

MarketPlace

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How members benefit in a professional group

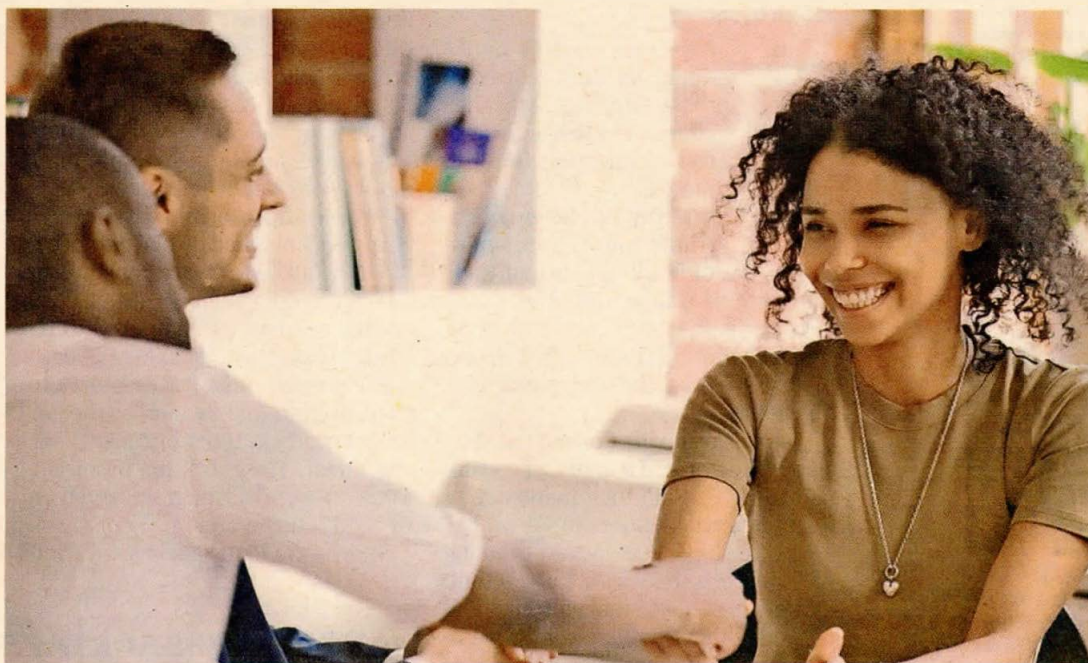
Japhet Ruto

Professionals who belong to certified groups are more likely to be trusted in the job market than those who do not. This is according to a 2015 report, *Understanding the Value of Professionals and Professional Bodies*, published by the UK's Chartered Institute of Building.

From the research, 76 per cent of those who knew about professional groups agreed they would trust a professional more if they belong to a body, compared to 46 per cent of those who had never heard of professional bodies.

The research, which focused on the United Kingdom's construction industry, further revealed that chartered professional bodies for the construction sector provided an objective industry voice that could be trusted (55 per cent), while 45 per cent believed that they also met their public interest obligations, compared to just nine per cent who disagreed.

The survey was conducted on 152 UK members of parliament and members of the public online. It found out that 48 per cent of those surveyed were more posi-



Companies give preference to members of professional bodies when hiring - FILE

RESEARCH HAS FOUND THAT PROFESSIONAL BODIES PRODUCE WORKABLE POLICIES WHICH INCREASE EFFICIENCY IN THE RESPECTIVE INDUSTRIES

tive about the ability of chartered professional bodies for construction professionals to support good policy making and in promoting robust standards of compliance, governance and ethics in their industry.

It also found that professional bodies produce workable policies which increase efficiency in the industry.

In Kenya, many companies give preference to potential employees who belong to professional bodies. This way, their chances of hiring quacks are reduced.

To strengthen their reputations,

professional associations have been tightening the requirements for membership.

For instance the Public Relations Society of Kenya last week announced plans to roll out new certifications based on the revised curriculum and industry examinations as a part of wide ranging reforms to weed out a rising number of quacks who have been infiltrating its ranks.

"At PRSK, we have a new strategic plan which highlights the need to guarantee quality practice. The new PRSK Council has been mandated by the membership to ensure that we sustain the transformation, which we commit to undertake," said Dr. Wilfred Marube, the newly elected President of the society.

Michael Arum, the Sugar Campaign for Change Coordinator believes that experts and policy makers in the sugar industry are more likely to be heard by the government if they register with the State or belong to a professional group instead of championing for

change individually.

"Certified professionals input in policy change cannot be ignored. Their contribution in advocacy helps them bargain collectively without issues of mistrust arising," said Mr Arum.

Experts say professional groups help in maintaining ethics, upholding code of conduct, and adhering to set professional standards. All these, they say play an important not only in the career prospects of the members, but in growing the economy as well as enhancement of social wellbeing through provision of quality goods and services.

The PRSK, which has more than 3,000 members, was established in 1971. The Society broadly seeks to advance excellence in public relations and communication management and ensures the practice "continues to thrive within the ethical framework defined by the profession".

The PRSK said it will lobby engagements for the proposed draft Institute of Public Relations and Communication Management Bill geared at facilitating the legislative formation of a professional body - Institute of Public Relations and Communication Management - to

regulate and promote standards of competence and practice among PR practitioners

"The step taken by PRSK aimed at weeding out quacks is a good move that will ensure all practitioners meet the threshold, the society will now have power to regulate rather than just oversight if the proposed bill is passed," said Alex Owiti, the founder and Managing Director Alexander PR and Communication Network.

It is advisable, Mr Owiti said, for one to be part of a professional body related to their work, adding that this helps professionals to better understand their field through trainings and networking opportunities.

Currently, Public Relations practitioners in Kenya are managing operating budgets estimated at more than Sh8.7 billion, necessitating the need to enhance discipline in the profession.

The PRSK, Dr. Marube said will also be accelerating the formation of sector-based practice chapters to cater for the professional development needs of PR practitioners in the Public Communication, Private practice and academia fields.

African Laughter

BRIEFING

REAL ESTATE FIRM BAGS SME AWARD FOR INVESTMENTS IN HOUSING

Real estate development company, Username Investments has been crowned the 2019 Real Estate SME of the Year during the first edition of Annual Bizna SME Awards Gala Dinner held at Laico Regency Hotel in Nairobi.

Its closest competitors for the top prize were Saif Real Estate and Sahihi Interior Builders who also command a substantial share of the market. The awards sought to recognise small and medium-sized enterprises based on their performance, profitability, quality of products and customer relations.

Nominees for the coveted award were drawn from various sectors of the economy including agribusiness, transport, real estate, tourism and hospitality, digital and social media, education and entertainment.

"We hope to settle as many Kenyans as possible and ensure they have a place they can call home. This award is a testament to the role we are playing in making Affordable Housing a reality for all Kenyans", said Reuben Kimani, the firm's chief executive.



HUAWEI SHIPMENTS COULD FALL BY UP TO A QUARTER

China's Huawei, hit by crippling US sanctions, could see shipments decline by as much as a quarter this year and faces the possibility that its smartphones will disappear from international markets, analysts said. Smartphone shipments at Huawei, the world's second-largest smartphone maker by volume, could tumble between 4 per cent and 24 per cent in 2019 if the ban stays put, according to Fubon Research and Strategy Analytics.

Several experts said they expect Huawei's shipments to slide over the next six months but declined to give a hard estimate due to uncertainties surrounding the ban. The US Commerce Department blocked Huawei from buying US goods last week amid its escalating trade spat with China.

Reuters