

Building businesses that build Africa: Innovation in uncertain times

By [Jon Foster-Pedley](#)

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Halfway through South Africa's unprecedented 21-day lockdown, there's a lot of trepidation. We don't even know if the restrictions will be lifted by next Friday, 17 April, but what we do know at Henley Business School Africa is that our systems work and our people are energised.



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We officially transitioned our Johannesburg-based campus to a virtual teaching platform 10 days before the national quarantine was imposed as part of the national state of emergency and we have been perfecting it ever since.

The classes are still highly interactive in every respect, while we are also able to record classes and then post them for students to access so that they can watch them again in their own time – or catch up if they were unable to make a class. There is no need to travel.

For a school like Henley Africa, with sister campuses in the UK, Europe and Asia, we can bring in our expert faculty from around the world to address students as seamlessly and as immediately as if they had flown in. We can bring that experience to our students irrespective of where they live; from Accra to Zeerust. Our MBA is truly flexible and international.

A more responsive approach

We have become even more agile, more intuitive and more responsive in the last 21 days: Henley Africa is a business school that began as a start-up, as an innovator, implementing the theories and using the tools it taught to students in the classroom to help its own staff achieve the incredible cumulative year-on-year growth of 1,000% over the last nine years.

Now as the world faces its greatest health crisis in modern times, we are continuing to innovate and pivot; think differently, imaginatively and critically – once again exactly the kind of abilities we grow in our students.

“ *The world you enter after the lockdown is lifted, will be dramatically different from the one you left. How you deal with that will depend on the choices you make now* ”

If you're serious about making sense of an ever-changing world; about getting the real tools to do that to earn while you learn – or frankly to help keep your job and thrive as we recover – then you should seriously be considering investing in yourself right now, because that's what it's about. In some ways, there has never been a better time to do a top-quality, international MBA.

Our parent school, Henley at the University of Reading, is the oldest in Europe. It has a history of rising to succeed in difficult circumstances. It was started right after the end of World War II when the global economy had been devastated by six years of brutal dehumanising war, literally blown to smithereens in some cases.

Today, the challenge is just as great. It's another world war, this time against a faceless foe which is turning everything we once held dear on its head. We are going to get through this crisis, but the people this country needs most of all are the people who build the businesses that build Africa, just as Henley did for the UK in 1947.

The world you enter after the lockdown is lifted, will be dramatically different from the one you left. How you deal with that will depend on the choices you make now. One of them could be to start your international MBA with us. It's time for you to make sense of, and be a pioneer in, a future that is rapidly evolving into our present reality.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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