

What is the future of trade unions and collective bargaining in a reimagined industrial relations framework?



A global view

A future with trade union revitalization

The four future scenarios for trade unions - **marginalization, dualization, replacement** and **revitalization** - are all possible, and in fact are all happening now, sometimes in the same country, in different sectors and in different combinations. For instance,

- Dualization as a holdout against marginalization;
- Replacement as a source and inspiration for revitalization;
- Revitalization as the opening-up of dualization.

Various tools, such as foresight or scenario thinking, can be useful for trade unions in dealing with this uncertainty - to anticipate change, to explore possible futures, and enable transformative action.

Yet in this context of multiple transitions, with trade unions are faced with so many serious challenges, they have shown great resilience and a remarkable capability to revitalize themselves in innovative ways. This bodes well for the future. Strong trade unions are needed now more than ever to build a world of work founded on sustainable development that ensures decent work for all.

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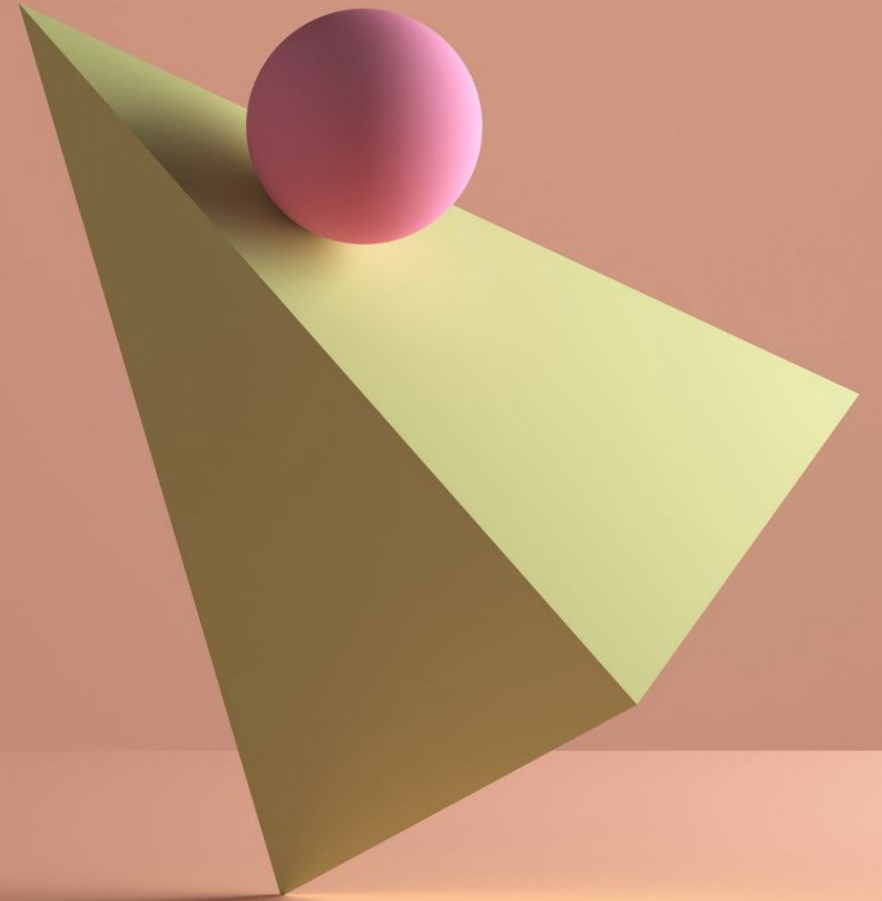
International
Labour
Organization

THE UNION MOVEMENT IS LOSING RELEVANCE IN SOUTH AFRICA

02 MAY 2023 - 05:03IMRAAN BUCCUS

With mass unemployment and decades of steady deindustrialisation, the union movement can only be far weaker than it was in the 1980s. The kinds of jobs where unions become effective at organising workers have been disappearing for years, and unions have not been successful in organising workers in new areas of work such as delivery and e-hailing drivers.

The National Union of Metalworkers of SA (Numsa), uniquely, has been able to expand into areas of work beyond its original base in the metal factories. Some unions have been able to expand beyond the base of the metal industries.



A global view



“Identify the most severe risks on a global scale over the next 10 years”

■ Economic ■ Environmental ■ Geopolitical ■ Societal ■ Technological



A South African View

POLARIZATION



Extremely divided

Edelman has identified four metrics to watch:

- 1 Economic Anxieties
- 2 Institutional Imbalance
- 3 Class Divide
- 4 Battle for Truth

Nations with fair economic outlook and high trust in institutions including China, Singapore and India are less polarized.



India



Kenya

Nigeria



Thailand



Ireland



Canada



Australia

Divisions can't be overcome



What you *used to do*
to deliver ...



What you *now need* to
deliver ...



A South African View, What it may look like, for now

Economy: SA executives fear state collapse

SA executives fear the state will collapse, while global sentiment expresses concerns over the cost-of-living crisis in the short term and the climate crisis in the long term. This is according to the 2023 Executive Opinion Survey (EOS) in the World Economic Forum's (WEF) Global Risk Report, which uses data from over 12 000 business leaders from 121 countries to determine the biggest risks posed in specific countries for the next two years. **BusinessTech** reports the five biggest fears of SA executives who took part in the EOS include the following: State collapse; debt crisis; collapse of services and public infrastructure; cost-of-living crisis; and employment and livelihood crisis. SA is only one of three countries to have a state collapse as the biggest perceived risk facing the country – Peru – which is currently in the midst of deadly anti-government protests – and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Financial



Highest concern

Descending order

State collapse

Debt crisis

Collapse of
services

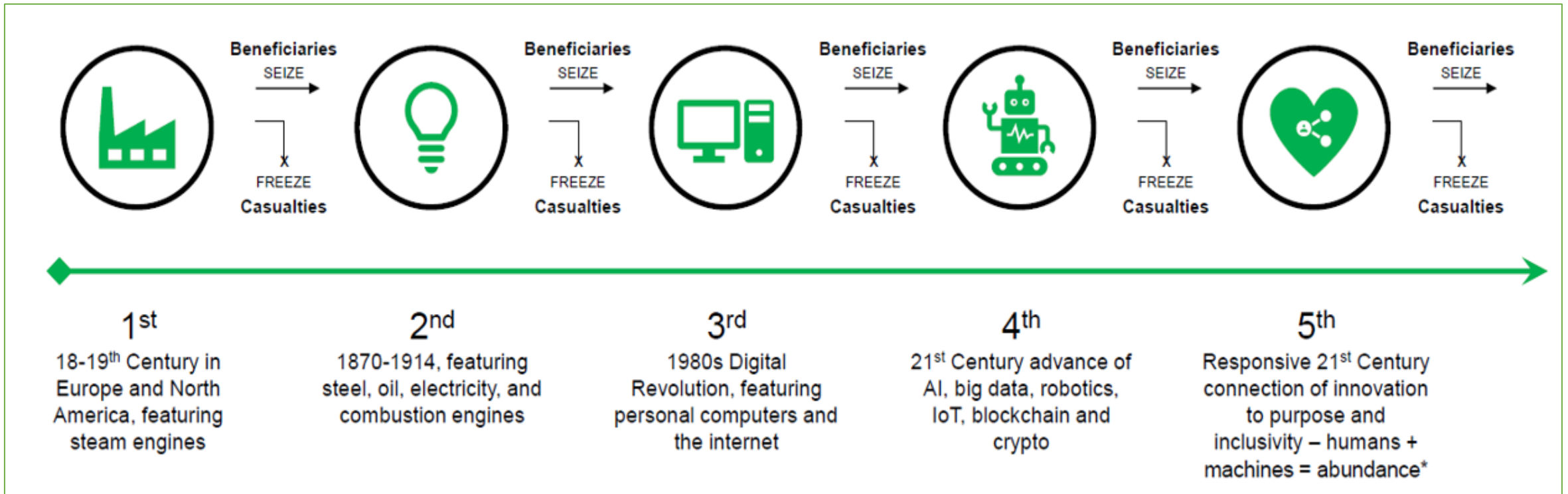
Infrastructure

Cost of living

Employment
crisis



Social partners need to make a decision to be a beneficiary of change



A South African View, starting with rebuilding trust



Lencioni's Five Dysfunctions

Absence of Trust

An absence of trust is the most severe dysfunction. Without trust, productive work and growth are almost impossible. Social partners spend time and energy protecting themselves or undermining each other, instead of focusing on the work and goals of the collective.

By contrast, when team members trust one another, they're willing to be open and "vulnerable" with the group. They trust that no one will attack them maliciously, which means that they can spend their time and energy on the work at hand.

Team members show a lack of trust when they:

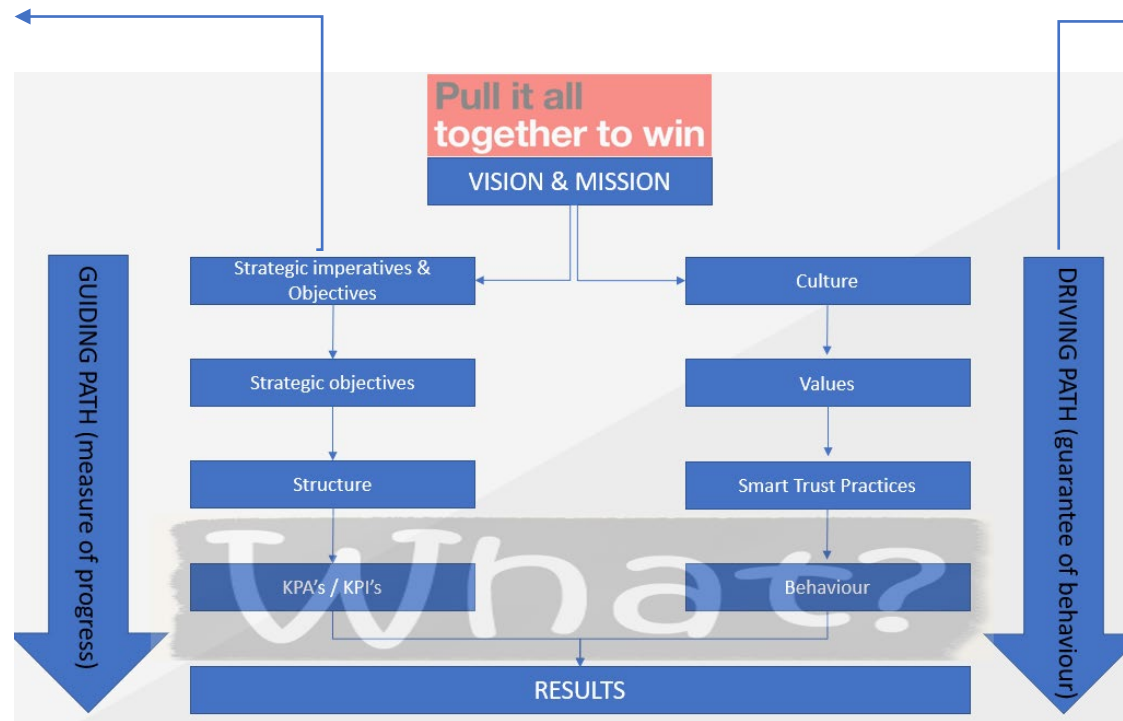
- Hold grudges.
- Don't ask for help, or don't give feedback.
- Hide their mistakes or weaknesses.
- Find ways to avoid spending time together.

A South African View

Having a clear strategy and a culture of collaboration

Key matters on the agenda

- Economic growth
- Wage inequality
- Service delivery (broad)
- Transformation
- Digitisation
- New workforce models
- Unemployment
- New labour laws coming
- Illegal conduct and corruption
- Generations at the workplace
- and the like.

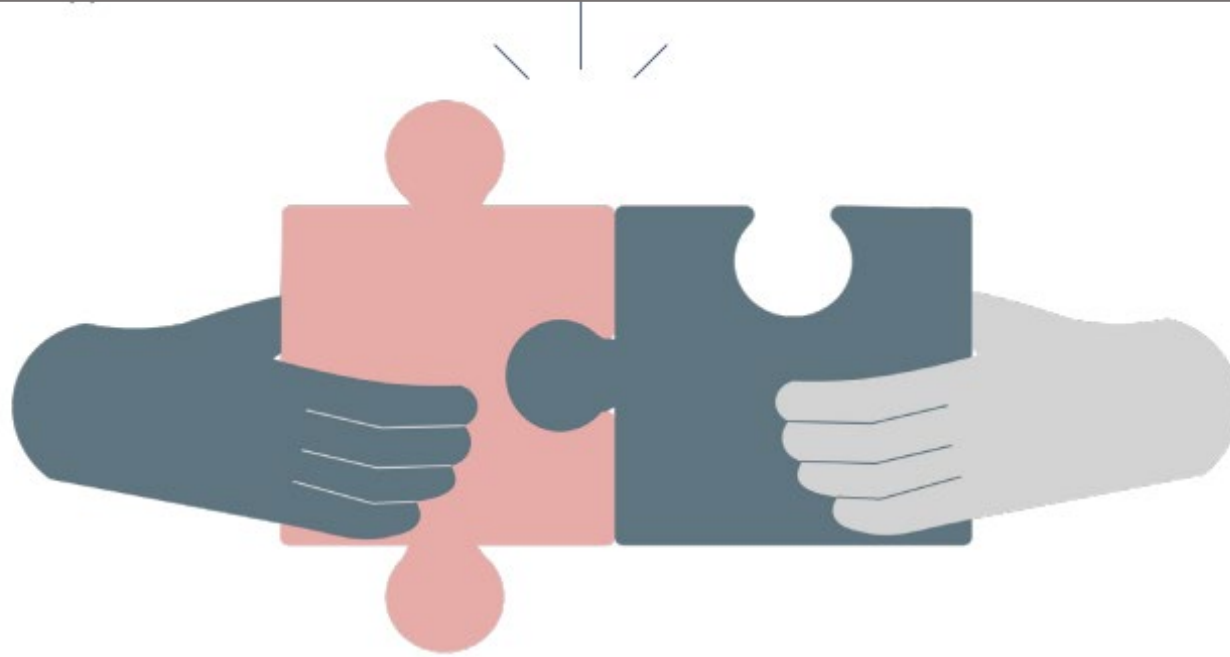


Key matters on relationships

- Leading by taking care of people
- Managing by taking control
- Relationship-building
- Constructive conflict
- Play the ball, not the person
- Display character
- Adapt to change

A South African View

Possible approach, because having laws and national policies will not generate the results alone, we need to connect and focus on the task



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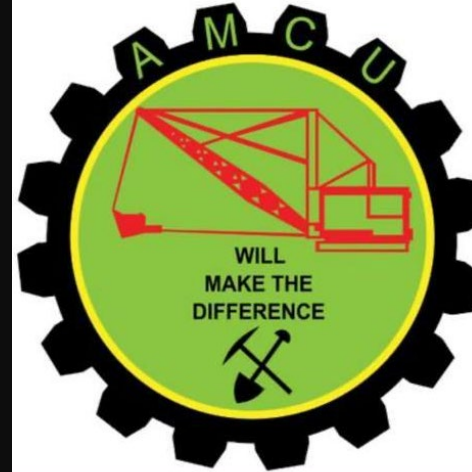
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Conclusion

- Discovery Vitality
- Too much division and litigation
- Not enough creative thinking around retrenchments
- Virtually no creative thinking around dispute resolution
- There is work to be done between multi-year agreements
- Compulsory arbitration

BREAKING NEWS: The Labour Appeal Court delivered a judgment today declaring that the appointment of Joseph Mathunjwa as AMCU President was lawful.



Discovery
Vitality



Thank you

Jonathan Goldberg, inter alia

- ❑ NEDLAC LMC Convenor for Business
- ❑ Ministerial appointment to NMW Commission
- ❑ Member of the Employment Services Board
- ❑ Chairman of Global Business Solutions

johnny@globalbusiness.co.za

083 281 9571