

GIBS: Pronunciation: /ˈbɪznɪs/noun [mass noun]

1. An occupation, profession, or trade. **2.** The purchase and sale of goods in an attempt to make a profit. **3.** Volume of trade; patronage: *Most of the store's **business** comes from local families.* **4.** A person, partnership, or corporation engaged in commerce, manufacturing, or a service; profit-seeking enterprise or concern. **5.** A building or site where commercial work is carried on, as a factory, store, or office; place of work: *His **business** is on the corner of Melville and Fricker Roads.* **6.** That with which a person is principally and seriously concerned: *Words are a writer's **business**.* **7.** Something with which a person is rightfully concerned: *What they are doing is none of my **business**.* **8.** Affair; project: *We were exasperated by the whole **business**.* **9.** An assignment or task; chore: *It's your **business** to wash the dishes now.* **10.** Also called piece of **business**, stage **business**. **11.** Of, noting, or pertaining to **business**, its organisation, or its procedures. **12.** Containing,

suitable for, or welcoming **business** or commerce: *Johannesburg is a good **business** town.* **13.** **Business** is **business**, profit has precedence over personal considerations: *He is reluctant to fire his friend, but **business** is **business**.* **14.** Get down to **business**, to apply oneself to serious matters; concentrate on work: *They finally got down to **business** and signed the contract.* **15.** Give someone the **business**, informal. **16.** Have no **business**, to have no right: *You have no **business** coming into this house.* **17.** Mean **business**, to propose to take action or be serious in intent; be in earnest: *By the fire in his eye we knew that he meant **business**.* Origin: Old English *bisignis* 'anxiety', -ness; the sense 'state of being busy' was used from Middle English down to the 18th century, but is now differentiated as *busyness*. The use 'appointed task' dates from late Middle English, and from it all the other current senses have developed.

Over the years GIBS has become known as the 'business school for business'. Given our objective to significantly improve the competitive performance of individuals and organisations through business education, we would simply say - **GIBS MEANS BUSINESS.**



Employee salary structures and remuneration within the public sector can be seen as competitive with jobs in the private sector. Through the recent salary adjustments, government has taken account of all its spending priorities, including social development, addressing crime issues, infrastructure investment and better service delivery for communities in pursuit of a better life for all. In line with these goals, government has come up with a comprehensive remuneration package for employees that is prudent and paves the way for simultaneously improving service delivery and public service performance.

The State's contribution to the GEPF is set at 13% for civil servants and in return employees contribute 7,5% of their monthly salary to the GEPF.

- Non-pensionable cash allowance: This is any remaining amount in the flexible portion. The total amount structured for these allowances/benefits must equal the amount available in the flexible portion of the package.

Pension benefits:

All public service employees employed on a permanent basis are required to become members of the GEPF. The State's contribution to the GEPF is set at 13% for civil servants and in return, employees contribute 7,5% of their monthly salary to the GEPF. The fund provides benefits on retirement, resignation, death or discharge.

The Department of Public Service and Administration has developed a booklet on salaries and benefits in the Public Service, which assists you in structuring your benefits to suit your needs best. By doing this, you optimise your salary and benefits to the fullest.

Retirement:

The retirement age is 60 years or unless otherwise stipulated. Normal retirees with less than 10 years' pensionable service receive a lump sum cash benefit or gratuity equal to the members' accrual interest in the fund. Retirees with 10 or more years of pensionable years of service, receive a gratuity and a monthly pension or annuity.

The inclusive remuneration package per employee consists of a basic salary, the State's contribution to the Government Employees Pension Fund (GEPF) and a flexible portion. The basic salary for the Senior Management Service (SMS) on levels 13 to 16 consists of 60% of the inclusive flexible remuneration package. Employees on levels 11 and 12 or Medium Management Service (MMS) have a choice between, 75/76 (set 1) or 70 (set 2). The remaining portion may be structured by the employee as he or she chooses.

Death after retirement:

Retirement annuities are guaranteed for five years after an employee's retirement. If an employee dies within this period, the spouse or beneficiaries will receive the balance of the five-year annuity payments, excluding the annual supplement in a cash lump sum. The spouse will receive annuity equal to 50% or 75% of the deceased annuity. An employee has the option of increasing the spouse's annuity entitlements from 50% to 75% by reducing the gratuity or annuity.

Employee remuneration

By Samona Murugan

The flexible portion may be structured as follows:

- A motor-car allowance for SMS employees only, to a maximum amount of 25% of the total package per year. MMS employees are allowed to structure the flexible portion for a motor-vehicle allowance.
- A service bonus or 13th cheque: This is structured as a once-off non-pensionable bonus paid to employees in the month of birth.
- Medical assistance: The State provides medical assistance, known as the Government Employees Medical Scheme (Gems). The State pays 75% of the employee's total monthly contribution on any selected option from Gems.
- Housing allowance: SMS employees are able to decide on an amount within the flexible portion limitations. MMS employees receive a monthly stipend of R500 towards a home they own or rent, provided that he or she has a valid rental contract.

Funeral benefits:

The fund provides funeral benefits on a death of a spouse and eligible children as follows:

- R7 500 is payable at the death of an employee
- R7 500 is payable at the death of a pensioner or his/her spouse whose annuity commenced on or after 1 December.

Ill-health benefits:

A GEPF member may be discharged at any age as a result of medical reasons. Members with less than 10 years of pensionable service, will only receive a lump sum cash benefit.

A member with 10 years or more pensionable service, will receive a lump sum and annuity, calculated at a percentage of the members final salary within his or her period of service.

A member with more than 10 years is also paid an annual supplement amount.

**For further information on benefits, call the GEPF on 012 319 1000 or visit www.gepf.gov.za
For information on GEMS, call 0860 004367 or visit www.gems.gov.za**

Partly the lack of a robust debate on the possibility of creating a new public service culture and cadre. Regrettably, this vacuum creates an impression that the promise of creating public-service excellence remains a distant possibility when in fact mounting evidence points to the contrary.

On several occasions before and after the general elections, President Jacob Zuma has instructed: "We need public servants who will always uphold the interests of the people they are employed to serve ... we want to build an administration that knows where people live, which knows what they think, and which acts fast, efficiently and effectively on the issues they raise." He asked further: "... how will we make the Public Service more caring, responsible, effective and interactive?"

To bolster the thesis that what the President has called for is achievable in the short- to medium-term, I will explore the features of public service excellence with "public service mandarins" at the helm, concluding by positing that possibilities abound to achieve this goal given the political milieu and direction, the public agency for a professional and accountable public service, as well as emerging professional development opportunities available to senior managers in government.

This means they ought to see their work without the lenses and domain of daily routine and the meeting of targets. Public-service mandarins should constantly worry about why poverty and inequality persist; and why our rates of growth and social cohesion perform unspectacularly when at political level, a mandate, resources and support are provided to aid efforts to alter these challenges.

They should constantly ask "what can we do to achieve even better outcomes?" instead of being satisfied with the cliché – "there is improvement."

At the very least, a professional public service that the President has called for should demonstrate the following virtues (in no particular order):

Political competence: this means full appreciation of the mandate of the governing party as well as the country's eminent objectives. Serving is always pleasurable when one comprehends the genesis, object and expected outcomes of such policy priorities as improved education and health standards, creating of decent work, accelerating rural development as well as fighting crime and corruption. The desire to build a developmental state must be embraced by the Public Service as a call to action and not just a grand intellectual project.

This is not blind loyalty as some who doubt the mandating party's intentions have observed. Unfortunately many people have ignored the fact that in *Ready to Govern*, the mandating party actually committed to deploying competent people to the Public Service.

Can the Public Service

MANDARINS

By Busani Ngcaweni

raise their hands?

What should inspire these mandarins (an advanced detachment of public servants) is a conviction that public service is a revolutionary practice; a vocation of not only interpreting problems facing society and finding tranquilizers for such. They are a cadre that envisions their mandate beyond mundane implementation of strategic plans and annual programmes. Society expects them to "push the envelope" in a manner that permanently alters the socio-political economy and propels the nation into a greater development trajectory.

In all these cases, the qualifying criterion is competence and a commitment to the ideals of reconstruction and development that is, building a caring, non-racial, non-sexist, democratic and prosperous South Africa.

Technical competence: this talks to the ideal of employing one's technical skills to the extent that the service we provide is according to specification and is delivered on time and on budget. There are many technically competent people in the Public Service. We must aspire to efficiently use their skills in the right positions and under enabling conditions.

They also require management since many of them under-serve because of poor management. The Public Service now pays better with, among other things, the introduction of occupation-specific dispensation, so there is no excuse for poor performance.

In my limited time in government, I have observed that here we have some of the best brains in the land. The challenge is often application. This immediately cheats the public of a timely and quality service. In the long term, these colleagues rob themselves from learning and professional development opportunities. Hence, we have doctors who ill-prescribe, quantity surveyors who overspend and accountants who underbudget. So, technical competence and professional excellence are the most vital virtues all public servants should strive for. The bulk of government training budget should go to technical training.

Discipline, commitment and excellence are qualities that the mandarins must aspire for and personify. This requires us to exercise diligence in the application of public resources (money, time, infrastructure etc.) and striving for superior outcomes of the work we do. Such basics as teachers being at school on time teaching will go a long way in improving the quality of life of all South Africans.

It is a pity that a culture of entitlement among us is often divorced from the culture and aspirations of discipline and excellence. We often accommodate mediocrity without necessarily counting its social and material costs to the nation. Besides, middle and senior management service pay is now nearly on par, if not better, with comparable positions in the private sector. So the expectation of the "protestant ethic" is not unreasonable. Let's do what we're paid to do!

Trust, honesty and integrity are the other important virtues of the Public Service mandarins. We must be truthful to our work, taking into account the mission, vision and mandate of the employer – the State. Trustworthy people act honestly and with integrity. They are honest with themselves (they know what they can and cannot do and therefore seek necessary remedies) and in their dealings with others.

Finally, and especially to those among us fast-becoming common denominators in government corridors, we should serve with humility and be self-critical. We hold no monopoly over the answer to the question: "how to do things in government?" If we did, society will be far ahead!

Our vantage point is that the State has invested in us and so we should humbly pay our dues through excellence and efficiency. We must avoid what one Duke University public values professor call "delusions of grandeur and delusions of adequacy", which can be so pervasive among those who declare: "I've been here for too long so I know what I am doing". This contradicts a natural phenomenon of the continuity of change. Examples abound of disciplined, productive and humble public servants who go beyond the call of duty. Conscientious observers of the evolution of the South



Busani Ngcaweni

African Public Service can affirm this. There is therefore a firm foundation from which generations of public service mandarins can flourish.

Government is rolling out measures to capacitate the Public Service. There are all sorts of training programmes on offer. The culture of accountability is being emphasised. The work and deliverables of each department are being sharpened. There are deliberate attempts to build a professional civil service insulated from the after-shocks of political cycles. The service is expanding, opening up career- advancement opportunities for many. There are incentives such as rural and occupational specific allowances.

Under this political ecology and a commitment to build a democratic developmental state, a platform is created for the mandarins to raise their hands higher. Therefore, the narrative of equating public service with corruption, laziness, dishonesty and incompetence will be changed by the manner in which we conduct ourselves, execute our tasks and strive for continuous improvement. The social compact regulating our relationship with the public requires that, at all material times, we should act ethically, professionally, consistently and diligently.

The majority of public servants don't do corruption because they know it is morally, politically, economically and culturally distasteful. With the hope of inspiring colleagues and bringing intellectual credence to this project, let me end with food for thought from a Cuban revolutionary, Manuel Barbarroja Pineiro who challenged public officials to act differently:

"Let us increase our vigilance against complacency and arrogance – which may appear like weeds in our work and, if we don't uproot them in time, wind up by invading everything. Let us oppose them with revolutionary unpretentiousness ... Let us oppose this with the careful administration of resources, systemisation, planning, and the most intelligent use of all human and technical resources we have."

Can public service mandarins raise their hands?

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