



An SA-EU dialogue on...

A values-driven public sector:

Building state capacity through professional ethics and integrity

WHAT IS IT ABOUT?

When the public sector is driven by factors other than our Constitutional Values and Principles (CVPs), it inevitably leads to failures, frequently with far-reaching consequences. Some of the most severe recent values-failures were revealed at the Life Esidimeni, SARS and State Capture inquiries. This is indicative of the fact that despite a robust regulatory and policy environment that promotes good governance, evidence suggests that the Constitutional Values and Principles are not sufficiently embedded in most public institutions.

To build a public sector that serves South Africans in the way that the Constitution intended, the Public Service Commission (PSC) embarked on a Programme to promote and evaluate the Constitutional Values and Principles (CVPs). Now, the urgency for a truly values-driven public sector remains high. To maintain the focus, and ensure we move forward, the PSC is hosting a dialogue on a *Values-Driven Public Sector: Building State Capacity through Professional Ethics and Integrity*, in partnership with the SA-EU Strategic Partnership Dialogue Facility.

WHO WILL BE THERE?

The intention is to bring like-minded South African and European stakeholders together for a structured 2-day conversation to engage on the critical challenges and opportunities related to strengthen ethics and integrity as well as embedding the Constitutional Values and Principles, and advance the National Development Plan (NDP). These stakeholders will include political leaders, public servants, academics, civil society, labour and business representatives. We want to facilitate an active dialogue between informed and interested people who will all share knowledge and experience and explore potential synergies going forward.

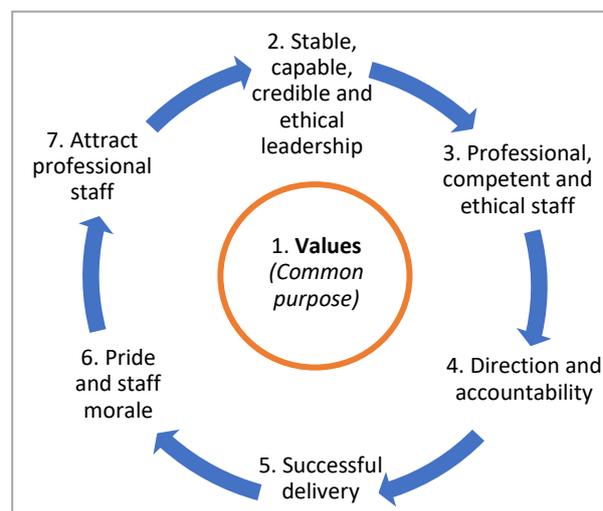
WHAT WILL BE DISCUSSED?

Although we are frequently reminded about the need for a values-driven public sector when there are ethics failures and corruption, this is not an anti-corruption conversation. Rather than focusing on what we want to see less of, we want to consider the culture change journey we need to embark on to enable what we want to see more of. In other words, what needs to be done to change the public sector culture to become more values-driven?

One does not build a values-driven public sector merely by appealing to public servants to take the values more seriously. What is required is a focus on the entire system within which public servants operate and within which they are socialised into their professional roles, values and principles. There needs to be a stable, professional system where values play a central role in keeping the focus on the common purpose. The following theory of change will guide us:

If:

1. We are aligned on our common purpose, and the values and principles that should guide us as a public sector;
2. And we manage to ensure stable, capable, ethical and credible leadership in the public administration;
3. And build a professional, competent and ethical staff;
4. And there is sufficient direction and accountability from management;



Then we should see:

5. successful delivery of services;
6. which will lead to improved pride and staff morale in the public sector;
7. which will make it easier to attract and retain professional staff;
8. which will give us a better pool of people from which to select a stable corps of capable leaders.

HOW WILL THE CONVERSATION BE STRUCTURED?

The morning of day 1 will comprise of official closing ceremony of the Public Service Month (PSM), political and introductory presentations, after which we will break into groups along the following 5 key thematic areas:

- i. Alignment on values, principles and common purpose
- ii. Stable, capable, ethical and credible leadership
- iii. Skilled, professional and ethical staff
- iv. Direction and accountability
- v. Mechanisms for reinforcing values

Each session will have a 10-minute presentation to provide context by a South African expert, and a 10-minute presentation by an EU Member State expert to share international experience on the topic. These conversations will be facilitated and will take us to the close of day 1.

Day 2 will kick off with feedback from day 1 followed by a panel discussion of past and present DGs/CEOs and heads of organisations reflecting on the question: *What challenges are there to ethical leadership and conduct for DGs/CEOs and senior administrators?*

After that, there will be round two of the breakaway conversations, focusing in the practicalities of going forward.

While the dialogue is aimed at knowledge exchange and experience sharing, it is also first step in building networks and identifying opportunities for future collaboration between South Africa and EU member states.

VENUE AND LOGISTICS

This Dialogue will form part of the Public Service Month programme and it will serve as the closing ceremony. The details regarding the Dialogue are as follows:

Date: 30th of September and 01st of October 2019
Venue: Gauteng Centurion at the Royal Elephant Hotel
Time: 09:00

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