

BOOK REVIEW

Essential Skills for Highly Successful Youths

CAROLYNE MANDE LUNGA

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This is a book written for young people who are about to leave school and enter the world of tertiary education, an internship or work. It provides many useful lessons from a variety of sources. The author has reached into her personal experiences and attempted to provide young people with an encyclopaedia of useful how-to information.

The book may at times seem a little directive to young people but the reader should keep in mind that many young people do not have parents or role models from whom they can learn. The book provides a useful resource that can be used individually or in groups, with or without a facilitator.

If made available as an Open Book, this resource should be of great use if it can reach young people in formats that may be read on their smartphones. It will be essential to provide it in eBook formats such as ePub and Mobi.

In the introduction, the author describes what led her to writing the book; how certain family members encouraged and supported her. Having managed to complete a tertiary qualification and find work, she is now finding ways to help others through her experiences. Tracing much of her young life, the author places the book on a personal level for other young people who can relate to her challenges and progress.

Carolyne Mande Lunga hopes that her book will provide critical skills that are important for successful youths. In an era of massive unemployment amongst youth, increasing levels of poverty, poor service delivery and increasing levels of disease, the author hopes that her work will revive hope among young people who are progressing through high school.

This book identifies and describes the essential and critical skills which put youths on the path to success.

Skills identified in the book include lifelong learning, critical thinking, problem solving, entrepreneurship, financial literacy, creativity, innovation, emotional intelligence, information and communications technology, social media and other skills that are important to finding and retaining work. The author is positive and gives attention to positive thinking while providing “how to” details and the necessary actions to be taken to be successful.



The book is divided into the following sections:

1. Thinking skills which comprise:
 - a. Problem solving
 - b. Creativity and Innovation
 - c. Emotional Intelligence
 - d. Decision Making
2. Action/Creative Skills:
 - a. Communication
 - b. Media and Information Literacy
 - c. Entrepreneurship
 - d. Financial Literacy
3. Skills for living in the world:
 - a. Lifelong Learning
 - b. Leadership
 - c. Stress Management
4. Personal Skills:
 - a. Flexibility and Adaptability
 - b. Being Positive at all times
 - c. Physical Fitness, Wellness and Positive Lifestyle
5. Social Skills:
 - a. Tolerance and Mutual Respect
 - b. Conflict Resolution and Negotiation
 - c. Social Manners
 - d. Collaboration
6. Information Communications Technology:
 - a. Using various ICT Tools
7. CVs, Resumes, Personal Statements and Cover Letters:
 - a. Writing Winning CVs
 - b. Writing a Winning Resumé
 - c. Writing a Winning Personal Statement
 - d. Writing a Winning Cover Letter

- e. Online Applications
- f. Succeeding at Interviews
- g. Other Important things to be Done.

Each section and chapter provide descriptions of the skills, where the skills are typically used in daily life. The importance of the skills is outlined, and questions posed to help the readers assess themselves. The format of questions posed to the reader may easily be transferred into a group discussion format to support a facilitator. References for further reading and research provide the essential information for personal skills building.

Where Internet links (URLs) are provided, the reader may need to search for the item using regular search engines. As is often found, so called "link rot" can set in and the URLs may be found to no longer work. Given the information provided and the references, updated URLs should be traceable online.

As the book has been written for youth and includes many URLs to additional materials, it would benefit readers to have it available in eBook formats such as ePub and Mobi. This kind of book lends itself to regular updates, contextualising and translations, which could benefit from editable versions being made available in Open Book formats.

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