

UNDERE DEGLON: Executive Leader | International Relations Builder | Culture and Change Specialist

KEY SKILLS

Strategic leadership with ability to display thought leadership in complex and ambiguous situations.

Excellent communication (report writing, facilitation, presentation)

Advocacy and lobbying to Facilitate transformation, diversity and inclusion within organisations

Quantitative and qualitative research

Financial management

Government policies and procedures

Communication and marketing

Stakeholder relations

Conflict Resolution and Mediation Facilitation

Project management

Resource Mobilisation

Administration

Content development/ training

LANGUAGES

Mother Tongue: English

Other: Afrikaans

CONTACT DETAILS

DISABILITY

Crutch user

GENDER

Female

HOME PROVINCE

Northern Cape

REFERENCES

Available upon request

PROFILE

Undere Deglon is a highly respected South African strategist with over 20 years of experience in diversity and transformation, particularly in integrating people with disabilities into the economy. Known for her leadership and ability to navigate complex organizational challenges, she has a track record of developing innovative and effective programs.

Undere's career highlights include her role as the founding CEO of the Disability Workshop Development Enterprise, where she led groundbreaking initiatives in the supported employment sector. She has collaborated with global organizations such as the World Bank, Danida, and the International Labour Organisation (ILO), contributing to international disability inclusion efforts.

She continues to serve on advisory bodies, including the Presidential Working Group and the Ministerial Committee on Disability for the National Department of Social Development. Since 2022, she has worked at the University of Cape Town as the Institutional Culture Change Specialist in the Office for Inclusivity and Change, driving transformative efforts to create inclusive environments.

Her academic background includes a Master's degree in Research Psychology from the University of Cape Town and a Bachelor of Social Sciences, complemented by additional qualifications in Education from the University of the Western Cape.

PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

MA (Research Psychology), University of Cape Town	2006
BSoc (Hons), University of Cape Town	2004
Certificate, Human Resource Management, Unisa	2000
HDipEd, University of the Western Cape	1992
BA, University of the Western Cape	1991

PROFESSIONAL/ BOARD MEMBERSHIPS

Member, Presidential Working Group on Disability	2022
Member, Services SETA: Labour and Collective Services	2020
Member, International Labour Organisation (ILO) Global Business and Disability Network	2022
Board member, Institute of Promotion of Disabled Manpower (IPDM)	2019
Board member Darkroom Contemporary (Arts organization)	2019

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

Serves as members of Presidential Working Group, and of Ministerial Committee on Disability for National Department of Social Development	Current
Participated in systematic review/ scoping project to determine disability inclusion/ mainstreaming in community enterprise development programme on five mining sites, Anglo American	2019
Served on Western Cape Liquor Authority with vision to reduce alcohol-related harm via effective regulation of retail liquor in Western Cape.	2020
Spearheaded the Jobs Fund Careers for Youth with Disabilities in SA (CYDISA) programme, implemented across the Eastern Cape, Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, and Western Cape with the aim of finding employment for over 1000 youths with disabilities.	2015
Served on Council of Cape Peninsula University of Technology	2014

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Elected to develop South African country report for International Labour Organisation Global Business and Disability Network	2013
Served on Western Cape Gambling and Racing Board, to control/ regulate gambling and racing activities, reporting to Standing Committee on Public Accounts and Standing Committee on Finance. Appointed to WCGRB by South Africa Parliament	2012
Served on Decent Work Programme Steering Committee for International Labour Organisation, and on technical steering committee of Women Entrepreneurship Development and Gender Equality (WEDGE) Programme	2011
Appointed as Commissioner to Western Cape Cultural Commission by MEC Cameron Dugmore	2009 - 2012
Worked with international organisations (World Bank, Danida, International Labour Organisation, Fundosa Group (Spain), International Development Agency (Japan) and South African Government departments)	2007 – Current

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Company: University of Cape Town
Position: Institutional Culture Change Communication Specialist
From: 2022 – Present

- Embed cultural change processes across the institution, working with the departments and faculties to support the institution's transformation and inclusion response to address historical inequalities and systemic discrimination, particularly those resulting from apartheid.
- Implement training interventions with the aim to reduce disparities and inequalities specifically related to race, gender, disability, class, sexual orientation and other identity markers.
- Support and contribute to broader struggles for justice and equality through partnering with students, communities, sister universities and other relevant entities.
- Participate in research and convenings on transformation, inclusion and diversity (TID) in Higher Education
- Project Management
- Stakeholder Management
- Monitoring and Evaluation
- Content Development and Training
- Communication and Marketing
- Report writing

Company: Disability Workshop Development Enterprise (DWDE)
Position: Founding Chief Executive Officer
From: 2007 – 2022

- Leadership and Strategy Development: Led initiatives aimed at the economic empowerment of persons with disabilities.
- Developed and implemented strategies to transform collective work schemes for inclusive employment.
- Program and Service Development: Designed and launched innovative employment support services to integrate persons with disabilities into the mainstream economy.
- Advocacy and Transformation: Advocated for the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the workforce through targeted systemic change interventions.
- Promoted workplace transformation to ensure accessibility and inclusivity in employment.
- Partnerships and Collaboration: Collaborated with stakeholders to create opportunities for persons with disabilities in various sectors.
- Worked with government and private organizations to develop support services that empower workers with disabilities.
- Implemented governance and administrative systems, managed operations and resources.

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- Relationships/ partnerships with funders/ beneficiaries; fundraising and donor relationship management
- Monitored and evaluated organisational programmes.
- Designed organisational culture change processes with skills in quantitative/ qualitative research methodologies
- Stakeholder Management
- Developed diversity and inclusion strategies, policies, and procedures.

Company: Programme of the Child, Youth, Family and Social Development
Research Unit; Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC)

Position: Research Consultant

From: 2006 – 2007

Research activities:

- Youth Study/ International Labour Organisation/ Statistics South Africa
- Formulated operational guidelines to implement survey in Western Cape
- Facilitating partnerships with NGOs and DPOs
- Managed team of fieldworkers/ training
- Questionnaire design and translation; data analysis and report writing
- Report writing and financial management

Company: Disabled People South Africa

Position: National Co-ordinator

From: 2001

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- Implemented a national campaign to advocate for the recognition and enforcement of disability rights within the South African legal framework. Specific areas included:
 - The equitable administration of disability grants.
 - The recognition of Sign Language in South Africa.
 - The implementation of the White Paper on an Integrated National Disability Strategy, which was launched in 1997.
 - Efforts to realise Inclusive Education.
 - Promoting accessible public transport in South Africa.
 - Advocating for the right to employment.
 - This role was crucial in driving forward the goals of Disabled People South Africa (DPSA) in advocating for the full inclusion and empowerment of people with disabilities in the post-apartheid context, where social justice and equality were key national priorities.
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