

# Are “Soft Skills” another demand on RM professionals or an opportunity?

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Selamat Datang!  
Welcome!



# Introductions

- Background
- MSc
- Research in Malaria,  
Food security
- Management of a service  
laboratory  
(DNA sequencing)



# New Beginnings

Research Management

Wits Commercial Enterprise

16 years

Pre and Post Award activities

As of April 2020 achieved  
IPCR Professional recognition  
as Research Management  
Professional (RMP)



# Soft skills:- Set of personal attributes, traits, and abilities

Soft skills are essential for building strong relationships, collaborating with others, and navigating diverse situations successfully.



They complement technical or hard skills  
Essential to personal and professional development.

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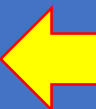
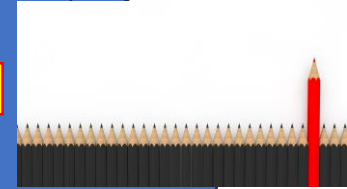
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# Application of Soft Skills in our Institutional Environments



## Benefits

- Agile response to funder calls
- Institutional policy requirements met
- Dissemination of Funder requirements
- Implementation of funder requirements
- Enhanced research activity and facilitation of requirements





## Hiroshima Statement

Essential Practice of Research Management and Administration

*The International Network of Research Management Societies (INORMS) enables interactions, sharing of good practice, and joint activities between the member societies worldwide, irrespective of their national political situation, to the benefit of their individual memberships. We all face similar challenges and aspire to a common goal: to improve our local, national, and global research landscapes. For this, we need a set of common principles, which are described in this Statement.*

### Principles and Responsibilities

1. **Collegiate:** RMAs work in partnership with researchers and other professionals to add value to the research enterprise. They share information and best practice among the research community.
2. **Inclusive:** RMAs value the diversity of individuals, skills, and experiences in their profession and support a culture which embraces equity, fairness and inclusivity.
3. **Professional:** RMAs have a responsibility to develop their knowledge and skills, and to mentor and train future RMA professionals and researchers.
4. **Innovative:** RMAs should be innovative, responsive and resilient to operate in a rapidly changing research environment.
5. **Accountable:** RMAs should be aware of the external regulatory environment and should ensure effective policies and procedures are in place to support best practice and integrity in research.

<https://inorms.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/hiroshima-statement-finalized.pdf>

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# Universal Application of Soft Skills in RM



- Language
  - Not having a common language
  - Variation of use of language
  - Funder specific terminology
- Time zones
  - Culture around time
- Teams with diverse cultural backgrounds, geographically dispersed
- Age – Generational Theory
- Gender
- Different technical disciplines
- Different skill level
- Integrity

# Building RM and Project Partnerships



Understanding the Partner and Funder context



Understanding the external influencers on a project



Developing the Leadership skills of the PI



Developing the RM Professional support



Developing the PI and RM partnership



Enhancing TRUST



Building networks – Community of Practise



Impactful Research – stakeholder relationships



## World Conferences on Research Integrity Cape Town Statement

This statement advocates for fair practice from conception to implementation of research and provides 20 recommendations aimed at all involved stakeholders. These recommendations are grouped under values that were identified as important underpinning considerations in discussion groups at the 7th WCRI.

1. diversity,
2. inclusivity,
3. mutual respect,
4. shared accountability,
5. indigenous knowledge recognition and epistemic justice (ensuring that the value of knowledge is not based on biases related to gender, race, ethnicity, culture, socio-economic status etcetera).

<https://www.wcrif.org/guidance/cape-town-statement>

<https://www.wcrif.org/downloads/main-website/cape-town-statement/580-cts-poster/file>

# Diversity & Inclusion

- Diversity is about how representative an organisation is.
- Inclusion is about how well the contributions, presence and perspectives of the diverse groups of people are reflected in an organisation.

These concepts are adaptable to Research Management

Offer a framework

- successful research teams and
- research organisations.

# Social Science Models

- The Diversity and Inclusion model

Active promotion of diverse and inclusive culture at all levels of the organization. fostering collaboration and innovation, leading to better business/ research outcomes

- The cultural intelligence model

Training and support to overcome cultural barriers and promote more effective collaboration among researchers. (Global N-S relations)

- The Social Identity Model

Creation of a safe and supportive environment where all are comfortable to express their identities and perspectives, fostering a sense of belonging, reducing conflict

- The Intersectionality Model

Policies and initiatives that address multiple dimensions of diversity as well as the unique challenges and barriers that different groups may face

# Application of the diversity models to RM

The RM profession is diverse and requires that we ensure that this diversity is understood and effectively included in the Institutional frameworks. This objective requires that we are innovative in applying knowledge from other fields so that we can positively impact Research Leadership to:

- develop proper understanding of the dynamic specialities involved, including their professional nature – Diversity & Inclusion model
- mentor young professionals, skills development – cultural Intelligence model, social identity model, intersectionality model
- develop an enabling research and innovation environment, along with Governance structures, Research and Innovation Management integration – Diversity & Inclusion model, Social Identity Model, Intersectionality model
- Develop external research collaborations – Diversity & Inclusion, cultural Intelligence model, social identity model, intersectionality model

# Benefits of a diverse and inclusive RM space

- **Improved Work environment**
  1. Improved employee morale and job satisfaction
  2. Increased ability to attract and retain diverse talent
- **Better Research outputs – More publications, grants, contracts & IP**
  3. Increased creativity and innovation
  4. Enhanced problem-solving abilities
  5. Expanded market reach and economic growth
- **More successful Overall research strategy**
  6. Better decision-making processes
- **Better public perception of your organization**
  7. Improved customer satisfaction and loyalty
  8. Increased brand reputation and social responsibility.

# Benefits of “Soft Skills” to the Research Activity

Including:-

1. An integrated research team, across diverse professional competencies at an institutional and universal level
2. An increase in research outputs
3. An increase in partnerships of high research integrity
4. An increase in the perception of the Institution



# Impact for Individual RM professionals

# RM Professional “Key Competency Areas”



Graphics courtesy of the IPRC

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**W**  
Wits Enterprise  
The Innovation Edge



Graphics courtesy of the IPRC

# Role of the IPRC

## Call information

New call opening

## Website details

<https://iprcouncil.com/>

## Contact details: IPRC Secretariat

### CALL US

+27(21) 813 6467

### EMAIL

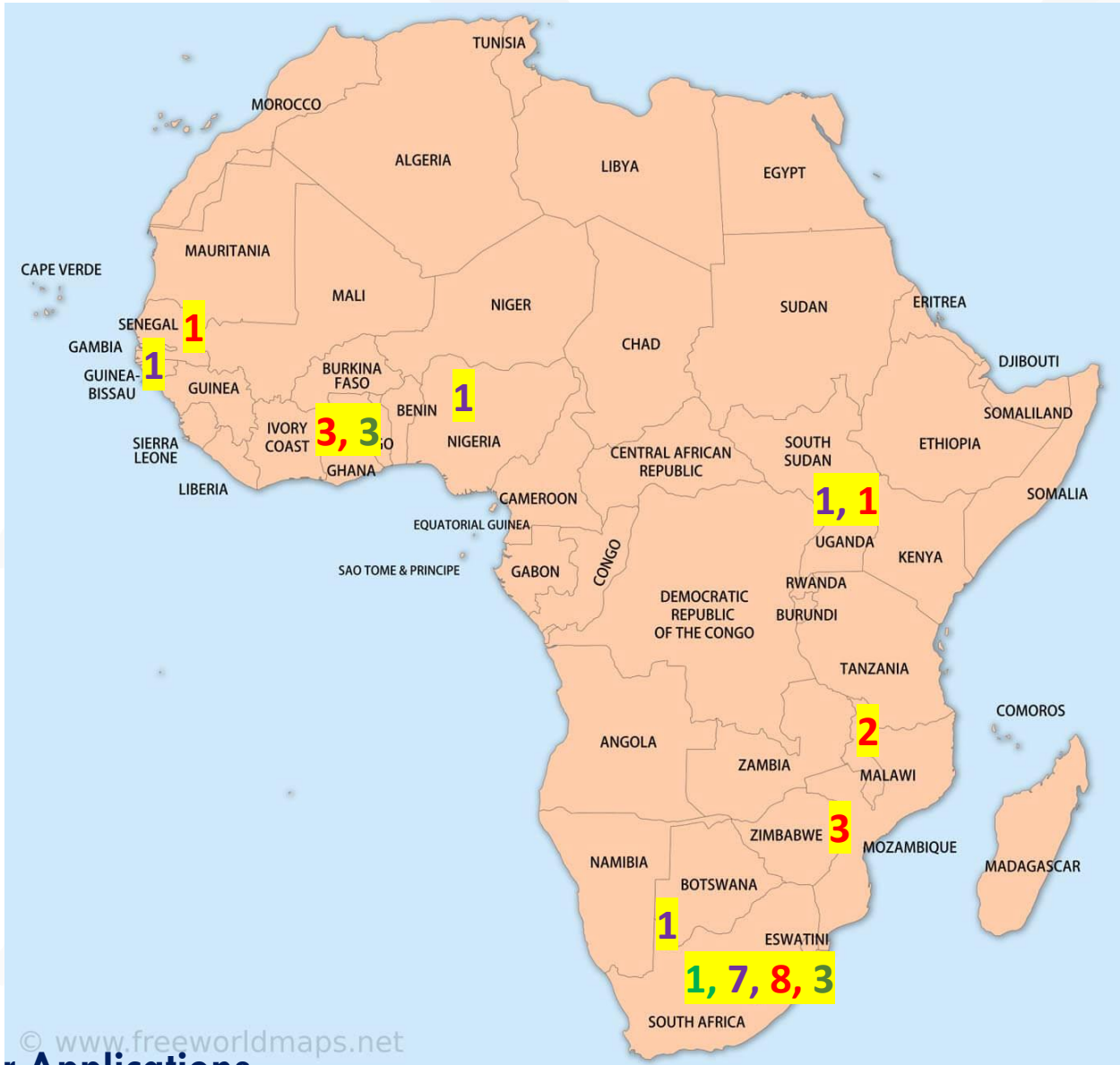
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## Registered IPRC RM professionals (December 2022)

<https://iprcouncil.com/recognised-professionals/>

**Hon. SRMP 1 SA**

**SRMP 1 Botswana**

**SRMP 1 The Gambia**

**SRMP 1 Nigeria**

**SRMP 1 Uganda**

**SRMP 2 Other**

**SRMP 7 SA**

**RMP 1 Senegal**

**RMP 1 Uganda**

**RMP 1 Other**

**RMP 2 Malawi**

**RMP 3 Ghana**

**RMP 3 Zimbabwe**

**RMP 8 SA**

**RAP 3 Ghana**

**RAP 3 SA**

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**For Applications**  
<https://iprcouncil.com/about-2/>

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# Fostering soft skills



Community of  
Practice



Networking



Mentoring

# Personal approach towards humanising RM

1. Recognition of the diversity of the RM activity
2. Regional RM Forums, Conferences and Symposiums
3. Institutional RM Forums

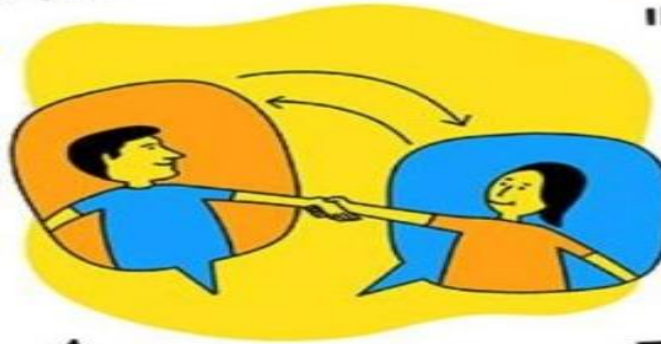


START FROM WHERE PROTEGE IS:  
NOT WHERE YOU WANT HIM/HER TO BE!

PRACTICE focused LISTENING, MEANINGFUL REFLECTION and SINCERE COMMUNICATION of INTEREST and CONCERN

A MENTOR IS:

- GENEROUS
- CANDID
- HONEST
- PASSIONATE
- AUTHENTIC
- ENERGETIC
- DEVOTED
- BOLD



MENTORING IS



A LEARNING PARTNERSHIP

A JOURNEY OF



COLLECTIVE DISCOVERY...

# the art of mentoring

Insights: Managers as Mentors Chip R. Bell and Marshall Goldsmith

MENTORING

is an honor

EXCEPT FOR LOVE  
THERE IS NO  
GREATER GIFT  
OTHER THAN  
THE GIFT OF  
GROWTH

~ MARSHALL GOLDSMITH

SKILLS of  
A MENTOR

balance

truth

trust

abundance

passion

courage

ethics

Sketchnote: Tanmay Vora | @tnvora | QAspire.com

# Self-Care



# Acknowledgement

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Terima Kasih  
Thank you