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Skills Enhancement for Personal Assistants to Executives and Senior Officers in the Public Sector

Course Overview

The **"Strategic Executive Support Excellence"** program is a 5-day intensive course tailored for PAs and Executive Assistants working for Permanent Secretaries, CEOs of State Agencies, and Senior Government Officials across Africa. The program focuses on the "Three Pillars of Executive Support": **Administrative Mastery**, **Strategic Diplomacy**, and **Digital Agility**. It equips PAs with the skills to manage the high-pressure political-administrative environment, handle sensitive information with discretion, and proactively manage the executive's most valuable resource: **time**.

Program Objectives

By the end of this program, participants will be able to:

- **Manage the Executive Office** as a strategic hub, ensuring seamless coordination between departments.
- **Master Advanced Communication** skills for drafting high-level speeches, briefs, and official correspondence.
- **Navigate Protocol and Etiquette** required for interacting with diplomats, political leaders, and international dignitaries.
- **Utilize Digital Productivity Tools** to automate scheduling, document management, and reporting.
- **Apply Emotional Intelligence (EQ)** and conflict resolution techniques to manage the executive's "gate" effectively.

Course Coverage (Modules)

Day 1: The PA as a Strategic Partner

- **Beyond the Calendar:** Understanding the Executive's mandate and the National Development Agenda.
- **The "Right Hand" Concept:** Developing proactive thinking and "anticipatory management."

- **Office Organization:** Designing a world-class filing and information retrieval system (Physical and Digital).

Day 2: Advanced Communication & Stakeholder Management

- **Executive Writing:** Drafting memos, minutes, and briefing notes for Cabinet-level meetings.
- **The Gatekeeping Matrix:** Balancing accessibility with the need for executive focus.
- **Stakeholder Diplomacy:** Managing interactions with the media, politicians, and the public with "Ubuntu" (empathy and respect).

Day 3: Protocol, Etiquette, and Event Coordination

- **Official Protocol:** Seating arrangements, order of precedence, and diplomatic decorum in the African context.
- **The Master Coordinator:** Planning high-level retreats, board meetings, and international delegations.
- **Travel Management:** Managing complex itineraries, visas, and security briefings.

Day 4: The Digital PA (GovTech & Productivity)

- **Cloud Collaboration:** Using Microsoft 365/Google Workspace for real-time document tracking.
- **Cybersecurity for PAs:** Protecting sensitive government data and managing digital signatures.
- **AI for Productivity:** Leveraging AI for transcription, research, and data visualization.

Day 5: Professionalism, Ethics, and Stress Management

- **Confidentiality & Discretion:** Navigating the Official Secrets Act and Ethics in the public sector.
- **The Resilient PA:** Managing stress, working under pressure, and work-life integration.
- **Action Planning:** Creating a "Manual of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)" for the Executive Office.

Target Participants

- **Personal Assistants (PAs)** to Ministers and Permanent Secretaries.
- **Executive Assistants (EAs)** to CEOs of Parastatals and Agencies.
- **Private Secretaries** and Administrative Officers in the Executive Office.
- **Office Managers** in Regional and Local Government Administrations.

Expected Outputs

Participants will graduate with a **"High-Level Support Toolkit"** containing:

- **An Executive Office SOP Manual:** A customized handbook for managing their specific executive's office.
- **A Communication Style Guide:** Templates for official correspondence and briefing notes.
- **A Digital Resource Map:** A list of apps and tools implemented to save the executive at least 5 hours per week.
- **A Professional Development Plan:** A roadmap for their own career progression into administrative management

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