

Wholesale & Retail LEADERSHIP CHAIR

PRESS RELEASE

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EE 'NUMBERS GAME' HAMPERS TALENT MANAGEMENT

A 'numbers' approach to employment equity (EE) is hampering the development of talent in the retail sector. This is one of the findings in a research report titled 'Interventions to Achieve Employment Equity Objectives in the Wholesale & Retail Sector'.

In their report, researchers Dr Leon Roman and Professor Roger Mason noted that many companies in the retail sector were struggling to meet EE requirements laid down in the Employment Equity Amendment Act of 2013. The study used questionnaire surveys, in-depth interviews, case studies, focus groups and secondary data.

- 15% of respondents said they had difficulty in compiling or completing EE reports
- 42% found it is difficult to define 'suitably qualified' persons
- 42% claimed that they would have difficulty in filling positions if they used the prescribed demographic profile (regional and national) in their EE planning
- 52% reported the economy had a definite bearing on implementation

One of the effects of this was that many companies focused on meeting targets rather than looking at the bigger talent management picture.

- 82% reported not having a formal talent management system in place
- 88% said they had not rolled out any change or diversity management programmes

Said Roman: "Employment equity should not be about hiring or promoting unqualified candidates, or having organisations suffer undue hardship. Rather, it is about taking steps to ensure that competent designated group members are hired, promoted and retained equitably. This is more important than achieving numerical goals."

Among the report's chief recommendations is for companies to adopt a career management model with clearly defined competency levels (identifying skills, abilities and behaviour needed to perform effectively) to help attract, develop, motivate and retain talent in a transparent way.

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