Editor’s Note

2017! Each New Year starts with promise and raised hopes. Spirits are high and there is much excitement about everything the New Year holds. It’s also a good time to start afresh or move on to new adventures and this year has been no different.

These first two months we say goodbye to some old friends who have left the company for new adventures. We also welcome new employees across the Polokwane, Mafikeng and Head Office branches.

A New Year was the perfect opportunity to revive our employee newsletter, and while it is, in a bit rusty, we are proud to have started and look forward to being consistent and providing our staff with quality and informative reading. We also have a part-time vacancy for a Content Contributor to help make the newsletter better. If you love news and writing, please email us for more information.

“Be at war with your vices, at peace with your neighbours, and let every new year find you a better man.”
Benjamin Franklin

Message from the HR Department

How many of us set ourselves New Years resolution that we abandon before we even hit the half-year mark? How many of us have actually given up on setting resolutions because no matter how hard you try, you just never seem to get it right.

The general trend everywhere from workplace to workplace and across all social media is greatness in baby steps. More and more people are seeing the need to set higher goals for themselves while at the same time being realistic about what can be achieved in the short-term.

A healthy work-life balance has never been more important, or more easy to achieve for that matter. This year forget the New Years Resolutions. Forget all the previous failed attempts. Take it one step at a time and make it more about the ride than the destination. Forget about the conditions that are not favourable and focus on rearranging your goals to suit the conditions. It doesn’t mean giving up or lowering your goals, it simply means you are unpacking them and prepared to achieve them in phases. It is better to start now and achieve in smaller milestones than to wait until conditions are favourable.

So read a book, travel to a new place, do a new short course, run a race. Do something today!
EMPLOYEE WELLNESS

2017 HR Calendar
This year we have decided to do things different because as the saying goes “If you keep doing the same things, you will keep getting the same results”. Our calendar for the year has been prepared in advance to ensure maximum efficiency in our handling of events. Our calendar and HR Budget have been submitted to the Executive Directors for approval, thereafter a large print-out will be sent to each branch. One of the additions to the calendar includes themed socials for Head Office which will revert back to the old activity based calendar. Alternatives will be decided for the branches. The theme for January is “The Hunger Games” which will include life-sized garden games such as Giant Jenga. Another addition is the Employee of the Month which will carry with it a prize monthly. The prizes range monthly starting in January with a 2 nights stay for two at the 4-star Mangwa Valley Lodge at Dinokeng Game Reserve.

Another new introduction is the Motivational Library which will be introduced from the 01st of February. A selection of books has been purchased to start up the library and these will be available for everyone to check out. The available books are a recommended list from the Directors. A few of us aspire to be Chartered Accountants, and as a whole we all aim to be greater than we are. The focus is on GROWTH and DEVELOPMENT and what greater way than to draw inspiration from World greats such as Napoleon Hill.

Our aim is to redefine our culture in preparation for Vision 2020:200 to build a team of highly-inspired and dynamic young individuals, and that we believe is key to achieving our strategic objectives.

TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT _ 2017 Personal Development Plans
The company has always encouraged a culture of learning, giving employees an opportunity to study further with the financial assistance policy. Harvest has always committed itself to ensuring our employee's are developed and given the tools to improve themselves, and it is up to each employee to utilise these resources.

Training initiatives are usually the first to suffer in small companies where budget constraints are a reality. The company has ensured that this is never the case and assistance has been available for those who are self-studying however discretion has been applied for skill-based courses. We have reached a point where our employee’s need to be in a position to grow with the company however we face a real challenge in this regard due to a lack of qualifications and skills, which often leads to us having to recruit for new roles externally. To avert this we have amended our Recruitment policy to ensure vacancies are advertised internally first to allow qualifying employees to grow and transfer within the company giving opportunity for growth and transfers to current employees.

Training opportunities are also available to employees to support the company and the employee’s growth. All training will always carry an obligation period as per the policy, and this is standard practice everywhere. We would like to urge people to take ownership of their own growth and re-examine their long term career goals and qualifications in preparation for the Performance Reviews which will include Personal Development Plans and to start planning their career short and medium-term goals to discuss with their managers.
INDUSTRY NEWS: AUDIT FIRM ROTATION

In an attempt to strengthen auditor independence and promote transformation, the Independent Regulatory Board for Auditors (IRBA) has begun a process to implement mandatory audit firm rotation for listed companies. In a consultation paper issued in October 2016 the IRBA asked for comment on the implementation thereof.

They proposed that audit firms rotate every 10 years, with a 5-year ‘cooling off period’ before the audit firm is eligible for reappointment. The individual audit partner remains subject to the rotation requirements of the Companies Act 71 of 2008 and the IRBA’s Code of Professional Conduct. It is proposed that audit firm rotation will be effective for financial years commencing on or after 1 April 2023.

HELPFUL TIPS: FOR COMBINING WORK AND STUDY

Since a lot of employees have put their focus on studying this year, we have listed a few helpful tips for juggling working while studying.

Use class syllabi as study tool.
There are helpful little documents your lecturers have created for you to help you out during the school semester – your class syllabi! Take a good chunk of time to thoroughly review the syllabus for each of your classes so you know what to expect over the next several weeks, from course topics, project and exam due dates, to other useful information.

Begin working on a school assignment as soon as it’s assigned.
Do you wait until the last minute to begin a school project and end up pulling all-nighters that leave you tired and drained at work? Instead of setting yourself up for a stressful situation, simply start working on a school assignment as soon as possible. Get the momentum going by taking small steps such as thoroughly reading and understanding the assignment, jotting down a few ideas for a paper topic, or conducting some basic research online.

Find new ways to study.
Make the most of the study time you have available to you by finding new ways to absorb, memorize and understand information. Try writing down concepts and facts, read your notes aloud, use flashcards, rewrite or retype your notes, or study with a classmate. You won’t know which study methods work best for you until you try them out, so feel free to experiment!

Define studying tasks.
When you’re at work you most likely tackle unique tasks such as answering the phone, doing a close-concentration task, writing emails, or having a meeting with colleagues. Your studies should be approached in a similar fashion with clearly defined tasks. Create a list of different study tasks to help you with your study time, such as reviewing a chapter summary, reading passages in-depth, working on a problem set or editing a report.

Plan study sessions for the week.
Do you study with a plan in mind? Or do you just crack open a textbook and hope for the best? Block out time in your calendar in advance to tackle different study tasks (see above) to make the most out of your schedule, be it a half-hour, a two-hour chunk of time, or whatever you have available to you that week.
The 2016 Year End Function was held at Moyo Restaurant at Zoo Lake. The function was attended by all the branches while the ladies were treated to a day at the renowned Octavias Day Spa at Emperors Palace.

While many felt the evening was too short, it nonetheless was a memorable event as many had brought their other halves. The highlight of the night was no doubt the Employee Awards. There were not enough awards to recognise each individual however the Company is committed to making Reward and Recognition a key priority this year and beyond to ensure that we do not have to wait until the end of the year to receive recognition.

Congratulations to all the winners and we hope to see the CSI & Events Committee step up this year to take ownership of staff activities and events and hopefully the best Year End Function to date.
“Farewell”

1. **Mario de Sousa (IT Services Manager)**, who is leaving Harvest effective on the 31st of January. Mario will be emigrating to Dublin, Ireland with his Wife Leonie and son Max. Mario and Leonie will be moving to Ireland on the 04th of February. We wish them all the best on this new adventure.

2. **Mbali Sadikge (BEE Analyst)**, will also be leaving on the 31st of January. Mbali is moving to audit firm Mazars, where she will be providing BEE Advisory Services. We wish her all the best on this new chapter, as well as her next chapter as a mother.

3. **Lebogang Maduna (Junior Accountant)**, will be leaving Harvest to join KTVR Bus Service in the Payroll Department. KTVR is a client of Harvest and situated in the same office park. We wish Lebo well and hope she doesn’t become a stranger.

All the best to these three individuals who have made a significant impact during their time here. They will all be dearly missed.

**The New Members**

* A very warm welcome to all the new joiners:

- Shingirirai Bondera **(Corporate Financier – Head Office)**
- Maseng Nyapholi **(Project Administrator – Head Office)**

**Birthdays and Announcements**

A happy birthday to all those celebrating in Jan & Feb.

- Eugene Sadikge 05 January
- Tsakane Masutha 12 January
- Nothemba Mpalweni 30 January
- Oriengulula Gandamipfa 07 February
- Geoffrey Nemabubuni 17 February
- Joshua Mudzanani 23 February

- Henny Chavani and his wife Lynette were blessed with a beautiful baby girl, Lulama on the 23rd of January 2017.