



**T**his month, South Africa and the world will celebrate the birthday of one of the founding fathers of our democracy: Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela.

At this time, it is befitting to reflect on what Madiba, through his words and actions, has taught us. This living legend means many things to many people. To the formerly oppressed, he is our liberator and to his beloved movement, the African National Congress, he is one of a collective and a great leader in his own right.

To South Africans in general, he is the great reconciler, unifier and nation-builder who, through his leadership and vision, pulled our country back from the brink of a precipice in the early 1990s to create an inclusive nationalism founded on universalist values. To the world at large, he remains an icon and a symbol of great statesmanship. And of course, let us not forget that to his family he is a father, a grandfather and a great grandfather. These are the many sides of the man.

But as managers in the Public Service, we ought to ask ourselves the questions: What does Nelson Mandela mean for us? How do we live his values as we serve the public?

Madiba, during his active years in public life, displayed a caring and burden-bearing attitude towards others. Many a story abound about how he showed personal interest in the well-being of those who either worked with or for him – the Cabinet Minister whose wife had just given birth, the cajoling of his former deputy Thabo Mbeki to go on leave because he was overworking himself, the unannounced personal visit to boxer Baby Jake Matlala after he had won a match in the United States, the children's Christmas parties he hosted at his home in Qunu. There are many such acts attributed to him.

From these we learn that Madiba could relate to others. As senior public managers, we would be carrying his legacy forward if we could relate to and show an interest in those citizens that we serve. It is a blight on the legacy of the founding President of a democratic administration when as public service managers and civil servants in general we treat those who need service from government as a nuisance who must be dismissed as quickly as possible. That attitude is certainly not part of the bequest we inherited from Madiba.

Another aspect of his legacy that we can learn from as senior managers is his ability to think. One major flaw connected with much of the Public Service is that too many senior managers have too little time to think. It seems typical of senior managers to make knee-jerk decisions based on gut-level feelings or tradition about how certain things should be done.

Madiba came from a generation who had cultivated the skill of observation, fact-gathering, reflection, reasoning and judgement to arrive at a solution that advanced the cause of the struggle. When the time came for Madiba and his generation to change the course of the struggle, they did not hesitate. However, that was preceded by intense reflection and reasoning. The same approach can be adopted by senior managers to advance the cause of this Administration.

In conclusion, as we honour and celebrate the legacy of Madiba this month by volunteering 67 minutes of our time in acts of service and kindness, may we be inspired to do more to live his values within the Public Service.

  
Ortm Gillins Chabane

Minister for Performance, Monitoring, Evaluation and Administration

# Let's do it the **Mandela way**

**T**he celebration of Mandela Day on 18 July, gives us as public sector managers an opportunity to not only volunteer our 67 minutes in community service but to reflect deeply on what the man symbolises.

For us, Mandela should symbolise change. In his youthfulness, he and the likes of Walter Sisulu, Oliver Tambo, Anton Lembede and Ashley Mda were part of a group of young intellectuals who articulated the need for change within their organisation – the African National Congress (ANC) – and critiqued its policies in a desire to speed up the liberation of the oppressed. They became the driving force of that process and transformed the ANC from the declining organisation it had become into a vibrant one.

Again, when it had become necessary to review the armed struggle and consider negotiations with the apartheid government as an option, it was Mandela and his generation who first mooted the idea. The results are there for all to see.

But what are the lessons for us? As public sector managers, we should not be afraid to initiate and be the driving force for change. It took those within the ANC – Mandela and his colleagues – to change the ANC. One submits that the Public Service – about which there are a number of complaints – will not change unless that change is initiated and led by public servants themselves.

Today, we face a different struggle – the struggle to defeat poverty and deliver quality services to all South Africans. The passion that drove Madiba and his colleagues in the 1940s to critique their organisation's policies should be emulated by today's public sector managers as they critically assess what is wrong with the way we do things as government and how we can improve service delivery.

Another lesson we as managers can learn from Mandela is his ability to provide a clear mental image of the future – what in one word is a vision. That vision was well captured in his words during the Rivonia Trial when he said:

*During my lifetime I have dedicated myself to the struggle of the African people. I have fought against white domination, and I have fought against black domination. I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal which I hope to live for and achieve. But, if needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die.*

We have devoted quite a number of pages in this edition to reflect on Madiba and his legacy. We hope that these will inspire us to graduate into doing things the Mandela way.

In "Conversations with Leaders", we feature an interview with Minister Trevor Manuel on the diagnostic report recently released by the National Planning Commission. It is our view that public sector managers are going to play a critical role in resolving the many challenges outlined in the report. Their understanding of the report is therefore very important.

We also have an interview with Gautrain Chief Executive Officer, Jack van der Merwe. The Gautrain is a partnership between the Gauteng Provincial Government and local and international partners. It is the biggest public-private partnership (PPPs) in Africa and has delivered a modern transport network that our country should be proud of. The sad thing is that when such projects are delivered, very little is acknowledged about the role of government in making these happen. *Public Sector Manager* will not underplay the role of government in PPPs. Watch this space.

**Enjoy the read!**



**Jimmy Manyi**

**GCIS: CEO  
Cabinet Spokesperson**



*As public sector managers, we should not be afraid to initiate and be the driving force for change.*



**Good work overall**

**A**s a civil servant, it fills me with pride to see such a magazine produced for us by a department like the Government Communication and Information System. The magazine keeps us up to date about what is happening in our sector.

I would like, though, to see more of a balance between national and provincial news/features. Currently, I see a lot of bias towards national stories, though in the edition which had President Jacob Zuma there was a fair amount of stories reflecting the provinces.

Whilst I enjoyed the latest edition, with Minister Gigaba on the cover, there was a bit of an overkill of youth stories though I am prepared to give an allowance seeing that June is Youth Month.

Otherwise keep up the good work.

*Johnny Buthelezi  
Pietermaritzburg*

do make an effort to reflect our part of the world in the magazine. Otherwise it could create the impression that it is meant only for public servants who work in provinces that are run by the ANC, which I am sure it is not the case.

*Candice Pieterse  
Cape Town*

**Editor's reply:** *The magazine is meant for all senior managers in the public sector, irrespective of the province in which they reside or work. Your point about doing provincial launches is well taken and we will consider it.*

**More climate change articles please**

South Africa will later this year be hosting the conference on climate change. Can I suggest that you consider a series of articles on this subject leading up to the conference.

Not many public servants, including senior managers, know about this important subject. One wonders what they tell their friends and families when they ask them what "this COP17" is that is coming to South Africa.

But more than that, isn't it about time we promote the concept of a "green government"? The amount of paper we churn out as government and the emissions from government's car fleet that is environmentally unfriendly could make a difference if we were to be more sensitive about the environment.

I have seen water pipes and taps leaking and lights left on in many government buildings. Surely, we cannot "speak green" as government while our actions point to the contrary. We have to lead by example.

*– Haley Claasen  
Cape Town*

# We hear your views!

**Remember to include all provinces**

I bumped into your magazine by chance. It does not seem to be distributed among public servants here in the Western Cape. Would you consider doing a launch of the magazine for public servants here in the Western Cape?

Also, I could not but notice the absence of Western Cape-based stories in the magazine. Is this deliberate? Please

*Please continue to help us make each issue better than the last one by writing to the Editor, e-mail: [Vusi.Mona@gcis.gov.za](mailto:Vusi.Mona@gcis.gov.za). Don't forget to include your name and the city, town or village where you live.*