

ATTUNED LEADERSHIP: AFRICAN HUMANISM AS A COMPASS – WEALTHWISE MAGAZINE BOOK REVIEW AND INTERVIEW

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ATTUNED LEADERSHIP – LESSONS ON AFRICAN HUMANISM IN LEADERSHIP

The past decade has been incremental for a number of discussions around the concept of leadership and what makes a good leadership. In his latest book, thinker, businessman, director and public speaker Dr. Reuel J. Khoza has re-opened the debate on leadership and good governance, introducing the concept of “attuned leadership”, portraying a leader attuned to his or her followers through empathy, compassion, integrity and humility.

Based on the African humanism concept of Ubuntu, as articulated in the Zulu proverb “umuntu ngumuntu nagabantu”, meaning “a person is a person because of others”, the concept of “attuned leadership” follows a groundbreaking work on leadership, the values of African humanism and the connection between corporate vision, business and community spirit in his previous writing, “Let Africa Lead”, subtitled “African Transformational Leadership for 21st Century Business”.

In “Attuned Leadership”, the reflective discussion of leadership and transformation continues with the direction for an ethical leadership in both African and global context for businesses, politics and governments. Both a practitioner and theorist in the field of African leadership, Dr. Khoza answered our questions about the current political and economic scene of South Africa and the continent, the lessons we should learn from the global crisis and how can attuned leadership make a deep impact in today’s world.

WealthWise magazine: What was the biggest motivation behind writing “Attuned Leadership” and how do you want it to be perceived in the current political and economical context on the continent?

Dr. Reuel Khoza: The main realization was that most of the leaders in South Africa and on the continent tend to drift away from the people they are supposed to lead and become what I have called “leaders in limbo”, especially because they lack a deep sense of their history, where they come from and where they are now, and very importantly, because they lost touch with the needs of the people and the way these people want to be led.

“Attuned Leadership” is my humble contribution to what I believe it is happening now in South Africa and the rest of the continent and hopefully the world can learn something from the principles which I humbly submit in the book, principles which are ethically, value-based and have an universal appeal. There must be a compelling vision for leaders to lead their people, but they must also depart from a solid base of good values.