

RE-INVENTING THE WHEEL

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just about where you were registered to vote in 2012.

The data is shared by people who expect other to use it. Who will get some benefit from it. In fact some of this data is not free. You actually have to pay to get access to it. For instance if you want to know the executive pay scales in a particular industry in a particular geographic region, you might have to purchase the data. Some of it is free of course, but wanna bet that the particular industry you are looking for in your area is going to demand that you pay?

The reason that prompted this article is the fact that people seem to think that if you use the internet as a resource it means that you have no knowledge. They seem to believe that you should know everything if you are in that profession. Not possible people. Let's be real. We live in a global world, and while 20 years ago changes in industry processes would take a few years before we became aware of them that is not the case today. Interesting fact for instance, until last week, I believed that all fish were cold blooded. I have since learnt otherwise. The opah, or moonfish is warm blooded, and I can bet that all the primary school teachers who do not visit the net are still teaching children that ALL fish are warm blooded.

Almost everything is dynamic. Everyday scholars and practitioners discover or discern new ways of doing things given the changing social environment. What is important to the professional is to understand the basic principles behind everything in order to be able to decide on whether or not they need to give attention to these principles within their own scope. It is not necessary for every professional to derive methods and ways of performing tasks when the internet is full of templates, processes, procedures and methods. Why invent the wheel. But it is important to know when you are to apply these, and it is important to modify them to meet your particular needs within your environment.

If for instance you are a human resource practitioner and don't know the factors that negatively influence employee performance, than you will not be able to identify the ones that exist in your organisation, and you will go online and try everything that you come across. But if you are aware that one of the promoters of low morale is ambiguous and overlapping responsibilities. You definitely will not make it a priority to see that everybody's job description is clear. This is where we have cases of *'there was a job to be done, Mr Everybody thought that Mr. Someone Else would do it, in the end Mr Nobody did it'*

The internet is a resource that smart people know they can use. But it is important to always be sure that the information that you are using is credible. It really does not do you justice to quote Wikipedia people. Wikipedia is a major library that ANYONE can place information on. It can be a starting point if all the sources have been cited. Use those sources. Here are 6 things to take into consideration when seeking the credibility of your source.

1. Has the write identified him/herself? And if it is a professional resource, does he have the credentials to have authority on the subject?
2. Date. Is the information still relevant? As I look through labour case law, I sometimes find cases that were decided in 1986. This was before the current Labour Code 1992 that we are using, and using that information to make my case might be to my disadvantage
3. Domain. .com, .co.ls, .co.uk, .org .org.ls are all domains that are readily accessible to anyone. However, .ac, .edu, .gov are reserved for schools and government. Please note that I do not mean to imply that the former are inaccurate or useless, just that they *can* be at times.
4. This is my personal peeve. Writing style. No professional will publish a paper with typos and spelling mistakes. No professional will use incorrect grammar. This should be your indicator that the paper has not been before a peer review.

Do we need to keep re-inventing the wheel? Why can't we just improve on the wheel someone else has designed, and model it for our precise situation? Facebook is only 12 years old, (I looked that up online, I did not know) There are Marketing professionals who graduated in 2000. If they don't follow the ideas of other and use Facebook for marketing their products, they might as well go home and retire.

In the interest of full disclosure, I am not an expert everything that I deal with. I rely on my colleagues, books and the internet. Unfortunately neither are you. There are new discoveries in your profession everyday that you have yet to know about. But you can have expertise in your field, implying that you know more than most. Basotho ba heso. Internet e teng for us to use. Do not criticise your colleague because he or she looked up what Enterprise Risk Management is. Just because she works in HR does not mean she knows the definition of every profession and the responsibilities that run with it. But he/ she should be able to know that you don't need an ERM at the fish and chips store, probably only after reading what it is all about online. Books are expensive Batho, and not readily available. But the computer and the internet are. (Except when ETL or VCL are acting up)

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