

Learn from animal instincts, says Old Mutual

With many businesses presently facing gloomy financial prospects due to a depressing global economy, there is perhaps no better time to look at the leopard's behaviour for business guidance, says André Diederichs, Old Mutual's SMME specialist.



Just as the leopard is compelled in times of drought to move away from his natural habitat in order to survive, business people should also change their approach and move forward especially those entrepreneurs finding themselves faced with a shrinking market.

They too should review their prospects by perhaps adapting their products and services to remain relevant in a highly competitive market.

"In an era of plenty, with too much of the same, the challenge should be to create scarcity. For instance, this can be achieved by differentiating your product,

or service in such a way that it will have a fresh appeal to the market.

"Just as the leopard had to learn to climb trees to safeguard its prey from other hungry predators, so too should the entrepreneur reinvent his or her business to avoid permanent closure."

Entrepreneurs are the lifeblood of our economy, and we need to do as much as possible to instill confidence and support this valuable sector. There is a wealth of information to be learned from nature, and at Old Mutual, we believe that entrepreneurs should arm themselves with this knowledge to explore the full

potential of their businesses," Diederichs added.

For over a decade, leading South African financial services company, Old Mutual has been at the forefront of empowering and supporting SMMEs and has established a centre of competence for SMMEs, which includes the delivery of suitable financial products and services.

The story of the leopard is but one of many other animal analogies for small business people in a book called *Business Jungle*. This book can be ordered from "on the dot" -0861668368 or send an email to naledi@mweb.co.za

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