

**OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL:
TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

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“Change Management for the TVET Leadership Summit”

Programme Director, Adv. Malunga

President, Mr. Kekana, SG, Dr Mothapo, Chairperson, Mr. Ndlela and
entire leadership of SAPCO

College Principals

SAPCO CEO and staff

President and Leadership of TVECGC

Chairpersons and Senior Executives of SETAs

Partners and stakeholders in the post-school education and training
sector

Dr Mukovhe Masutha, CER

Distinguished guests

Ladies and gentlemen

Good morning.

Thank you for the opportunity to address this important TVET Leadership
Summit on the subject of Change Management for TVET Transformation.
I wish to express appreciation to SAPCO for convening this leadership

platform at a time when the sector is being called upon not merely to manage continuity, but to lead purposeful and systemic transformation.

We meet at a moment when the TVET sector is under increasing pressure to respond to the needs of a changing economy, a changing labour market, changing technologies, and changing expectations from our communities, our students, and our government. Change, therefore, is no longer optional. It is not a future discussion. It is a present governance and leadership responsibility.

The central question before us is not whether change will come. The question is whether we, as leaders of the TVET sector, are prepared to shape it deliberately, manage it responsibly, and institutionalise it sustainably.

Transformation in the TVET sector must be understood as more than a slogan. It is not about cosmetic adjustments. It is about changing the way our institutions function, the way they govern, the way they teach, the way they support students, the way they engage industry, and the way they account for public value.

In practical terms, transformation requires us to confront several realities.

First, we must acknowledge that the sector is moving away from outdated models of programme delivery toward a system that is more responsive to occupational demand, labour market needs, and local economic realities. This requires colleges to adapt their programme mix, strengthen curriculum responsiveness, improve lecturer capability, and

deepen workplace-based learning partnerships. These are not technical adjustments alone. They require a shift in institutional mindset.

Second, change management in the TVET environment must address the transition from a compliance culture to a performance and outcomes culture. For too long, success in some parts of the system has been measured only by administrative activity. But the real test of the sector is whether students complete, whether they gain meaningful skills, whether they are employable, whether they become entrepreneurs, and whether colleges contribute to local development.

Third, transformation requires stronger and more stable governance. No institution can transform effectively where there is instability in leadership, role confusion in governance structures, weak accountability, or inconsistent implementation. Change management is therefore not only about strategy documents. It is about discipline, clarity of roles, consequence management, and the courage to take decisions in the best interest of institutions and students.

Fourth, we must recognise that change often creates discomfort. It challenges established habits, long-standing assumptions, and sometimes entrenched interests. That is why change management must be intentional. It must be communicated clearly. It must be led from the top. It must be supported by capacity building. And it must be anchored in a shared vision of the future of TVET.

For college leaders, this means a number of things.

It means being honest about institutional weaknesses, whether in finance, governance, infrastructure, student support, data systems, or academic performance.

It means building management teams that are agile, ethical, and capable of implementation.

It means bringing lecturers, support staff, students, councils, unions, and partners into the change journey so that transformation is not seen as something imposed, but as something owned.

It means using evidence to drive decisions, rather than assumptions.

And it means understanding that successful change is not achieved through one workshop, one circular, or one speech. It is achieved through sustained leadership practice.

The TVET college of the future must be agile, industry-connected, digitally enabled, student-centred, and development-oriented. But to move toward that future, we need leaders who can manage transition with maturity and strategic discipline.

This is why change management in our sector must focus on at least **five** areas.

The **first** is vision and strategic alignment. Institutions must understand where the sector is going and why. Without a shared strategic direction, resistance will always fill the vacuum.

The **second** is people and culture. Policies do not implement themselves. Transformation happens through people. If college leaders

do not invest in staff development, communication, institutional trust, and leadership renewal, change will remain superficial.

The **third** is systems and capability. We cannot speak of transformation while old systems continue to undermine delivery. Institutions need stronger planning systems, credible data, better financial controls, reliable student administration, and effective monitoring mechanisms.

The **fourth** is partnerships and external responsiveness. Colleges do not exist in isolation. Change management must enable institutions to build stronger relationships with SETAs, employers, municipalities, community formations, and other stakeholders. A transformed TVET college must be visibly connected to the development priorities of its district, province, and country.

The **fifth** is sustainability and accountability. Every change initiative must be linked to measurable outcomes, responsible leadership, timelines, and review mechanisms. Transformation without accountability becomes rhetoric.

Colleagues,

The challenge before us is to ensure that change management is not reduced to a reactive response to crisis. It must become a standing capability of the TVET sector. In other words, our institutions must not only survive change; they must learn how to lead it.

That calls for a new leadership posture. A posture that is strategic, ethical, responsive, and developmental. A posture that understands that leadership in TVET is not about preserving comfort zones, but about building institutions that can serve future generations.

As public leaders, we must also remember that transformation is inseparable from the constitutional and developmental mandate of the state. TVET colleges are not peripheral institutions. They are central to skills development, economic inclusion, social mobility, youth empowerment, and national reconstruction. If we are serious about building a capable state and an inclusive economy, then we must be equally serious about managing change in the TVET system.

Let us therefore approach this discussion not as an abstract management concept, but as a practical leadership imperative. Let us ask ourselves tough questions:

Are our institutions truly prepared for transformation?

Are our systems aligned to the future we speak about?

Are we leading change, or merely reacting to it?

Are we building colleges that are resilient, credible, and responsive?

These are the questions that should guide us.

In conclusion, change management for TVET transformation requires courage, clarity, collaboration, and consistency. It requires leaders who

can balance stability with innovation, consultation with decisiveness, and policy intent with operational execution.

The future of TVET will not be determined by external pressure alone. It will be determined by the quality of leadership within the sector.

Let us therefore commit ourselves to leading this change with integrity, with vision, and with a firm sense of public purpose.

I thank you.