

INTERNSHIPS – A MECHANISM TO MAKE OUR YOUTH MORE EMPLOYABLE

Whilst the government is introducing Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment policies to radically fast track the economic empowerment of previously disadvantaged individuals. With more than 55% of the country's population still living in poverty, unfortunately these policies are still making the rich, richer and the poor, poorer.

Again, our government has placed the pressure on the private sector to bridge the gap and embark on the journey to transform the country's economy.

The unemployment rate is currently at a minimal improvement of 26.7% from 27% and the greatest challenge to produce youth that are amongst economically active population by making them more employable.

In the recent Statement of Nation Address, President Cyril Ramaphosa confirmed there would be a drive to create employment for the youth through the immediate practical implementation of a million internships by 2021 and to allocate R57 billion towards free higher education.

Internships are defined as a Structured and monitored workplace experience gained through exposure and interactions within a real work environment. These programmes that range from a period of 12 to 18 months are specifically designed for candidates who have already completed an NQF Level 5 qualification or an N6 qualification that is relevant for employment in a specific sector, but have not yet collected the necessary practical experience to enable them to obtain employment.

It is no secret that any organisation would elect to employ an experienced candidate over an inexperienced graduate. Therefore, internships would play a vital role in generating a pool of employable youth.

Through the incentivised internship funding, employers, specifically SMMEs will be at an advantage. By utilising the funding, they will be able to grow their staff compliment and business through youth employment opportunities.

BEE compliant organisations will be able to claim points under the BEE Skills development scorecard.

The organisation will also be able to create a talent pool of young professionals, who are qualified as well as cognisant with the organisation's core business values and most importantly who have the relevant experience to operate.

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