

# Reputation Custodianship through Ubuntu.Lab Hub at Reputation House

Following last year's revelations of state capture and other corporate scandals, we saw many individual and corporate reputations ruined. The revelations laid bare the need for oversight to ensure that ethical business practices be upheld. They also shone the spotlight on the need to find ways of safeguarding one's reputation. This involves "out-of-the-box" thinking as well as the concept of ubuntu.

In acknowledgement of this, Reputation House has embarked on forging new partnerships, including one with the Presencing Institute at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) through engaging with author and consultant Martin Kalungu-Banda. His profile can be viewed at <https://www.linkedin.com/in/martin-kalungu-banda-a9989410/>

There is also a video link to Kalungu-Banda, in which he explains what Ubuntu.Lab is about: <https://www.facebook.com/pg/Ubuntu.Lab.PI/posts/>

Note that, in addition to being the lead facilitator of the Presencing Institute in the United Kingdom, Kalungu-Banda is a faculty member of the University of Cambridge Programme for Sustainability Leadership, with a focus on enabling senior business executives and those working in the public sector to take an active stance on sustainable development.

We at Reputation House have noticed a growing need for inter-

ventions, designed to conscientise internal stakeholders about the importance of managing their personal reputation and help them better understand how their conduct affects the company's reputation. In response, we have come up with a process for enhancing the corporate image - what we call Reputation Custodianship.

After nearly 12 years of delivering RepTrak® in South Africa, we are well equipped to deliver a competent reputation protection service, which incorporates our Systems Thinking and Theory U programmes.

For an introduction to Theory U and Presencing, please view a nine-minute YouTube explanation at <https://youtube/8zuDNH3zXW0>.

You can also gain a deeper understanding of these theories from viewing the following video, which is just under an hour long: <https://youtube/Ne78IVetZcA>

Communication is vital to protecting one's reputation, and we invite those who work in corporate reputation risk and in the communications and marketing sectors, as well as stakeholder engagement professionals and others keen on safeguarding their reputations, to engage with us in order to foster reputation custodianship in business and in other situations or "eco-systems".

We offer this service, in addition to our reputation research and measurement offering, using the Reputation Institute's RepTrak® model.



Moshopyadi Hannah Heil, Ubuntu.Lab Facilitator South Africa. Photo:

Ubuntu.Lab is an eight-month, applied online-offline learning programme for change-makers, emerging innovators and established leaders across Africa. It is ideal for people keen on driving corporate excellence. Through Ubuntu.Lab, we offer corporates the space to engage in crucial guided conversations about issues that ultimately have to do with reputation.

The Theory U process espoused by the MIT's Presencing Institute comes highly recommended. We are privileged to announce that

our first sessions of our Ubuntu.Lab Hub will be supported by Theory U expert Dr Dena van den Berg. Her profile can be viewed at <https://www.linkedin.com/in/dr-dena-van-den-bergh-a36b1242>

Our purpose is to enable our members to connecting the dots by re-imagining the interconnectedness of the business world, society and the self. Accordingly, our experts take corporate delegates through guided conversations that are drawn from the work of Theory U's originator, Otto Scharmer. He and Katrin Kaufer wrote a book detailing this theory in 2013, titled *Leading from the Emerging Future: From Ego-system to Eco-system Economies*.

**The purpose of this programme is to make a difference to members of Reputation House in three ways:**

- By our experts delivering knowledge about global best practice;
- By dealing with issues specific to South Africa and the African continent; and
- By addressing issues specific to the individuals attending the sessions

Given the need to respond to the challenges that come with the public losing their trust in corporate and government leaders whose ethics have been proven to be flawed and even non-existent, the Ubuntu.Lab Hub initiative aims to generate a positive social impact through tried-and-tested approaches delivered by

leading experts in the concept of Presencing and Theory U.

With the above as our focus, we invite organisations to join in and engage with other people in various African countries and also in the European Union.

We are thrilled to be launching an Ubuntu.Lab Hub in Johannesburg, along with events and initiatives that we aim to deliver through our exciting new partnerships with the Mail & Guardian locally and the MIT's Presencing Institute abroad.

By signing up as a corporate member of Reputation House, you'll have the opportunity to access skills that are available through Ubuntu.Lab and you will be part of our Reputation Custodians Network.

You can log on to the Ubuntu.Lab Hub in Johannesburg at the following address: [www.presencing.org/#/programs/ubuntu-lab](http://www.presencing.org/#/programs/ubuntu-lab). To find the Ubuntu.Lab Hub closest to you, scroll down to the world map and click on the marker for details.

We hope you'll join us in the process of enabling reputation consciousness and custodianship in South Africa and across Africa. Please also consider sponsoring youths or other people as part of your Corporate Social Investment programme.

**For more details about how to join Reputation House, please contact director Moshopyadi Hannah Heil by emailing [ubuntu.custodians@reputationhouse.co.za](mailto:ubuntu.custodians@reputationhouse.co.za)**

## All are one at Ubuntu.Lab

### Reputation House

Our Ubuntu.Lab Hub and Reputation Custodians Network is in response to the reality that we human beings live in a world of competing narratives. These must be revisited for the benefit of all of us, rather than the few deemed to matter more than others. We are invisibly interlinked and interconnected in the most basic and simultaneously complex sense. We are one, as quantum physics has found, one in all ways and always, even though it appears otherwise to the average unsuspecting human who is focused on the needs of the self.

Consider Joseph Stiglitz's admissions of IMF and World Bank shortcomings in his book *Globalization and its Discontents*.

Or consider Kate Raworth's book *Doughnut Economics*, in which she posits a challenge to the idea of the "rational economic man" and proposes seven ways to think like a twenty-first-century economist, which lie at the centre of her systems thinking approach that rattles the cages of traditional economic theory.

Our oneness is also found in Sheryl Sandberg's words in *Lean In*, where she states that "it has been an evolution, but I am now a true believer in bringing the whole self to work. I no longer believe people have a professional self

for Mondays through Fridays and a real self for the rest of the time. That type of separation probably never existed, and in today's era of individual expression, where people constantly update their Facebook status and tweet their every move, it makes even less sense. Instead of putting on some kind of fake 'all-work-persona', I think we benefit from expressing our truth, talking about personal situations, and acknowledging that professional decisions are often emotionally driven."

The oneness that begs wholeness is also in Kim Scott's radically candid assertions in *Radical Candor* on what she calls the "abrasive trap" in her treatment of the question: "Why gender bias makes Radical Candor harder for women", following BBC Radio4's recent broadcast after PwC published its BAME pay gap statistics (<https://www.pwc.co.uk/press-room/press-releases/PwC-publishes-BAME-pay-gap.html>) as well as following divergent views on Serena Williams' experience and expression of concerns at the US Open. While Kim Scott's primary focus is not on oneness, she nevertheless manages to shine light on the seemingly natural inclination to treat "others" that are "unlike us" with inauthentic deference or obnoxious aggression or manipulative insincerity when it comes to radically candid conversations that are necessary.

Relating to the indivisibility of a human being, there is much to contemplate in the realm of "private" domestic life. Abandoned partners may conceal their grief and shame as they face financial ruin over adulterous spouses determined to chase self-gratification at the expense of family well-being and security. This is a very important matter that often gets swept under the personal-matter, do-not-touch magic carpet of invisibility, beneath which transgressors are socially permitted to hide.

The May 2017 State Capacity Research Project, convened by Mark Swilling, was titled "*Betrayal of the Promise: How South Africa is being stolen*". We can also express inauthenticity and violate our integrity in our possible personal denial or indifference to the revelations and impact of reports such as this.

In all these spheres, we human beings live in a world of competing narratives where, as in the deep forest settings that are fast disappearing, the loudest, most prominent, most gifted and strong, most agile, and most familiar holds sway and centre stage, regardless of their authentic value and what they deliver for the All-of-Us in our interconnected whole.

Through guided conversations in Ubuntu.Lab, people can take off their masks in a safe and sacred



**In an increasingly multi-connected global world, UbuntuLab connects Africa to the world and to itself.** Photo: Moshopyadi Heil

space. The space is designed to nurture what Eckhart Tolle in *The Power of Now* recommends: "Have deep roots within ... The key is to be in a permanent state of connectedness with your inner body - to feel it at all times."

Our hope at Reputation House is that perhaps, through our TheoryU

conversations, we can provide an avenue for all to nurse these deep roots within in a way that allows all engaged to foster the higher vibrational frequencies required in order for people not to lose themselves in the loud world where values can be easily set aside or completely abandoned.