

Lessons from global meltdown

THE success of any company depends on two main aspects: finance and sales. And there is a prevalent school of thought that believes sales strategy should be an important topic in an MBA course.

Said Cobus van Graan, managing director of Tracer CQM: "Sales is a crucial yardstick by which many businesses are measured. We must give people the tools to set out a strategy, implement it and analyse company performance to move sales from an art to a science and create a discipline around sales management.

"People must be able to align the company's strategy and processes to the sales effort, develop and optimise sales structures, and measure their achievements," Van Graan said.

Bryan Hattingh, chief executive of Cycan, said recession holds material lessons for business schools, who must acknowledge their contribution to it.

"After all, these business schools educated and 'prepared' many of the MBA graduates who became the leaders whose actions, lack of responsibility and poor risk management caused the global meltdown."

He said that the two imperative lessons that business schools must put across in the post-recession period are: the ability to distinguish between good and bad risk, and to extend intellectual honesty beyond aspirational theory into intrinsic behaviour and lifestyle, with this becoming their ethics framework.

"Importantly, business schools must keep front of mind the fact that they are not simply providing post-graduate education — they are an integral part of the development of the future leaders of business and industry," Hattingh said. — *David Jackson*