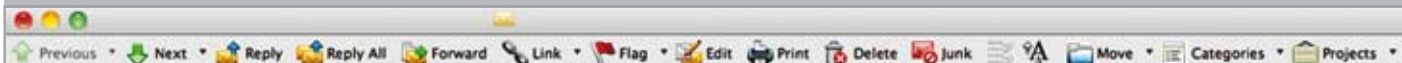


The new President's inbox

Imagine it is 2009 and South Africa's new president is perusing the presidential inbox.
What might he find there? PENNY HAW finds out.



From: Collin Smith; Sipiwe Nzimande; Prof Julian Sonn; Suzanne Ravenall; Chris Gibbons; Prof Laetitia van Dyk;
Raymond Ackerman; Nicky Newton-King Ackerman

Date: Wednesday, May 6, 2009 8:08am

To: The President of South Africa

Subject: How will you make them stay?

Dear Mr President
There is a generation of talented and highly-skilled young current and future business leaders in South Africa who are old enough to remember apartheid and to be judged as having been part of it, but not old enough to have fought for or against it. Scores from this "generation X" are leaving the country under the current wave of uncertainty regarding the future for them in our country. What will you do to keep this much-needed skills-base in our country?

Collin Smith
Empowerment and transformation advisor

Subject: The ongoing fight against crime

Dear Mr President
The temptation to do crime in this country is enhanced by a belief in the unlikely prospect of being caught, convicted and punished. That's what we are working on. That's what fixing the criminal justice system means, and we look forward to working with you in this regard.

Sipiwe Nzimande
Executive Director: Business Against Crime (South Africa)

Subject: Clarify your vision

Dear Mr President
If we are going to create a society in which people are not segregated, transformation issues need to be tackled. Unfortunately, though, many leaders do not make themselves clear on these issues or on their vision for the country. How do you intend to tackle issues of transformation and integration, and what is your true vision for South Africa?

Prof Julian Sonn
Diversity Management and Leadership Lecturer,
University of Stellenbosch Business School

Subject: The key is collaboration

Dear Mr President
It has never been more critical for South African businesses, government and communities to collaborate to create an environment that helps eliminate poverty, builds hope and wealth, and integrates society in this country. What are your government's plans to harness the tremendous power of collaboration so that we can ensure that we achieve these essential levels of upliftment?

Suzanne Ravenall
Entrepreneur, business strategist and Businesswoman of the Year finalist

Subject: A single concrete example

Dear Mr President
Please give me a single concrete example of how your government is going to be more competent, more skilled and better able to deliver than the last lot? And, by the way, why do you continually refuse to be interviewed by me? Surely you're not scared of difficult questions?

Chris Gibbons
Businessman, entrepreneur and broadcast journalist

Subject: Strategic alliances and women

Dear Mr President
In an ever-changing environment, what global positioning and alliances do you consider important for the country for 15 to 20 years from now? And, in the context of international changes with regard economic, socio-political and religious scenarios, how can the contribution of women in your parliament be optimised to create sustainable value patterns – and what guidance will you offer them?

Prof Laetitia van Dyk
Head, Centre for Leadership Studies,
University of Stellenbosch Business School

Subject: Deregulation of fuel

Dear Mr President
The government quite correctly tackled bread and milk suppliers for fixing prices. In the same vein, petrol is a basic commodity. If you are aiming for free pricing for basic commodities, is it not time to deregulate petrol?

Raymond Ackerman
Chairman: Pick n Pay

Subject: Increasing gap between rich and poor

Dear Mr President
The ever-increasing gap between the rich and the poor is a serious problem in this country. It worries us in business, because it fosters desperate behaviour and turbulence in the country. We need a concrete plan of action to close the gap. I look forward to seeing you address this concern.

Nicky Newton-King
Deputy CEO: Johannesburg Stock Exchange