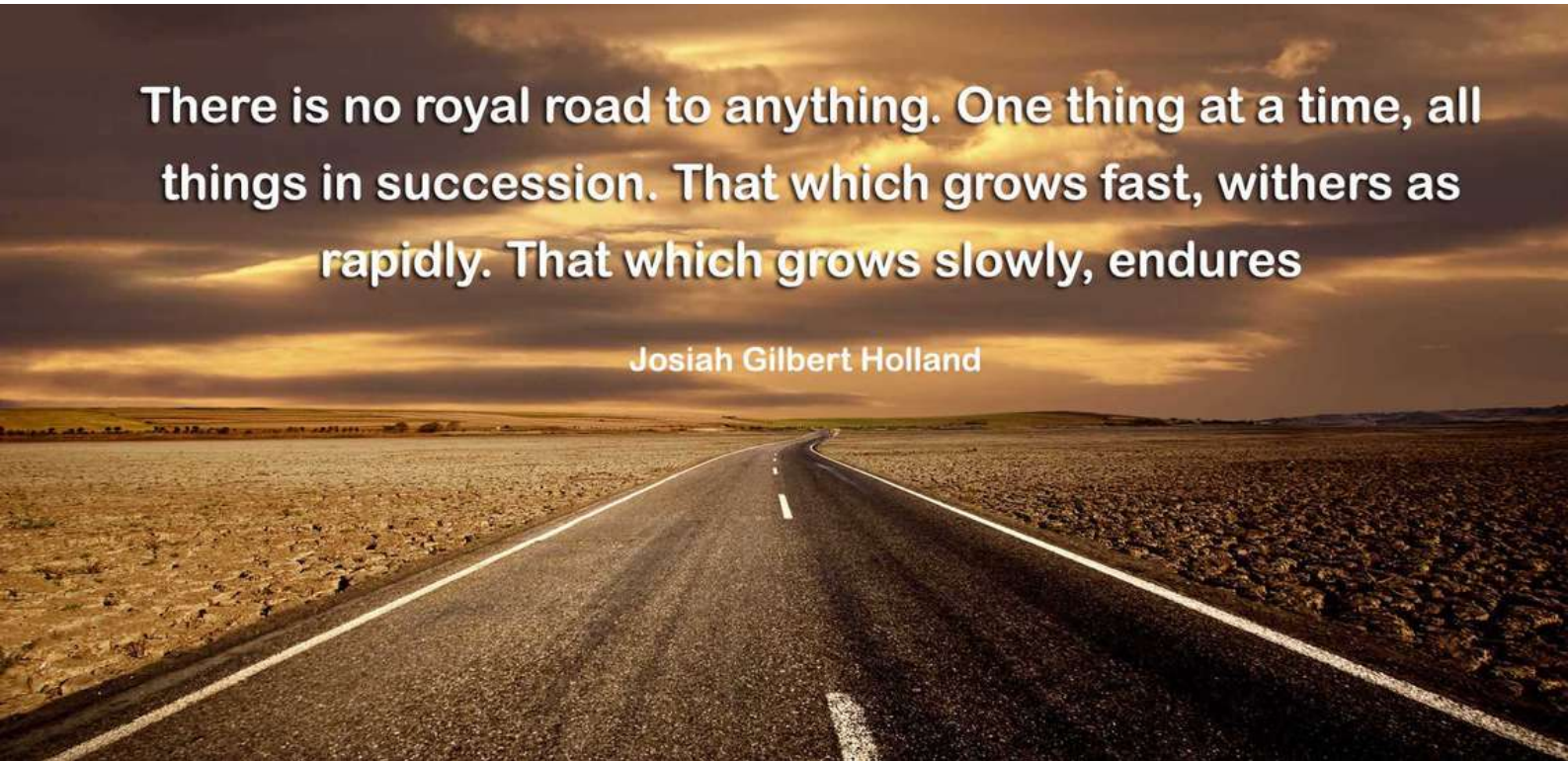
quality time with your family and friends, meeting new people who share your interests or values, volunteering for a cause that matters to you, or joining an online group or forum.

9. Practice self-care. Self-care is not selfish; it's necessary for your well-being. Self-care means taking care of yourself physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. It means doing things that make you feel good, such as getting enough sleep, pampering yourself with a massage or a bath, eating well-balanced meals, listening to music, watching a movie, or doing anything that nourishes your soul.

10. Be kind to yourself. Last but not least, be kind to yourself. You are doing the best you can, and you deserve love, respect, and compassion. Don't be too hard on yourself, don't compare yourself to others, don't judge yourself by unrealistic standards. Instead, celebrate your achievements, acknowledge your strengths, forgive your mistakes, and embrace your uniqueness.

I hope these ideas will help you stay healthy and fit in 2024.

Remember, health and fitness are not goals to achieve, but lifestyles to enjoy. So have fun, be happy, and be well!



There is no royal road to anything. One thing at a time, all things in succession. That which grows fast, withers as rapidly. That which grows slowly, endures

Josiah Gilbert Holland

A high-angle, top-down photograph of a woman running on a dark asphalt path. She is wearing a red sports bra and black leggings. The path is flanked by reddish-brown gravel or dirt. The lighting is bright, creating shadows on the path.

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Let me share about the power of understanding divine intervention and human effort. There is power in the combination of divine intervention and human effort. As you pray, be able to draw a demarcation line between what needs direct divine intervention and what needs you to put your effort after praying about it. Prayer does not replace duty and duty does not remove prayer. These are to be intertwined in order for one to get great results.

God cannot do for us that which He commanded us to do for ourselves under His guidance. Many have been turned away from God because they have seen professed Christians failing to take action where they needed to take action. Instead of taking relevant action they have been seen praying and led down to wait for a miracle where action was needed.

A good example is that of students who are praying to pass their final examinations. No matter how much they pray if they're not studying, listening to teachers while they teach and not dealing with their mind-set it will be hard for them to make it. After praying they should take an action and study, listen to parents and teachers, this will help them achieve intended results. This combination of prayer and hard work will lead to amazing results.

There are some of course who trust much in their power and they only remember God when the examination paper has been put in front of them by the invigilator or after they look at the paper and they realise that they know nothing and what they have been studying didn't come as part of the exam. They just do a short, fast prayer to bribe God so that He helps them to pass but their life has not been a life of prayer.

In as much as it is good to appreciate yourself that you thought about God and you understood that He is the one who can solve your situation, there are problems you will face in future and I need to address them.

I also understand that there are some who might have had an experience of doing that and it worked for them but the greater percentage of students have come back facing these challenge. Remember that I am using a student in an exam as an example but the principle applies to everyone.

The moment you do a short prayer seeking for God to intervene it is registered in your mind as a prayer request. The expected answer from your side is a miracle for you to pass. If you don't pass, there are higher chances that you will accuse GOD of not doing the miracle on your behalf. This is because most of the times when people fail they look for something to blame so that they escape taking responsibility of failure. This is the reason why when students fail they blame teachers, shortage of stationery, parents and so on.

When you blame God you will stop relying on Him and you would have invited many challenges. You can't be angry against God and be in full harmony with other people. This is also the same as those who become angry with God after not making it in their final examinations when they spent many days doing all night prayers. Yes you prayed, but you then have to take responsibility of the results you got so that you can correct where you went wrong. It is the devil's strategy to influence people to blame God after failing in something, he knows that is you are against good you are in his side and it will be hard for you to accept, heal and move on with life.

Another powerful concept in understanding about divine intervention and human effort is knowing what decisions to pray for. This knowledge will help you to understand their role in answered prayer. Some of our prayers have not been answered because of the decisions we have made or because of asking God to bless what He cannot bless. Do you know that we are sometimes responsible of the answers to our prayers? This is one of the privileges we have as human beings. A good example is a person who is praying for good health.

No matter how much you pray to be healthy if you eat unhealthily the result will be an unhealthy body. If you pray for pork to become beef or chicken you will never open your eyes after prayer to see pork having changed to become beef or chicken. If you choose alcohol instead of water, no matter how much you pray, the consequences of drinking alcohol will come. This shows that a person who prays for God to bless the food he eats has a responsibility to choose nourishing meals and to cook them healthy. Pray earnestly and make decisions that are in line with God's will, and He will bless you.

These lessons help us to understand more about purpose and character. As we live our God given lives on this earth, the main purpose is to live purposeful lives and fight for His character through Him. The information shared above is the foundation to healing those who are wounded. Once we understand that God is sovereign, that after accepting Him He helps us to discover who we are and helps us to share His righteousness with others and that He leads us into confessing our sins for the perfection of our character, only then will be able to live peacefully and heal from both invited and uninvited challenges. May God bless you as you continue with your journey of healing and your dedication to improve as a person.



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