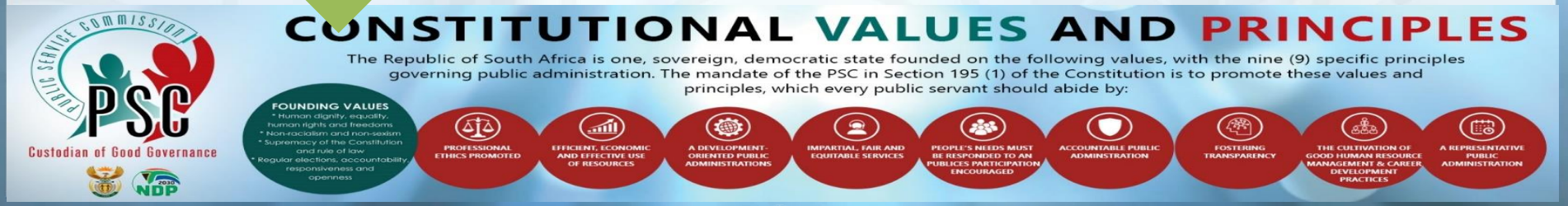
# INVESTIGATIVE ANALYSIS INTO THE ENABLERS AND INHIBITORS OF PERFORMANCE OF SENIOR MANAGERS IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE

## WEBINAR PRESENTATION

10 MARCH 2023

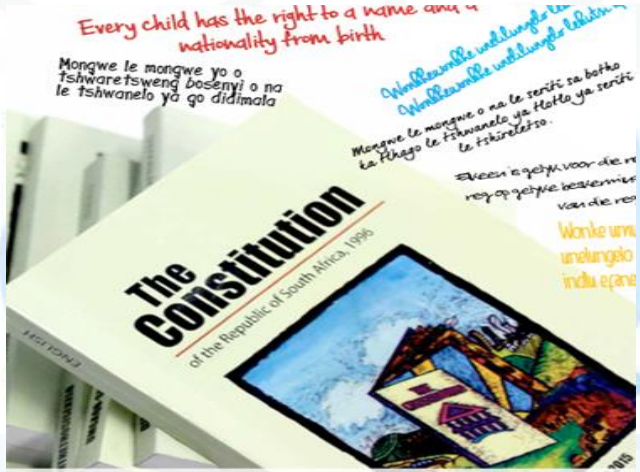
# PRESENTATION OUTLINE

1. Introduction and background
2. Objectives of the study
3. Methodology
4. Prescripts and literature reviewed
5. Findings & Recommendations
6. Conclusion



# BACKGROUND

The Public Service Commission (PSC) is established in terms of Chapter 10 of the Constitution to provide oversight over the Public Service.




**You can now access the Constitution in any of the official languages of South Africa at your nearest public library.**

The PSC conducts research, investigations, inspections as well as advocacy in the interest of maintaining an effective and efficient public administration through cultivating good HRM and career development practices to maximize human potential.


## CONSTITUTIONAL VALUES AND PRINCIPLES

The Republic of South Africa is one, sovereign, democratic state founded on the following values, with the nine (9) specific principles governing public administration. The mandate of the PSC in Section 195 (1) of the Constitution is to promote these values and principles, which every public servant should abide by:

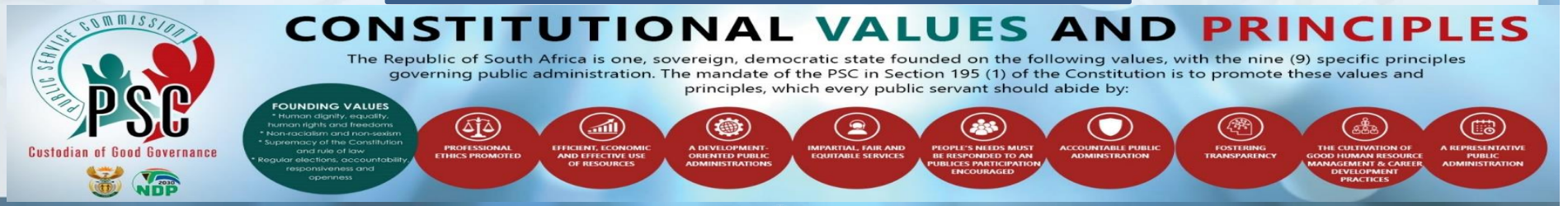
**FOUNDING VALUES**
* Human dignity, equality, human rights and freedoms
* Non-racialism and non-sexism
* Supremacy of the Constitution and rule of law
* Regular elections, accountability, responsiveness and openness

- PROFESSIONAL ETHICS PROMOTED
- EFFICIENT, ECONOMIC AND EFFECTIVE USE OF RESOURCES
- A DEVELOPMENT-ORIENTED PUBLIC ADMINISTRATIONS
- IMPARTIAL, FAIR AND EQUITABLE SERVICES
- PEOPLE'S NEEDS MUST BE RESPONDED TO AN PUBLICES PARTICIPATION ENCOURAGED
- ACCOUNTABLE PUBLIC ADMINSTRATION
- FOSTERING TRANSPARENCY
- THE CULTIVATION OF GOOD HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT & CAREER DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES
- A REPRESENTATIVE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

## BACKGROUND (cont…)

This study presented an opportunity for SMS members from selected national and provincial departments in the Public Service to share their experiences as a basis to identify the **enablers and inhibitors** of their job performance.

Performance management is vital to building a professional and developmental state, therefore it is prudent to examine the factors that enhance or inhibit the performance of SMS members continuously and put measures in place to ensure that their performance is optimal and meets the needs of a developmental state.

# OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- Identify and assess the influence of enablers and inhibitors of job performance of SMS members in the Public Service;
- Propose appropriate interventions to improve the appointment, promotion and performance management of SMS members; and
- Provide possible managerial approaches which can motivate senior managers on their job performance.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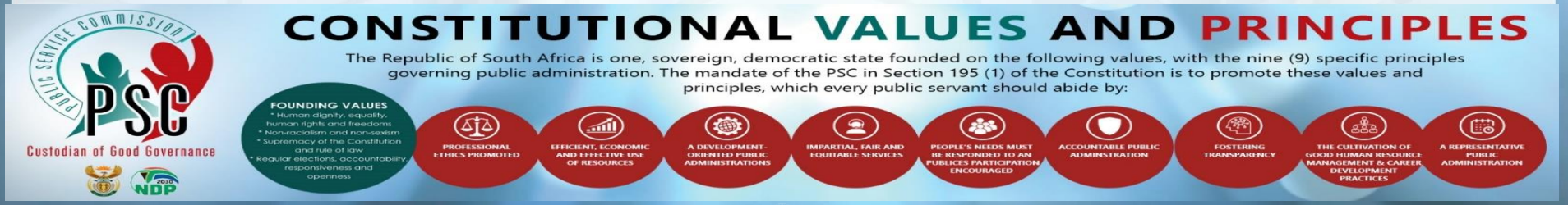
# METHODOLOGY



- The methodology utilised for the study entailed an analysis of secondary data *(legislative and policy frameworks, academic literature and published government reports),* followed by primary data collection through the distribution of questionnaires to all SMS members from selected departments at the national and provincial level.

- With the exception of the North West Province, <u>two departments were selected</u> at both the national and provincial administrations for the purpose of collecting primary data.

- A total of 192 questionnaires were completed and returned to the PSC from 17 participating departments.

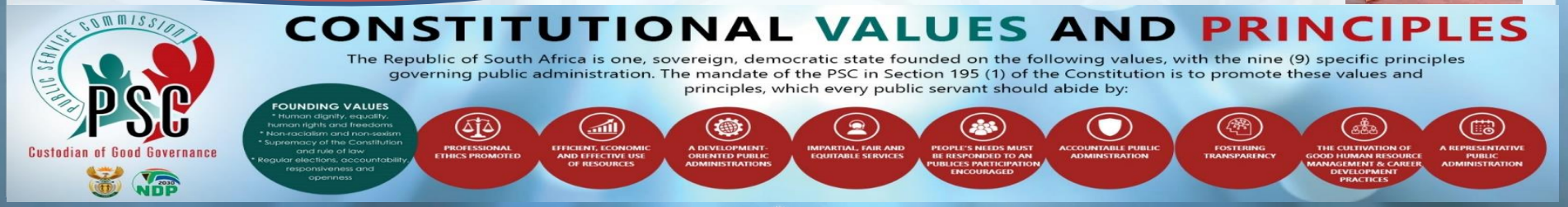


# PRESCRIPTS AND LITERATURE REVIEW

The following prescripts were scrutinised to understand and contextualise continuous employee development in Public Service:

## Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996

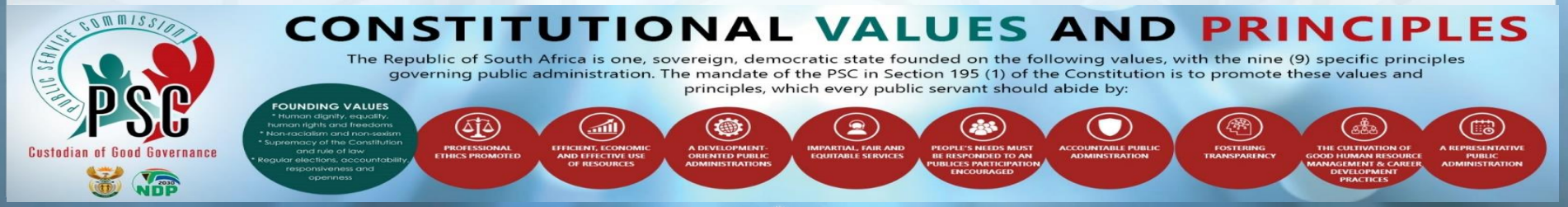
- Public Service Act, 1994, (Act 103 of 1994), as amended
- Public Service Regulations, 2016 as amended
- White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service, 1995
- Senior Management Service Handbook, 2003
- White Paper on Human Resource Management in the Public Service, 1997
- Public Finance Management Act 1 of 1999
- Human Resource Development Strategy, towards 2030.
- A National Implementation Framework towards the Professionalisation of the Public Service, 2020

# PRESCRIPTS AND LITERATURE REVIEW (cont..)

- Literature reveals that performance management has become a frustrating concept within the public administration and public management discourse.
- In the Public Service, the challenges related to performance management and development for SMS members are not only created by non-compliance with prescripts, they emanate from various behavioral aspects of those involved in the processes.



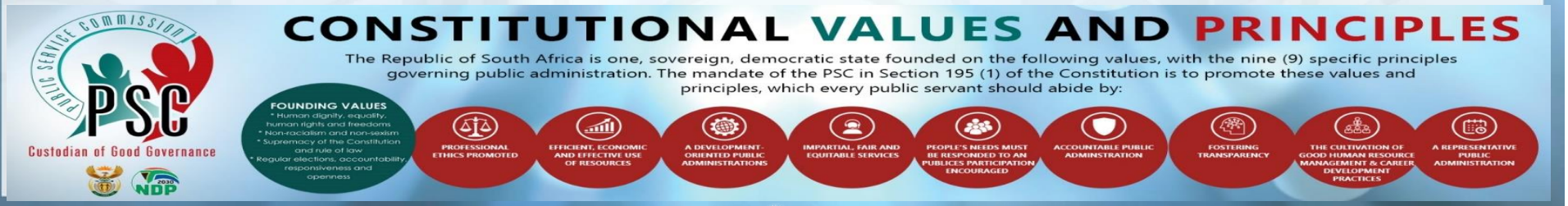


# LITERATURE REVIEW (cont..)

## Selection and appointment processes as enablers or inhibitors of job performance

- In the Public Service, the recruitment and selection process are supposed to be done in accordance with specific legislative frameworks
- Poorly managed recruitment processes can be cumbersome and costly in the long run.
- Recruitment and selection processes can become a hindrance for optimal performance of SMS members, especially when incompetent people are appointed into key positions, either as subordinates or supervisors.



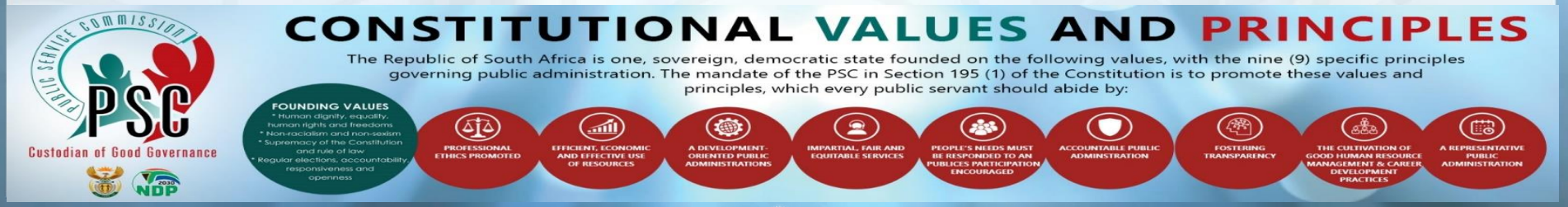


# LITERATURE REVIEW (cont..)

## Performance contracting and management as enablers or inhibitors of job performance

- Performance contracting and management are linked to and enhance accountability and control, if properly implemented.
- The PMDS has become one of the most contested systems in the South African Public Service.
- The PDMS is dependent on the subjective judgements of employees, supervisors, personal interactions between supervisors and employees as well as moderation committees.


- The difference brought by the existence of performance agreements and contracts in the Public Service appears to be superficial and have become more about compliance as opposed to enhancing performance.
- A prerequisite for effective performance management is a ***good accountability framework*** and ***sheer honesty*** **by all parties**
- The NDP found that in many cases accountability has been eroded because of the "absence of a process for consequence management due to the lack of a coherent accountability framework.



# LITERATURE REVIEW (cont..)

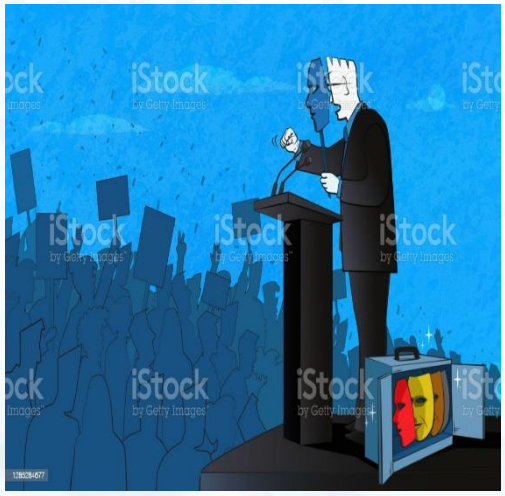

## Recognition and promotion arrangements as enablers of SMS performance

- Motivating and rewarding employees is one of the most important aspects and challenging activities of an organisation.
- Research has shown that senior public servants are likely to be motivated by promotion and recognition from their peers and the public compared to financial rewards.
- Performance rewards and motivation are important for achieving the goals of an organisation.


## Salary and financial reward as enablers or inhibitors of performance

- Available research suggest that in the private and public sectors, salaries and other forms of financial rewards play an important role in ensuring that employees remain motivated, productive, loyal and committed to their work.
- Motivation and commitment are not only dependent on salary and rewards, they can also be influenced by intrinsic motivational factors such as recognition and acknowledgement for work achieved.

# LITERATURE REVIEW (cont..)



## Political Administration Interface and Leadership

- The PSC defines the **Political Administration Interface** concept as “the terrain of interaction between Executive Authorities (EAs) and HoDs.”
- It is undoubtedly a complex relationship and it is a grey area within which politics have to be distinguished from administration and management.
- A successful developmental state requires a stable political-administrative interface that allows the administration to implement the government’s policy objectives.
- Achieving the correct balance in this complex relationship is pivotal to achieving successful development outcomes.
- If the balance is skewed towards one side of the political-administrative interface, it may result in decisions that are not in the best interests of development and/or contrary to applicable Public Service prescripts.
- **Ethics, integrity and maturity** amongst those involved in this complex relationship is pivotal.

# FINDINGS

**Attributes and characteristics of the ideal public servant in the Public Service**

- All SMS members who participated in the study have a clear understanding of the decorum, professionalism and the innate values that are required from an ideal public servant to ensure optimal performance, inclusive of, honesty and integrity; loyalty, dedication and commitment to public service, servant leadership, innovation and understanding of government policies and operations.

**The study also identified a range of factors that serve as performance enablers-**

- Prompt and constructive support and feedback from competent supervisors/managers.
- Teamwork/collaboration between colleagues and departmental units.
- (Non-financial) Recognition by peers and superiors.
- Exposure to training and development opportunities.

**A number of performance inhibitors were identified, inclusive of, amongst others-**

- Continuous restructuring/reorganisation of departments,
- Incompetent supervisors,
- Political interference/involvement in recruitment and selection processes,
- Toxic organisational culture,
- Appointment and/or deployment of incompetent persons into key positions,
- Lack of support from some superiors,
- Low staff morale and lack of passion for work assigned, and
- Budget cuts.

**Possible enablers or inhibitors depending on contextual variables, in the Public Service**

- Organisational culture,
- Restructuring/reorganization,
- Competency levels of supervisors and subordinates, and
- Employee commitment.

# FINDINGS (cont..)

## Recruitment and selection system as a key enabler or inhibitor of job performance

- The uniform standard created by regulations and DPSA directives is complemented by a rigorous interview process.
- 55% of respondents said most SMS members in their departments are appropriately qualified for the posts they occupy, but many lack the required skills and work experience.
- The effectiveness of the recruitment and selection process in identifying the most suitable SMS members was rated 6-10 by 65% and 1-5 by 25% of the respondents, whilst 9% were unsure due to lack of participation in recruitment processes.

## Political involvement in recruitment and selection processes as an inhibitor of performancein the Public Service

- According to some respondents, political considerations and involvement are 'somewhat justifiable' at the DG level only.
- political involvement in the recruitment, transfer or appointment of SMS members, or public servants in general, negatively impacts on the character of the Public Service.

## Poor implementation of the PMDS as a key inhibitor of performance

- The majority agreed that PMDS is manipulated and poorly implemented over the years.

- 81 (42%) out of the 192 respondents said the PMDS has a negative effect on employee performance and does not add value to their work and the strategic objectives of their departments, with 50 (26%) citing it as a good system and the remaining 61 (32%) respondents were either not sure or evasive in their responses.

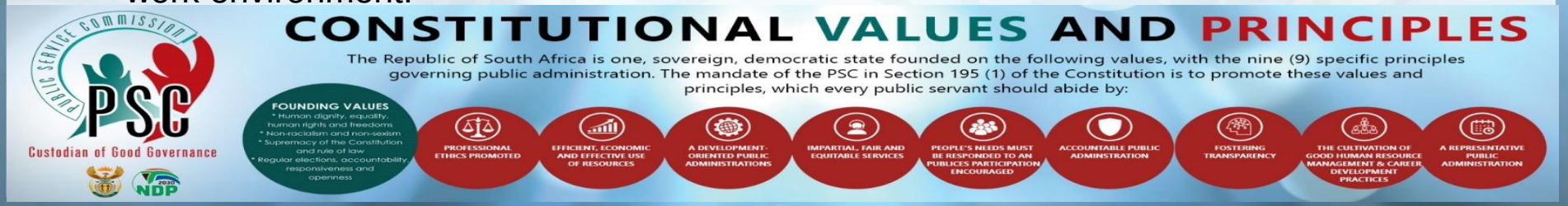
## *Other performance enhancement factors*

- Promotion and recognition are regarded as the most effective motivational factors with the potential of improving optimal job performance in the Public Service. Other factors include:
  - conducive work environment;
  - continuous professional development through bursaries, sabbaticals to further studies abroad and assistance with membership for certain associations; market-related salaries;
  - flexible working hours; and
  - adequate management support.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

It is envisaged that the following recommendations, which are aligned with recommendations of the NDP and framework on professionalization of the Public Service, will optimise the benefits of the *identified enablers (or drivers)* of SMS performance, influence the direction of the 'double edged' factors, and prevent or minimise the inhibitors *and their negative impact.*

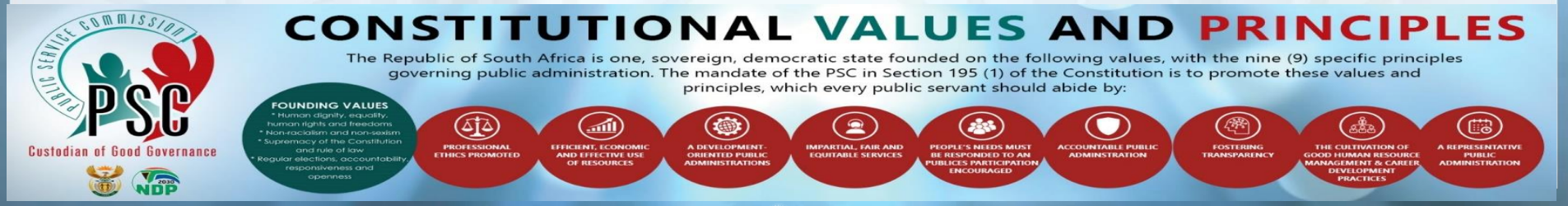
- Implement merit-based recruitment, promotions, transfers and secondments.
- Prohibit political considerations or involvement in the recruitment, transfer or appointment of SMS members, or limit it to when dealing with HOD appointments in line with NDP recommendations.
- Prioritise, in terms of time and other types for support, training and capacity development of SMS members.
- Expedite the process of developing and implementing a 'holistic' performance reward framework for the Public Service so that employees can feel appreciated, recognised and supported to achieve optimal performance.
- Institutionalise the CVPs as a basis to build a professional and conducive Public Service work environment.



# RECOMMENDATIONS (Cont..)

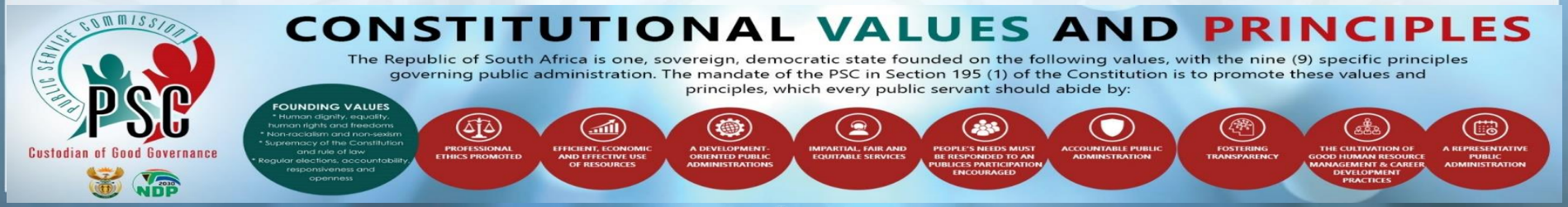
Mechanism should be put in place to **deal with the underlying causes of the identified inhibitors** and to effectively manage or minimise their impact. Interventions in this area should include the following:

- Capacitate incompetent and non-supportive supervisors and subordinates, failing which, consequence management should be instituted.
- Recognise and reward (in-kind) dedicated, loyal and diligent employees in order to boost morale and productivity.
- Delegate authority for decision-making and programme implementation.
- Address capacity and budget constraints constructively by setting realistic performance targets.
- Prevent tensions at the political-administrative interface by implementing the NDP recommendations and the framework on professionalisation of the Public Service.



# CONCLUSION

- There is no doubt that a capable and development-oriented state requires managers and leaders who are innovative in the development of new approaches to public administration and and have a productive and fulfilling work life for the betterment of the lives of fellow citizens and residents.
- It is incumbent on government to adopt a perspective for capacity development, training and management in the Public Service that is commensurate with the needs and requirements of a developmental state.
- The poor management of the complex relationship between political administrative interface is a concern because if the interface is unstable, certainty is not created and this impacts on the performance of departments and their ability to deliver on their mandates. This must be addressed in an ethical and mature manner that enhances compliance with prescripts, facilitates service delivery and restores trust and confidence in the legitimacy and capacity of the Public Service.

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Thank you