

MEDIA RELEASE

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THE SECRETS OF A GLOBAL WINNER – A WOMAN OF FIRSTS

“Effective communication is a leading indicator of financial performance and the driver of employee engagement. Companies where communication was rated as effective have a 47% higher total return to shareholders over the last five years than companies without effective communication.” Towers Watson (2010)

According to this leading global professional services company’s latest 2013-2014 research results this powerful correlation stands the test of time. These fundamentals have evolved to be more effective when grounded in a deep understanding of an organisation’s culture and workforce.

And so has dr. Amanda Hamilton-Atwell evolved to guide businesses globally, and especially in South Africa and on the African continent. Her passion for the communication profession, her phenomenal leadership and the fact that she is a “serial” volunteer has made Amanda the first in many ways. The latest one is being the first South African in more than two decades to receive the Chairman’s Award of the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC). Robin McCasland, the 2013/2014 International Executive Board Chair of IABC, presented her with the award at the opening of the association’s world conference in Toronto, Canada in June this year.

“Amanda has been a phenomenal leader for IABC over the past several years. She has not only lead growth in South Africa and on the African continent, but she has also been a key influencer on the global front,” said McCasland.

“I am humbled by the award,” said Amanda. “I am passionate about the professionalisation of our industry and IABC enabled me to make a contribution – for which I am very grateful.”

WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR US?

Her impact on the development of the communication profession via her involvement as Co-chairperson of IABC’s Career Road Map and 2013/2014 International Chairperson of its Gold Quill Awards is threefold.

- Firstly it gives guidance to the profession itself. The Career Road Map and six core principles identify the areas of expertise required during four major milestones in a communication professional’s career path. This helps people to develop their current and future role as communication professionals.

- It also guides business regarding the strategic role of the profession, recruiting the most suitable persons for the different roles in the profession and structuring an effective communication function.
- The Gold Quill Awards is a global competition which recognises best practice in thought leadership, strategic management, creativity, resourcefulness and successful communication solutions.

“It is more than an award – it encourages people to be better at what they do. The stellar quality of the 2014 entries and the importance placed on measuring the return on investment of communication, shows that the format is improving the quality of business communication worldwide. South Africa received 18 Gold Quill Awards in Canada last month,” said Amanda.

A PROFOUND BUSINESSWOMAN IN HER OWN RIGHT

As founder and owner of communication research and consulting company, Business DNA, Amanda extends her expertise to her clients.

“Through research we 'drill' into the DNA of an organisation to identify elements that could enhance or hamper its growth and recommend interventions that will leverage its strengths and address its problem areas.”

“We concentrate on helping organisations create and maintain positive and productive relationships with all their stakeholders – employees, shareholders, customers and the community. We customise the diagnostic tools to our clients’ environment, time frame and budget.”

Business DNA has provided research, training and consulting services to blue chip companies in the following sectors of the economy – agricultural, communications, construction, finance, government, hospitality, manufacturing, mining, tourism and utilities.

WHAT ARE HER SECRETS TO SUCCESS?

I do not have secrets, I believe in a couple of basic things:

- Know what is on the radar screen of your field of interest – the small blips in the distance and the ones that were big but are disappearing into the distance
- Read - books, articles and online comments
- Belong to professional organisations
- Participate in discussions about the industry – it will keep you abreast and introduce you to thought leaders
- Enjoy the roller-coaster ride of the communication profession – it is fast, it is up and down and will take turns you did not anticipate, but it is exhilarating and fun!

MORE FIRSTS... AND PASSION ACROSS CONTINENTS

Being the first woman in South Africa to be awarded a Doctorate in Communication Science, Amanda was also the founder of IABC chapters in Pretoria, Nigeria, Tanzania and Botswana. She served on its African and International Executive Boards.

Her diversity as a leader is clear from the leadership positions she filled in other spheres such as the Chairperson of the Board of the Child and Family Care Society, founder of the South African

Communication Association, board member of the South African Association of Industrial Editors, board member and Deputy Director of the Pretoria and Gauteng North Chambers of Commerce and Industry and board member of the Afrikaanse Handelsinstituut.

AMANDA HAMILTON-ATWELL - THE PERSON

Amanda is married to Wimpie and has three children – two sons and a daughter. Her house is also the home of a cat and four dogs. She loves storytelling, ballroom dancing and travelling to far-away places.

"My life philosophy is not a new one but having experienced it, I made it my own. If today is the Last Day, it must be a good day – so live life and travel light! Life is still good..."

Dr. Amanda Hamilton-Attwell is available to be contacted for interviews and addressing public forums – both from an academic and business perspective. She can be contacted at:

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More about IABC

The IABC is a professional association which enables a global network of communicators working in diverse industries and disciplines to identify, share and apply the world's best communication practices. It is recognised as the professional association of choice for communicators who aspire to excel in their chosen fields.

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