

IR COMPETENCIES FOR THE CHANGING WORK ENVIRONMENT: A SOUTH AFRICAN STUDY OF INDUSTRY REQUIREMENTS

Marius Meyer

Senior lecturer: Human Resource Development, Technikon SA

Tel.: +27 (11) 471-3549 or 082 859 3593

E-Mail: mmeyer@tsa.ac.za

ABSTRACT

The major criticism against South African academic institutions has been its lack of industry focus in academic programmes. On the other hand, companies are faced with its greatest training challenge of the new education dispensation: how to prepare a work environment that not only enhances the skills of their employees, but also provides a path for lifelong learning and career development in line with the NQF. In the face of these problems, industrial relations (IR) practitioners are often expected to provide solutions to a multitude of organisational problems. A research study was undertaken to determine industry requirements for an IR practitioner in line with the demands of the modern work environment.

This paper summarises the results of an IR research project. A total of 102 job advertisements in the field of IR were analysed to determine the knowledge and skills requirements of an IR practitioner. It furthermore examines the core values and attributes needed to be an effective IR practitioner. The outcome is a competence profile of all the industry requirements presented in the form of a model and integrated with the requirements of the National Qualifications Framework and the South African Qualifications Authority Act. This model can be used by IR practitioners to benchmark their own performance, and also by higher education institutions in the process of re-curriculation of IR academic programmes and short courses.

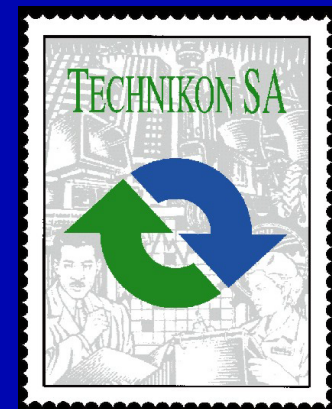
The results indicated that the role of the IR practitioner is not limited to the interpretation and application of labour legislation, but includes broader aspects of organisational transformation, skills development, organisation climate and change management, all of which require a new set of skills and knowledge. Moreover, the IR practitioner is presented with an opportunity to make a significant contribution to the African Renaissance by building relationships and acting as a catalyst for workplace transformation.

IR COMPETENCIES FOR THE CHANGING WORK ENVIRONMENT

3rd African IIRA regional congress



Marius Meyer
mmeyer@tsa.ac.za



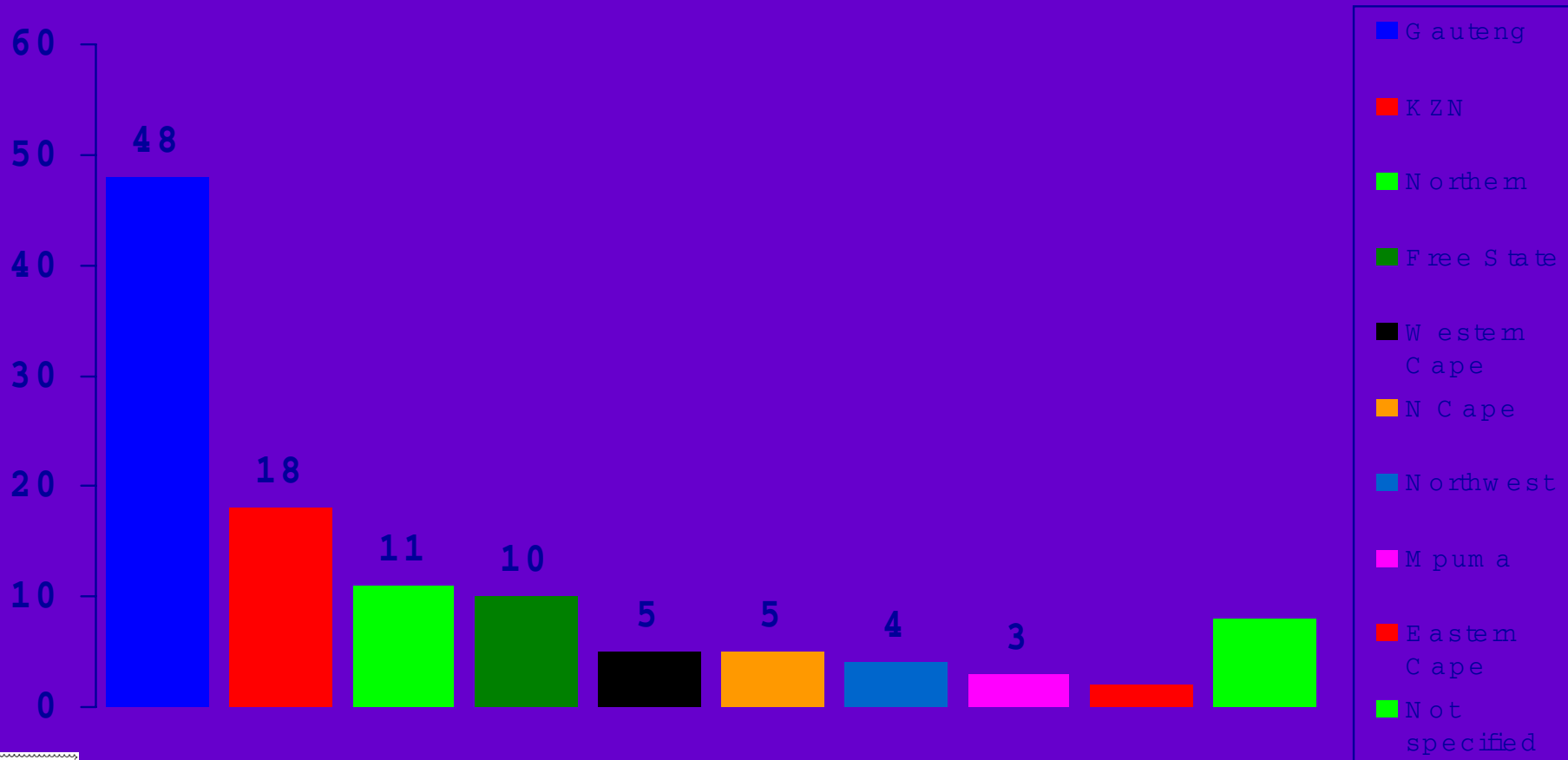
GOALS OF RESEARCH PROJECT

- Identify the competencies & skills of IR practitioners as required by SA organisations
- Review career opportunities in IR
- Identify new roles for IR practitioners

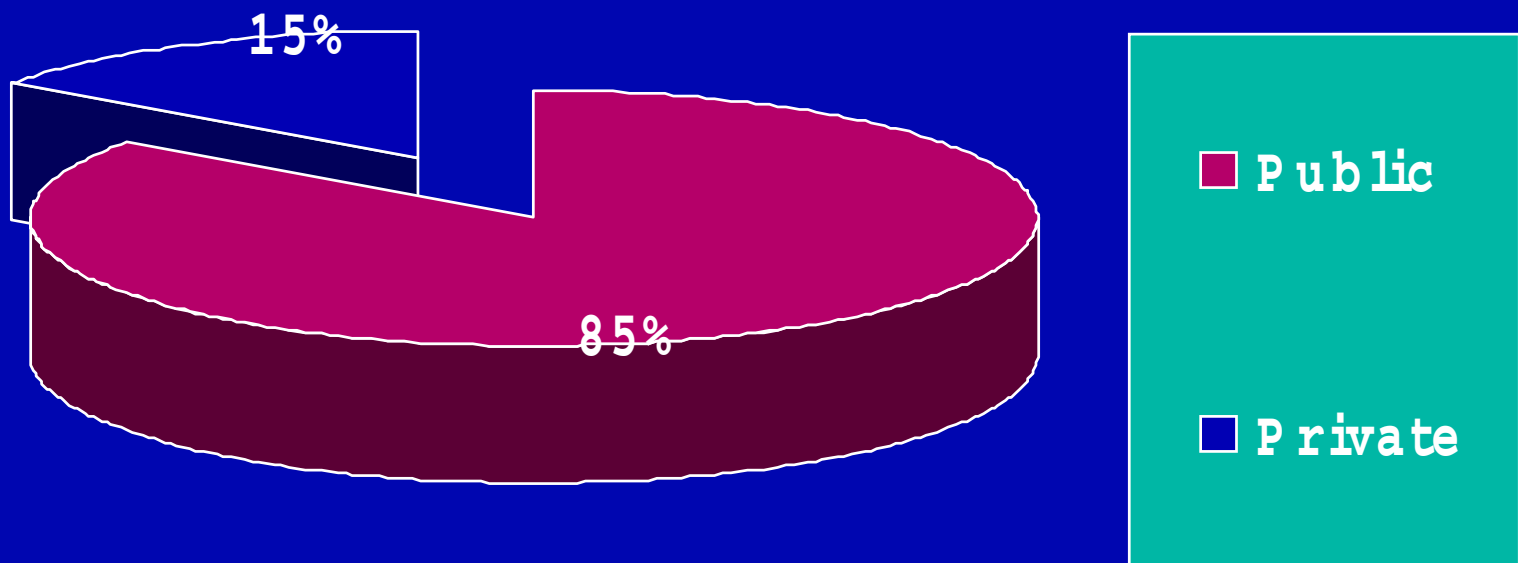
METHODOLOGY

- Collection of IR job advertisements over a period of one year
- Content analysis of requirements and skills
- Grouping of data
- N = 102 IR positions from 71 organisations

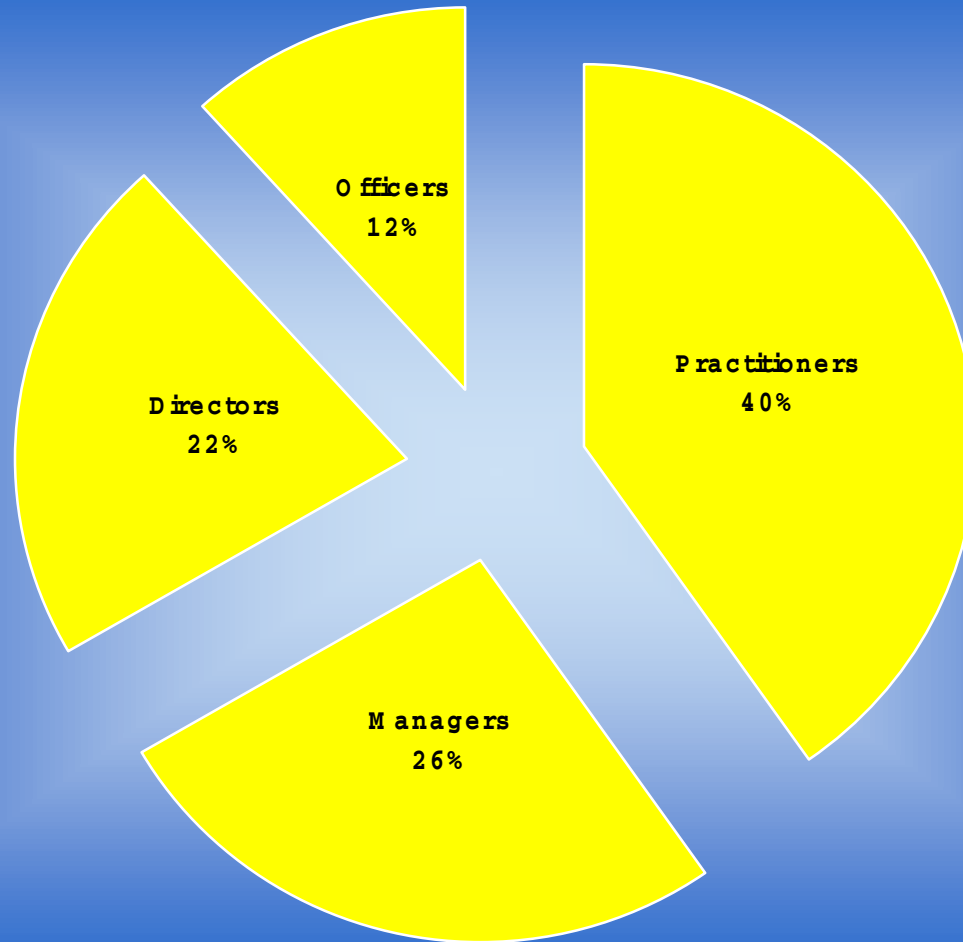
IR POSITIONS PER PROVINCE



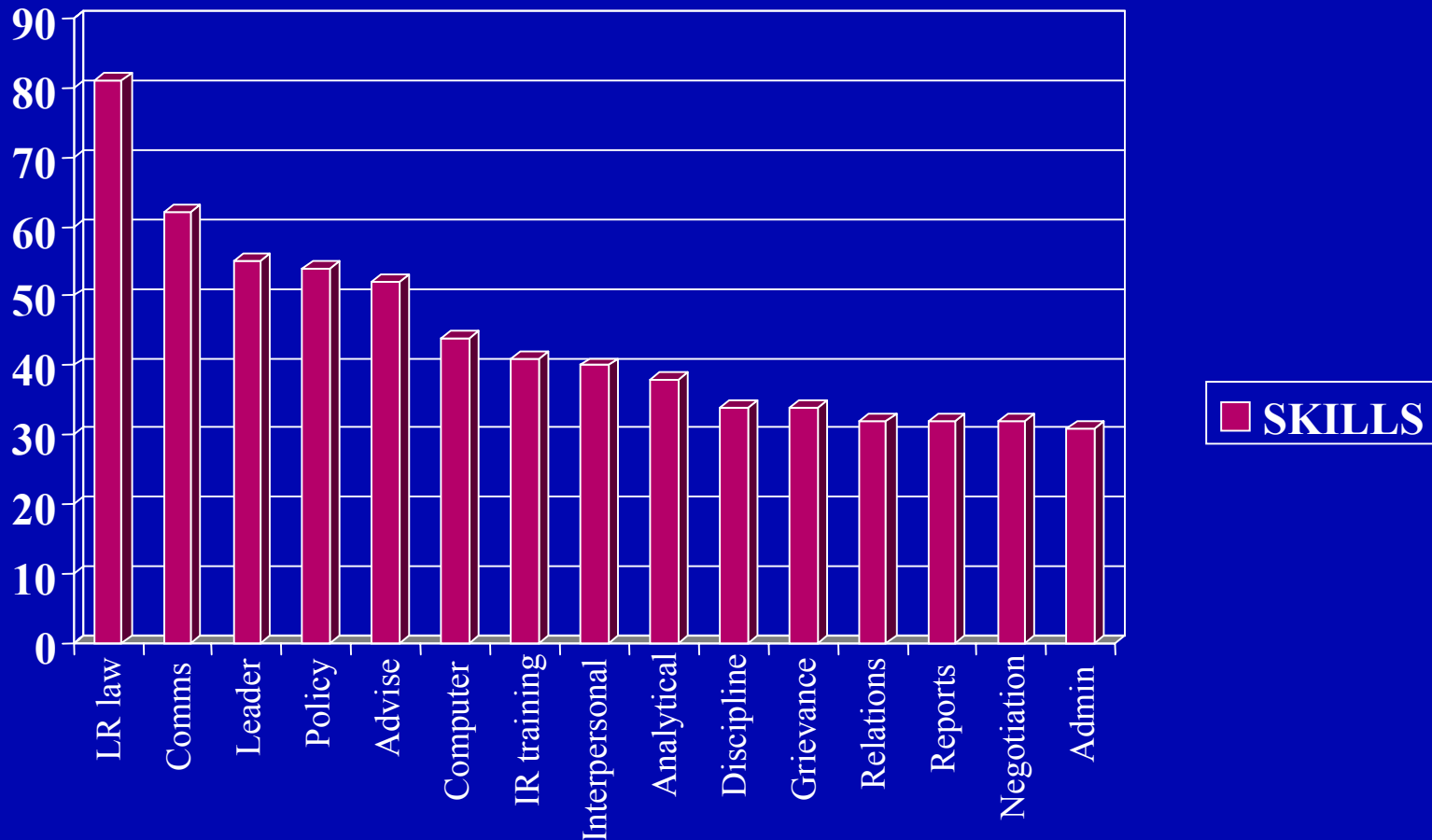
ECONOMIC SECTORS



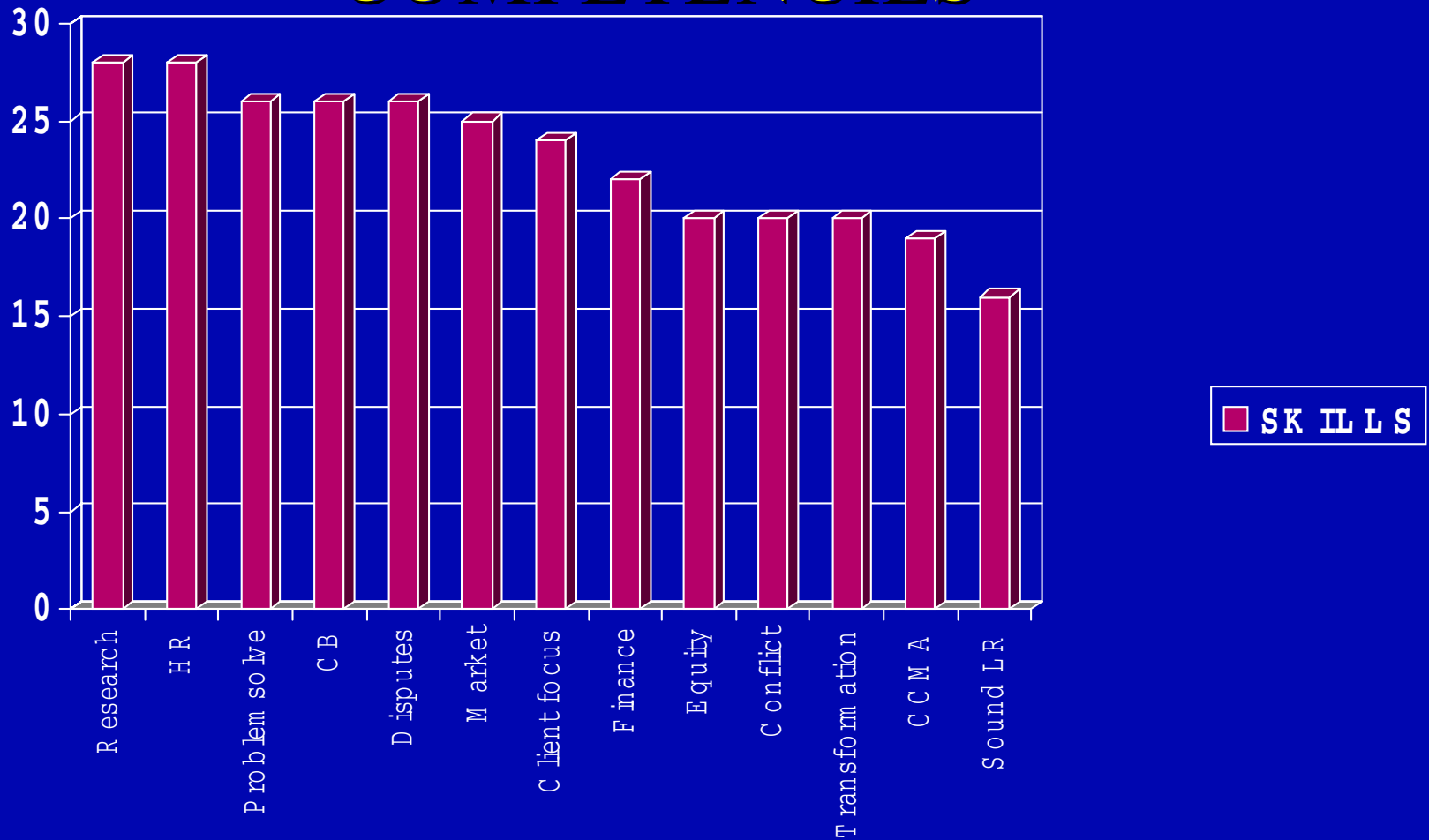
LEVELS OF IR POSITIONS



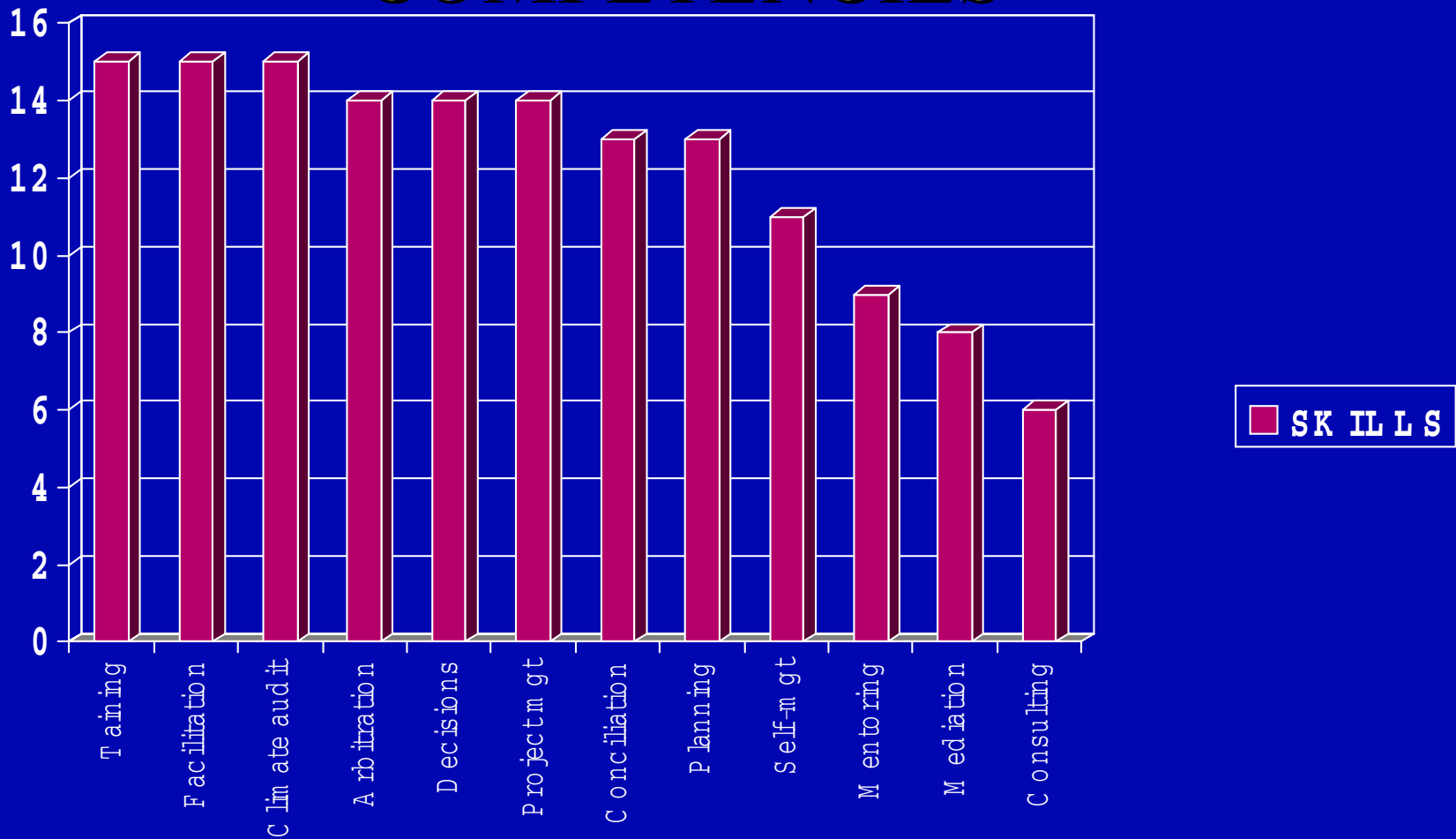
FREQUENCY RANKING OF IR COMPETENCIES ...



FREQUENCY RANKING OF IR COMPETENCIES



FREQUENCY RANKING OF IR COMPETENCIES



CONCLUSION

IR is not a single disciplinary field anymore. It has evolved into a multi-disciplinary field - more and different skills are needed in areas such as management, research, training and development, administration, computers and HR management.

IR COMPETENCIES FOR THE CHANGING WORK ENVIRONMENT: A SOUTH AFRICAN STUDY OF INDUSTRY REQUIREMENTS

Marius Meyer

Senior lecturer: Human Resource Development, Technikon SA
Tel.: +27 (11) 471-3549 or 082 859 3593
E-Mail: mmeyer@tsa.ac.za



CONCISE CURRICULUM VITAE

Marius Meyer is programme manager and senior lecturer in human resource development at Technikon of Southern Africa. He is also a consultant for the Institute for Organisation Development and Transformation. Prior to accepting a lecturing position, he was employed as a training and development practitioner. He co-ordinated and conducted training and organisation development interventions in the areas of employment equity and diversity, communication, management development, performance management and quality improvement. He is a registered personnel practitioner with the South African Board for Personnel Practice and has full membership of the following professional bodies: Institute of People Management, South African Society for Quality as well as the Industrial Relations Association of South Africa. He is also the national organiser for the SA Forum of the American Society for Training and Development and is on the executive board of the International Society for Performance Improvement (Southern African Chapter). Marius has a master's degree in Human Resource Management and is a senior assessor for the South African Excellence Foundation. He is also the editor of the book "*Managing Human Resource Development: An outcomes-based approach*" and co-editor of the new books "*Organisation Development and Transformation in South Africa*" and "*ETD Practices in South Africa*" both published by Butterworths. Marius lectures at RAU on a part-time basis and is a moderator at Technikon Witwatersrand. His research and consulting interest lies in the areas of management development, change management and organisation development. He facilitated interventions for Sappi, Standard Bank, Smile, South African Navy, Liberty Group, Matla Coal, Independent Development Trust, Department of Land Affairs, Department of Correctional Services, Western Metropolitan Local Council, Medscheme and Eskom.