

Grooming leadership through horseplay

SARAH-JANE BOSCH

OBSERVING how horses react to humans is an effective way of evaluating leadership skills and potential, says Willemien Law, marketing manager of USB-ED, the executive development arm of the University of Stellenbosch Business School.

Although leadership can be researched, evaluated and categorised, it is the realities of life that make people effective leaders, says Law. Contact with horses can emulate this reality.

"Equine Assisted Learning (EAL) is regarded as a new leadership field in which experimental activities with horses reflect the realities of life. Participants learn more about themselves and how to process behaviour, feelings and patterns. This helps to cultivate leadership skills, develop problem and conflict resolution, establish bound-

aries and remain within them, deal with aggression, and improve non-verbal communication.

"Horses are exceptionally intuitive and very well attuned to dealing with adversity in their surroundings. Horses will very quickly reflect any adverse behaviour which human beings may not be aware of. Working with horses presents you with a fair idea of yourself, how others perceive you, what motivates you, your adaptability and flexibility in changing circumstances, and your ability to lead. To accomplish a task with the help of a horse presents a wonderful metaphor for dealing with intimidating situations in real life."

Putting this unusual leadership concept into practice, the USB-ED will be offering a two-day experimental initiative in August to mid-level managers, people who display management potential or those who



BUILDING RAPPORT: Robert Redford, who starred in and directed the film *The Horse Whisperer*, demonstrates effective interaction with horses

want to further their management skills.

The presentation will be facilitated by Yolanda Sing, a human resources specialist.

"Through this programme managers can find out how their leadership styles are experienced by others, by observing other members of the group and by taking lessons

from a natural leader, the horse," says Law.

"Participants will soon learn that when working with horses enforcing power is not an option and that a title means very little. Leadership only comes to the fore through achieving authority, the demonstration of reliability and the attainment of confidence."

Participants will initially undergo emotional intelligence assessments which will be followed up on completion of the programme to reveal any changes resulting from interaction with the horses.

The programme will be presented in Durbanville on August 11 and 12 and in Johannesburg on August 14 and 15. No previous experience with horses is necessary, and no horse-riding is involved.

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Author's grant gives writers a chance to develop their careers

STAFF WRITER

TO DEVELOP writing and knowledge production in South Africa and encourage the writing and publishing of high-quality non-fiction works, especially by young authors, the Academic and Non-Fiction Authors Association of South Africa (Anfasa) has introduced a grant scheme for authors.

The publishing output of South

Africa does not yet reflect the demographic profile of the country, says Anfasa director Kundayi Masanzu.

Some of the reasons for this are: inadequate support for aspiring authors; insufficient incentives to encourage a diverse and fully representative writing community; and inadequate training in writing and research skills.

"Poor management of intellectual property rights also remains a

barrier to writing development.

"The ability to manage writing competencies and skills is a key factor in the personal development of published and aspiring authors, and this is, in turn, a force for the growth of the South African writing and publishing industries.

"The greater the reward for individual authors, the greater the incentive to enter the field.

"Anfasa's aim is the profession-

alisation of non-fiction and academic writing, which means the raising of standards and the possibility that more authors of non-fiction and academic works will be able to write full-time. The objective of the grant scheme is to develop writing and knowledge production in South Africa and encourage the writing and publishing of high-quality non-fiction works, especially by young authors.

"The short-term objective is to provide established and aspiring authors with the means to devote themselves to writing. This could involve taking time off from work, travelling, undertaking research, or participating in relevant training programmes for purposes of completing the writing project."

● Contact Kundayi Masanzu on 011 489 5193 or visit www.anfasa.org.za.