

Caroline Abel: Leadership Development Programme graduation ceremony

Remarks by Ms Caroline Abel, Governor of Central Bank of Seychelles, at the Leadership Development Programme Graduation Ceremony, Beau Vallon, 19 June 2024.

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Board Members,
First Deputy Governor,
Facilitators of the Leadership Development Programme - Mr Andrew Long
and Mr Paul Whitman,
Participants of the Leadership Development Programme,
CBS Colleagues,

Good afternoon.

I am delighted to be a part of this momentous occasion. Today, we are not only marking the culmination of CBS' Leadership Development Programme; more importantly, we are paving the way for 41 talented individuals to confidently pursue the journey of becoming well-rounded and effective leaders who will help steer our institution forward.

As you may recall, at the beginning of 2020, we launched the Executive Development Programme, aimed at equipping the emerging leaders of CBS with knowledge of what it entails to be a central banker and to develop their leadership potential. After an exciting start, the programme had to be put on hold due to the exigencies and impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. This pause, however, did not dampen our efforts; instead, it provided an opportunity to reflect on the ever evolving central banking landscape, the complexities of the modern workforce, and the skillsets needed to keep pace with these developments. These reflections, including your valuable input, contributed significantly to the revamped Leadership Development Programme.

Although divided into two components - the Senior Leadership Cohort and the Leadership Fundamentals Cohort - the programme was generally focused on three main themes: Leading Self, Leading the Team, and Leading the Organisation.

Over the past six months, you have had the chance to engage in self-reflection, become more aware of your strengths and weaknesses, and gain a thorough understanding of leadership and what it takes to be a good leader.

You have also learned the importance of knowing your teams, having emotional intelligence and using different leadership styles to inspire, motivate and get the best out of them. The importance of active listening, collaboration, adaptability, receiving and giving feedback are just some of the essential skills that resonated during the training sessions.

In your respective groups, you have also shared experiences and enhanced your critical thinking skills. You created a safe space for open, frank and thoughtful

discussions about your respective roles and broader matters, including existing gaps and untapped opportunities that need to be reflected upon to bring about positive changes and greater organisational success.

I am proud to have witnessed your commitment to the training despite your numerous responsibilities and workload. I am even more encouraged by the collective sharing of your learning experiences this afternoon, how you plan to put what you have learnt into practice, and how you would like to continue being empowered to further develop your leadership potential.

Today's graduation ceremony is definitely not the end goal. I look forward to the positive impact and transformation that your leadership will have on your respective team members, as well as on the performance of your respective divisions, units and the Bank as a whole. I also count on you to embrace the upcoming rotation programme being designed to shape CBS leaders into well-rounded central bankers. Your commitment to these efforts will contribute to the objective of ushering in a new era of central banking within CBS and building a stronger and more resilient institution.

In all of this, it is essential to acknowledge that leadership and learning go hand in hand. I look forward to our collective contribution on how the Bank can put the necessary mechanisms in place for the continued empowerment and development of not only the leaders gathered here today but also other existing and future team members with leadership potential.

At this juncture, I would like to take the opportunity to thank 'It's a Learning Curve' for partnering with CBS on the Leadership Development Programme and extend my deepest appreciation to Andrew and Paul for tailoring and facilitating the sessions, with a particular focus on addressing the specific needs of our institution. Your expertise and unwavering commitment have undoubtedly contributed to the programme's success. We look forward to more collaboration as we endeavour to continue empowering our leaders.

To the graduating leaders, allow me to quote Simon Sinek, who is well-known for his thoughts on leadership: "Leaders are the ones who have the courage to go first, to put themselves at personal risk to open a path for others to follow". This quote resonates well with your journey. I remember the mixture of sentiments echoed when you were embarking on the programme in October last year - from excitement to uncertainty. Nevertheless, you willingly embraced the opportunity.

Today, I say well done and congratulations to all of you.

My greatest desire is to see you uphold the organisational values as you lead and do it with your head, heart, and hands - that is, be mentally, emotionally, and physically engaged in the noble task entrusted to you. I also hope you will maintain the bond formed during the training and continue encouraging and supporting one another.

I sincerely wish you all the very best on your leadership journey.

Thank you.