



## **NEGOTIATION SKILLS**

### **COURSE INSTRUCTION:**

This course, based on best practice negotiation training developed at the Program On Negotiation (PON) at Harvard University, has been designed to assist current and future business leaders to understand the fundamental principles that underpin the different types of negotiation; become more creative in developing alternatives and dealing with substance and relational problems in manners that separate the parties from the issues at hand; understand the tactics and ploys often used by negotiators and develop strategies to respond to such tactics and ploys; become better equipped at applying the universal principles of persuasion abstracted from over the fifty years of dedicated research by leading social scientists such as Robert Cialdini; and develop the confidence to apply principled negotiation in formal and informal interactions inside and outside organizations. The training materials provide a structured summary of the course contents, together with valuable information on other topics relevant to successful negotiation. Students will be required to apply their acquired insights and knowledge during in-class simulations, case studies, and in completing a negotiation assignment.

### **METHOD:**

The course is inter-active, involving lectures, experiential learning by virtue of case studies and debriefings, video presentations and simulations.

### **PROFESSOR:**

Prof. David Venter

Professor David Venter was born in Kokstad in the then East Griqualand, where he completed his first 10 school years. After matriculating from the Uppington High School he enrolled at The University of Stellenbosch where he obtained his B.A. Hons., B.Ed. and M.A. (Psychology) degrees cum laude. After practicing psychology for fifteen years, during which time he was head of a number of large school clinics and advanced to the position of Deputy Superintendent of Psychological Services in the then Cape Province, he joined the public service where he, inter alia, was responsible for the design and establishment of the largest opinion polling operation ever in South Africa. The results of the polls he



conducted between 1985 and 1994 were of crucial importance in convincing the then government and its support base to accept a negotiated, peaceful transition to democracy. Despite not having had a civil service career prior to his appointment in 1986, he rapidly advanced through the senior managerial ranks, becoming Director-General of the then South African Communication Service in 1992. As head of a service from that had a very dubious past, he radically transformed its propagandistic disposition and output, converting it into a fully representative institution that unashamedly condemned the policies of apartheid and vigorously supported a new democratic future for our country. During the past ten years he has trained hundreds of negotiators on behalf of many of the foremost South African and multi-national companies, public sector bodies and government departments. In addition, he developed a specialised negotiation training course for shop stewards in the South African Police Service, training 1 000 shop stewards between October and December 2002 to better equip them to more effectively perform their union responsibilities, and in 2005 trained some 50 Cape Town Councillors in Negotiation, Conflict Dispute Resolution and positive ways of handling ongoing change.

Since resigning as Director-General, he has regularly presented courses on negotiation to post graduate students at the business schools of the universities of Pretoria, Witwatersrand, Vlerick Leuven Gent, Stellenbosch and Dublin. Due to the very positive responses to his lectures on negotiation and conflict dispute resolution, the Vlerick Leuven Gent Management School appointed him as Professor in Organizational Behaviour and Conflict Dispute Resolution in 2005; recently also adding the Programme Management Directorship for the International Full-time MBA to his responsibilities. In addition to his teaching assignment at the Vlerick Management School, he also teaches at the Judge Business School, Cambridge University and the Business School of the University of Stellenbosch.