

Department of Industrial Psychology

DECEMBER 2022 NEWSLETTER



FROM THE CHAIR⁹S OFFICE

A swe look back on 2022, we are thankful to report that personal interaction – be it between colleagues or between lecturers and students – has mostly returned to normal. Our annual awards evening is an example of this. How wonderful it was to celebrate the achievements of our staff members and students with an in-person function held at STIAS.

At the awards evening it was evident that, although COVID-19 restrictions might be something of the past, online learning is here to stay. The Department is proud of the success of the Professional Certificate in Strategic Human Resource Management, which has, to date, attracted 2 600 enrolments from across 150 regions and countries.

In another first for our Department, our Certificate Programme in Personal Mastery in Leadership (PML) was presented beyond the borders of South Africa for the first time. The presenters of the course travelled to Botswana to host a leadership development programme for the senior managers of the Botswana Ash Company (BOTASH).

Closer to home, I am pleased to wish Dr Michelle Visser well for her second term as chairperson of the SABPP in the Western Cape. Academics have an important role to play in professional organisations and their involvement leads to mutually beneficial relationships. The organisations or associations benefit from academics' knowledge and research, while academics are kept abreast of the latest cutting-edge developments and best



practice in their respective fields of interest.

This relationship is true for the contract appointment of Dr Jacques Pienaar, who obtained his PhD in the Department after working in industry for 15 years and who can now share his experience with our students.

In this edition of the newsletter, we also look at "career enhancing strategies for optimising talent" as discussed by Dr Shayne Roux, whilst some of our recently registered industrial psychologists share their journeys towards registration.

Finally, we want to congratulate all our students – undergraduate and postgraduate – who graduated during the December graduation ceremony. A special congratulations to Dr Francois van der Bank, lecturer in Industrial Psychology, who received his doctoral degree.

As 2022 comes to an end, I wish everyone a blessed festive season. Although things might have returned to "normal", it certainly has not been an easy year, and we all need to rest and recuperate so that we can return refreshed and with renewed energy in 2023.

Departmental chair becomes Fellow of ITC

After serving on the International Test Commission's Council in various capacities since 2010 – most recently as President – Prof Aletta Odendaal, Chair of the Department of Industrial Psychology, was elected a fellow of the association at the Annual General Meeting held virtually on 15 July 2022.

The ITC awarded fellowships to three long-serving members – including Prof Kurt Geisinger, Director of the Buros Center on Testing and distinguished professor at the University of Nebraska, and Prof Paula Elosua, professor at the University of the Basque Country – increasing the total number of fellows of the ITC to 13. To become a fellow of the ITC, a nominee must have served on the Council for at least 10 years, must have spent some time in the role of one of the officers of the Council, and must have made a significant contribution to the work of the ITC.

Prof Odendaal concluded her term as president of the ITC in 2022 and was succeeded by Prof Stephen Sireci from the University of Massachusetts. He is also a distinguished extraordinary professor in the Department of Industrial Psychology at Stellenbosch University.

Prof Odendaal states that: "It is an honour to have been nominated, and I'm humbled by the acknowledgement. It is a privilege to be part of the ITC community because it contributes to my own professional growth and exposes me to the latest developments in the field of psychological measurement and testing.

"I have always had a passion for psychological testing and culturally appropriate assessment practices. The ITC provided the professional network that enabled me to expand my knowledge and expertise and improve the standards of testing practices in South Africa that are both global in scope, as well as relevant and local in application," she adds.

The ITC was formed in 1976 as an association of national psychological associations, test commissions, publishers and other organisations committed to promoting effective testing and assessment policies and to the proper development, evaluation, and use of educational and psychological instruments globally. Its primary goal is to facilitate the exchange of information among its members and to encourage their cooperation on problems related to the construction, distribution, and

use of psychological tests.

The Association recently completed a successful partnership with the Association of Test Publishers (ATP) in releasing the Guidelines for Technology-Based Assessments. These Guidelines cover important topics for developing, evaluating, and delivering assessments that enable technology to deliver tests that are effective, fair, reliable, and valid for their intended uses.

Being provided with the ability to expose students to cutting-edge developments in their field of study is one of the main reasons why Prof Odendaal believes academics should be actively involved in professional associations in their respective fields.

"These Guidelines for Technology-Based Assessments will be incorporated in our curriculum as early as next year," she cites as an example.

"Furthermore, involvement in professional associations lends credibility to an academic's teaching, research, and social impact role, particularly if you are preparing students for professional registration in a discipline. It is also important to be nationally and internationally recognised as an academic leader in your discipline if you want to advance your academic career."

New developments in educational and psychological testing

In the ITC's latest newsletter, new ITC President Prof Sireci mentions four developments that are rapidly changing practices in educational and psychological testing. They are: (a) using educational tests to support student learning, (b) promoting culturally-sustaining and anti-racist assessment practices, (c) rejection of tests for use in college and other admissions decisions, and (d) technological innovations in assessment.

"There is no other organisation better positioned to discuss these developments and use them to promote fair, efficient, and valid testing practices than the International Test Commission (ITC)," he adds.

STAFF NEWS

Dr Visser starts second term as provincial chair of SABPP

n June 2022, Dr Michelle Visser, senior lecturer in the Department of Industrial Psychology, embarked on her second term as Western Cape chairperson of the SA Board for People Practices (SABPP).

The role of the SABPP is to professionalise the HR function to ensure that HR becomes an increasingly recognised and respected profession. Since its inception in 1982, the SABPP has registered more than 10 000 HR professionals on five different levels of professionalism. The SABPP made history in 2013 by developing the world's first National HR Standards, followed in 2014 by an HR Audit Framework.

Dr Visser's association with the SABPP began almost ten years ago, and she remains actively involved with the SABPP because she believes in what it represents and the value it offers individuals and organisations.

According to her, academics have an important role to play in these types of entities.

"I regard myself not only as an academic, but also as a professional practitioner. I believe that the combination of research and practice-driven experience makes one a better lecturer. Academics' involvement also strengthens these professional organisations because we deliver well-researched, quality products and services. Take, for example, the National HR Standards – this is a world-class product, thanks to the late Mr Marius Meyer, a fellow academic and former colleague."

Dr Visser regards it as a huge privilege to work directly with employees and she definitely feels she benefits from her involvement with the SABPP.

"I'm passionate about my profession, I understand the corporate world, and people fascinate me. I want to see people being optimised in their workplace, since all businesses need people (human capital) to achieve performance outputs and gain a competitive advantage in the market."

Two of the challenges that Dr Visser wants to address during her tenure are membership numbers and marketing.

"I would like to start a student chapter at Stellenbosch University and ensure that we visit more rural areas to introduce the SABPP to companies there. We have a strong team of professional people who will make a big impact this term," she concludes.

PhD candidate receives award for best poster at Faculty research day

Susan Goosen, a contract lecturer and PhD candidate Sin the Department of Industrial Psychology, received the award for the best poster at the Faculty of Economic and Management Science's research day held in July.

The topic of her poster was "The measurement of character strengths: Ideal Point versus Dominant Measurement models".

She gave some background to her topic: "Most research in positive psychology investigates linear relationships between positive psychological constructs, such as character strengths, and positively valued outcomes, such as well-being. Recently, the focus has shifted to also study the too-much-of-a-good-thing (TMGT) effect, which posits a non-linear relationship between positive attributes and desirable outcomes, because the overuse (or underuse) of a strength potentially has a detrimental effect on the outcome.

"To date, the vast majority of studies have employed socalled dominance models to obtain person measures on positive attributes, which are typically measured with Likert-type items. Such models hold that persons with higher standings on the attribute of interest will always obtain higher scores on the attribute than persons with lower standings.

"There are indications, however, that attributes such as personality traits, attitudes and positive psychology

traits should be tested under the assumptions of an ideal-point response model, in contrast to the widely used dominance response models."

About the award, she said: "I feel a sense of accomplishment, as the poster made my proposal visible and real."





Dr Pienaar embarks on career in academics

The aspects of being a lecturer that Dr Jacques Pienaar enjoys most include preparing young people for the world of work and being given the opportunity to influence their values, knowledge, and way of thinking.

Dr Pienaar, who obtained his PhD last year, began his employment in the Department of Industrial Psychology on a two-and-a-half-year fixed term contract in May this year.

Dr Pienaar spent 15 years working in the industry before returning to Stellenbosch University (SU) to embark on his doctoral journey.

After obtaining his undergraduate degree at SU, he worked for AP-Moller Maersk, where he served as head of Maersk International Shipping Education, the company's graduate programme for Africa, and for the Shoprite Group, in the role of head of graduate recruitment.

He was able to pursue his dream of earning a PhD when he was selected for SU's Graduate School of Economic and Management Sciences (GEM). The topic of his thesis was "The development and validation of a graduate leader competency model".

"I spent many years working in the field of graduate recruitment. Organisations all have a different idea of what graduate talent means and how to measure and predict it. I was very sceptical about many organisations' approaches and started questioning their methodology for selection. This led to my study.

"I wanted to find a more scientific approach to the selection process and define what graduate talent actually means."

As an academic, he is currently continuing with the research he started whilst studying towards his PhD.

"My PhD only focused on one aspect of the graduate leader competency model. I want to expand the other parts of the model and connect this to the model developed in the PhD to create a more holistic picture of the psychological mechanism that describes and regulates graduate leadership. "I've published two articles resulting from my research and recently submitted a third one for consideration."

Dr Pienaar is actively involved as a lecturer. Not only is he the BPsych programme coordinator, but he also presents courses in Human Capital Metrics, Applied Psychometric and Achievement Testing, and Strategic Human Resource Management.

"The biggest challenge for me has been getting used to lecturing – having people listen to me for hours!" he admits.

He was also involved in the development of a new third-year module – Human Capital Metrics. This module focuses on equipping students with the skills needed to become trusted advisors to the senior management teams of organisations.

He believes his experience in industry has taught him many useful skills, including professionalism, and working hard.

"Things happen a lot faster in industry as there are many challenges and more pressure to complete tasks on time. At academic institutions everything happens at a slower pace, but you have more time to consider issues and there is therefore an enormous focus on quality.

"However, I still have many friends in the business world. I talk to them often and share stories, interesting facts, and important news snippets."

In the long term, Pienaar wants to establish himself as an academic.

"My aim is to make a meaningful contribution to my field of study. I would like to publish more and become involved with innovative research in the Department."

STAFF ARTICLE

Career enhancing strategies for optimising talent



by Dr Shayne Roux

It is widely acknowledged that in order for South African organisations to remain competitive in the global marketplace, they will have to develop a highly productive and competent workforce.

Babi-directional approach to talent management to meet future demands. At the same time, HR leaders are required to apply data analytics to predict the future in- and outflow of talent. The COVID-19 pandemic has forced a permanent change in the approach to talent management in many organisations and most companies are now compelled to refocus their strategies.

Organisations have been forced into rethinking and recrafting their people strategies to retain their distinctiveness in a highly competitive market. It is important to note that the global business landscape is continuously changing, and organisations must be both flexible and quick to respond to be successful. To be proactive in this ever changing and unpredictable world, organisations must review the contemporary talent management challenges and implement gamechanging initiatives to attract, develop and retain critical skills that create sustainable business value.

Many organisations are adopting strategies to maximise internal talent mobility to facilitate crossfunctional and global exposure for their employees. An approach which includes both lateral and spiral career moves and participation in special projects is encouraged to enhance employees' repertoire of competencies and maximise the opportunities for internal mobility. Additional organisational support may include the use of mentors to guide employees on a variety of issues, such as understanding business problems, achieving performance objectives, determining new priorities, establishing development plans, and to promote career development. Employees should also be encouraged to take personal responsibility and take charge of their own careers. From a self-directed perspective, three career enhancing strategies, namely, (1) employee selfnomination, (2) making use of mentor support, and (3)

networking, have been found to be particularly useful to advance career success.

Employee self-nomination

Employees may benefit from personally 'putting up their hands up' and making their managers aware of their career aspirations. Employee selfnomination, whereby employees take the initiative to proactively communicate their career goals to their manager, is a key talent optimisation strategy. This enables managers to be mindful of their employees' aspirations when considering staff members for various assignments. Once an employee has been placed on assignment, this may be used as a useful learning opportunity to improve the job-related skills necessary for positive career outcomes. It is important that employees are noticed by their managers and are considered for future career prospects. However, this is only possible if employees nominate themselves for career enhancing opportunities.

Support from a mentor

Mentoring has been widely acknowledged to be an effective career enhancing strategy, as the mentor provides both job- and career-related advice to support talent mobility. When employees make use of the knowledge gained from mentors and apply this knowledge in their own careers, it leads to positive outcomes in career success.

Access to networks

It is beneficial for employees to have contact with individuals, other than their managers, who could help build their careers by expanding their networks. The advantages gained from networking provide potential access to both internal and external job opportunities. The benefit of these three strategies, when effectively combined, is likely to positively contribute to employees' attainment of both objective and sustainable career success.

LATEST NEWS

Personal Mastery in Leadership programme – **An historical breakthrough to Botswana**

In an historic first for the Department of Industrial Psychology, its Certificate Programme in Personal Mastery in Leadership (PML) was presented beyond the borders of South Africa for the first time.

The PML programme in Botswana was presented in person by Prof Amos Engelbrecht (programme leader), Gert Scholtz (Scholtz Consulting) and Dr Michelle Visser, and online by Prof Johan Malan and Prof Bright Mahembe (standing in for Dr Samantha Adams).

The Botswana Ash Company (BOTASH) approached Stellenbosch University through the PML website earlier this year, requesting a leadership development programme for their senior managers. BOTASH, located in Suo Pan in northern Botswana, is Africa's leading supplier of natural sodium and a variety of salt products.

Prof Engelbrecht explains: "The PML programme aims to support managers in building the necessary sustainable leadership capability to become effective leaders in their work teams and organisations. The purpose of the programme is to introduce participants to a robust personal mastery-based leadership development framework.

"The leadership development framework uses selfawareness, experiential learning and best practice leadership development principles to develop an individual leadership development plan tailor-made for each participant's organisational role, whilst aligning with the participant's personality, emotional intelligence and current level of leadership competencies. The programme also focuses on ethical leadership, which is crucial for managerial effectiveness by enhancing mutual trust and developing an ethical culture in modern organisations."

According to Prof Engelbrecht, the first PML programme hosted in Botswana was well received.

"We were impressed by the high quality of discussions during the workshops on the practical implications of the leadership development programme. We are grateful to Ethel Bonyongo from BOTASH and Avdil



Lackay from the Department of Industrial Psychology at SU for the excellent organisation of the first international short course in PML hosted by the Department. The BOTASH management has expressed its intention to nominate a second group of managers to attend the PML programme in the future, which is very gratifying."

The PML programme is designed for business managers who want to increase their organisational impact through more effective leadership. The short course in leadership is presented on NQF 7 level and entails a two-month programme consisting of 18 hours of workshops, three hours of individual coaching and approximately four hours of assignment work.

Since its inception in 2014, 196 participants have successfully completed this certificate programme, including middle and senior level managers from a variety of organisations in South Africa, notably in the agricultural, fishing, wine, manufacturing, motor, logistics and food processing industries.



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Department celebrates achievements and a return to normality

On 29 September, the Department of Industrial Psychology at Stellenbosch University celebrated more than the achievements of its students and staff; it also celebrated the opportunity to host its first physical awards evening in three years.

t has become clear that, whilst the COVID-19 lockdown is in the past, online learning has become part of the present.

Dr Antoinette van der Merwe, Senior Director of the Division for Learning and Teaching, focused attention during the Awards evening on hybrid learning and how it can be a game changer for SU.

Hybrid learning broadens student access, enhances student success, creates additional learning pathways through a diversified academic offering, and broadens the reach of Stellenbosch University's academic offering.

The Department of Industrial Psychology recently entered the field of open online learning through the introduction of the Professional Certificate in Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM).

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Appreciation was shown to the Hybrid Learning team, which includes Ms Miné de Klerk (Project Manager) and Dr Renelle Terblanche (Hybrid Learning Coordinator).

In a sobering reflection, Mr Marius Meyer – who passed away in January 2021 – was remembered as a thought leader in Human Resources.

Mr Meyer's colleagues paid tribute to his life in celebrating his powerful legacy of recognising people as central to business success and making a strategic contribution to people management in South Africa. They remember him as an esteemed colleague, and a loving, caring, and passionate friend.

"We've lost not only a gentle giant and phenomenal academic, but also a practitioner who will be immensely missed."

In Meyer's honour, the Marius Meyer Top Achievement Award for the Postgraduate Diploma in Strategic Human Resource Management was awarded to Dr Johan Groenewald.

A number of students were acknowledged during the celebration, including:

Top honours student in Industrial Psychology 2021: Bianca Viljoen

Top master's student: Lara Kelly

PhD graduate 2021: Dr Angela Marsburg



Prof Deon De Bruin acknowledges Dr Angela Marsburg, who obtained her PhD in 2021.

The Industrial Psychology Society (IPS) 2021

was recognised for the leadership role it played in representing the academic interest of students within the Department of Industrial Psychology. Members are: Telisha Voges (Chair), Karla Botha (Vice-Chair), Quinnlyn van der Merwe, Kelvin Shenje, Kelly Zackay, Tariro Mapeta, Jerisca Pillay and Eduan Goosen.

Congratulations were extended to the **psychometrists registered in 2021**. They are: Flavia Balios, Rachelle Burger, Bianca Cloete, Zahra Dollie, Ale du Toit, Andrea du Toit, Marli Goosen, Lyrese Greyvenstein, Kelsey Handbidge, Michaela Heiders, Yonda Jack, Megan Jonker, Rochelle Jordaan, Shané Kleyn, Carla Loubser, Antonette Madalane, Gertrude Mashuna, Nokulunga Maziya, Martinique Myburgh, Roxanne Neethling, Luvhani Nemanshi, Sibongile Ngomane, Corna Olivier, Tracy-Lee Olivier, Judy Page, Tamsynne Roe, Angela Sedgewick, Heidi-Louise Steijnberg, Nicole Sieberhagen, Savannah van der Heever, Sumari van Dyk, Mary-Ann Vegter, Kimberley Wain and Toinette Werth.

Further congratulations were extended to the **industrial psychologists registered in 2021**. They are: Andrea Bremert, Talita du Plessis, Nicci Esterhuizen, Carmen Green, Jana Huysamer, Liisa Kleinhans, Francois Klopper, Kaylie Kriel, Gerrit Louw, Damian Perkins, Yvonne-Louise Smit, Lisa-Mae Strydom, Sonja van der Bank, Mari van der Westhuizen, Zahn van Niekerk, Qaitse van Staden and Petro van Zyl.

LATEST NEWS



The staff members of the Department of Industrial Psychology are: (Front) Dr Billy Boonzaier, Dr Mpho Magau, Ms Rahkeenah Peters, Prof Aletta Odendaal, Ms Marietha De Wet, Ms Coreli Cillie, Mr Tendai Mariri and Dr Jacques Pienaar; (middle) Ms Michéle Boonzaier, Prof Gina Görgens, Ms Lisa Bailey, Ms Susan Goosen, Ms Adelé Kapp and Ms Pamela Fortune; (back) Dr Francois van der Bank, Prof Deon de Bruin, Ms Rolean Godfrey, Ms Avdil Lackay and Ms Nomfundo Magala. Absent were Dr Michelle Visser and Dr Samantha Adams.



Department achieves success in hybrid learning sphere

The Department of Industrial Psychology entered the field of open learning in 2022 with the introduction of the Professional Certificate in Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM).

The first iteration of the certificate (four courses) will be available until April 2023 and currently has 2 600 enrolments from across 150 regions and countries. The module "Introduction to Human Resources (HR) leadership and HR management strategies" is attracting the most interest.

According to Dr Mpho Magau, the individual responsible for the certificate in the Department, the growing number of enrolments is indicative of a need in the market from people who want to develop and improve their strategic HR competencies.

"The programme does not restrict enrolment to HR professionals only, but anyone with an interest in people management is invited to participate. The content is designed in such a manner that it provides students with practical insights on how to immediately apply acquired knowledge in their work settings. He explains why he thinks this programme is so popular.

"Traditionally, HR studies have always been restricted to the students or practitioners with the relevant working experience and appropriate qualifications. Yet anyone in a leadership role who is expected to manage people requires HR management skills. The SHRM Professional Certificate bridges this gap by equipping learners with a range of practical people management skills, whether they are early HR career professionals aspiring towards upward career mobility, middle managers seeking to adopt a more strategic approach to HR management, or executives looking to improve their knowledge in optimising human capital."

Building on the Department's PGDip in SHRM, the Professional Certificate in SHRM is an exciting developmental opportunity for any working professional.

Former students share the highs and lows of registration as IPs

Passing the HPSCA board exam and registering as an Industrial Psychologist is the culmination of a long journey that requires passion, hard work and dedication. Four successful candidates tell us about their challenges and highlights and give advice to prospective candidates.

Zahn van Niekerk, an employee in the HR Department Of independent private higher education institution Eduvos, switched to Industrial Psychology after a long career in education.

She describes her journey to registration as a long and hard, yet fulfilling.

"I met some great people along the way and experienced amazing personal and professional growth," she says,

After two years spent working as an HR Specialist at Rage Distribution, **Mari van der Westhuizen** is starting a new job as the internal Industrial Psychologist at Convergenc3, a management consulting company, in December.

She describes Industrial Psychology as a fascinating, enriching and always expanding field and states that other Industrial and Organisational Psychologists (IOPs) are fantastic people.

However, she found communication and dealing with the HPSCA very difficult.

"Personally, I also found it tough to realise that not all companies care about people – managers can be ruthless. IOPs also tend to struggle with a sense of identity – finding our true place in the business world. I do see an improvement in this area, though," she adds.

Petro van Zyl is in the first year of her PhD studies at the Graduate School of Economics and Management Sciences (GEM) at Stellenbosch University.

She describes her journey as challenging but rewarding.

"When I began my undergraduate studies, I never thought that I would progress to master's level and register as an Industrial Psychologist. I soon realised that it would be worth it to pursue this 'journey' to the end. I've grown and developed as a person whilst also advancing my professional competence."

Finding an internship isn't always easy, and eventually Petro had to accept an unpaid internship.

"Even though the knowledge and skills I acquired were invaluable, it was difficult to navigate life without an income," she says.

Lise-Mae Strydom is working as a consultant at BTS, a

global management consulting firm, with much of her attention on assessment practice as well as leadership development.

She describes her journey as exhilarating, but also overwhelming.

"After studying for six years, completing an internship in my seventh year, writing a thesis, undergoing a board exam ... the moment was big. It was so worth it, so rewarding!"

However, she found her first year of work quite challenging.

"As a student you learn the theories, and you get so excited to go out, implement them, and change the world! But reality is not like that. You are challenged, you constantly question yourself, and then you realise you actually don't know what you don't know until you understand what you did not know. It requires constant learning and growth."

They all have some advice for aspiring IOPs:

"Never stop dreaming, work hard and persist in reaching your goal – you will get there, and it will be superbly rewarding," says Zahn.

"Contact more experienced Industrial Psychologists to guide you and make sure that you understand crosscultural application in the field. IP is based on a Western perspective, which is definitely not the reality in the South African working landscape. If possible, learn an African language and be open to other cultures' religion/ spirituality, their approach to mental health, and how they deal with trauma," is Mari's advice.

"Don't lose sight of the 'end goal' and 'bigger picture'. There may be hurdles along the way but keep on persevering," encourages Petro.

Lisa-Mae advises future IOPs to be sure that Industrial and Organisational Psychology is what they enjoy and love.

"Once you know that this is your passion, commit to it and pursue it. It takes time, long hours of studying, a dissertation, and an internship, but it is a rewarding journey. Connect with someone who is a registered IOP, who can guide you, mentor you, and support you."



Lecturer earns doctoral degree at December graduation ceremony

Adoctoral degree was awarded to Francois van der Bank, a lecturer in the Department of Industrial Psychology, during the December graduation ceremony at Stellenbosch University.

The title of his thesis is "Psychological appraisal in personal engagement: the influence of mindsets"

and his study investigated the role of psychological appraisal in the development of personal engagement, focusing on goal orientations and core self-evaluation as underlying cognitions influencing how people subjectively interpret objective features in their environment.

Prof Callie Theron served as his supervisor, whilst Prof Deon de Bruin was his co-supervisor.

"I'm very relieved and grateful," Francois said after the ceremony.

"All honour to God for carrying me through this process. I hope to be able to plough back what I learnt and make a difference."



Dr Francois van der Bank in a joyous mood with his supervisors Prof Callie Theron (left) and Prof Deon de Bruin (right).

The Department of Industrial Psychology would like to wish you a safe and blessed festive season and a prosperous 2023.