

Choose to future-proof yourself this Black Friday

By [Di Charton](#)

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It is the time of the year when everyone is gearing up for Black Friday and planning their cheap deals and clever purchases. With the temptation and the belief that there will be bargains galore, it could lead to a deadly combination. The hype and excitement that accompanies the biggest sale of the year can result in many shoppers being sucked into a retail whirlwind where they are overwhelmed by options and tend to make hasty buying decisions.



Image source: Karolina Grabowska from [Pexels](#)

A study conducted by PayU South Africa revealed that in 2021 clothing and electronics were the biggest-selling items with a 19% increase from the previous year. But with the current economic state that the country is in, perhaps it's time to rethink your Black Friday purchases this year.

With a possible recession looming as a result of load shedding and Russia's war with Ukraine, many families have been living in survival mode, making it impossible for them to budget or save for the future as they struggle against the rising cost of living.

Invest in yourself

This is why future-proofing your earning ability should be top of your wish list this Black Friday. It is all about buying effectively on Black Friday and making financial decisions that will help build a stronger financial future.

We all love bright and shiny objects, but those objects fade and age over time. The pair of sneakers that you think you have to have now will hold no value for you in a couple of years' time. But investing in your education is a purchase that will keep on giving, long after the rush of opening the box and seeing your bright and shiny object for the first time. The knowledge you gain will only be the start.



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Investing in empowering yourself is critical. Staying up to date with trends and changes in your industry, or the field in which you're interested, is so important. The world is changing so rapidly, and committing to being a lifelong learner, is one way of ensuring you always remain relevant.

Studying acts like a multiplier. It takes all those ingredients that you bring as a unique individual and helps craft it into something more. It is through education that you get exposed to new ways of thinking, different people, different opportunities and ultimately, the discipline to get there. It expands our minds and leaves them in a better place than when we started. And that can only lead to better things. It is important to attain the education, skills and work ethic to be self-reliant and contribute positively to society.

Online learning

I would advise that you turn your attention to online courses. This is an easy tool to empower yourself and future-proof your earning ability. Online courses have primarily been designed for those people who are either working or studying something else, and who require flexibility in terms of their time. They are strongly focussed on outcomes and equipping the student with skills that are both practical and applicable. As a course developer myself, I know that it is important that our courses are developed in close conjunction with the industry, which ensures we are always sharing the most recent and relevant knowledge, as well as developing courses that the industry has told us they need. Look out for institutions that do this, as in this way, you know that you are studying something that is both needed and up-to-date.

Over the past few years, we have seen a growing number of smaller businesses that take on our graduates. Employment is not just limited to the largest businesses and agencies and we have seen a growing number of entrepreneurs and small- to medium-sized businesses actively seeking the skills we nurture and develop. The development of small businesses, and the nurturing of entrepreneurs, is critical for the future economic growth of our country - something we are actively looking to do through the numerous courses we offer.



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The job market is brutal at the moment and South Africa has a high unemployment rate of about 35%. Think of different ways to get a start within your industry. You might not always get to start in the exact role you would like to ultimately do, but beginning somewhere is never a waste. I always advise my students to do some voluntary work for an NGO within their field

in order to build up experience.

It is often the challenge where employers are wanting experience but you need the break in order to get there. Doing some work for organisations that need it helps build proof points of what you can do, together with building up references, as well as showing you have practical skills and ultimately some experience.

You do you

I wish someone had told me to focus on what fuelled me – not just to focus on what I was good at. I had no idea that you could make a living in the creative spaces and the world of advertising and marketing, where I ultimately ended up, as it wasn't something that I was ever exposed to. Having said that, I believe that even though my studies were far removed from the world I ended up in, I will never regret it because it gave me a chance to think differently and be a unique problem solver. Nothing studied is a waste and knowledge fuels more knowledge.

My dad always told me to learn something new every day. It really was the best advice ever and something I still apply to this day. I am a firm believer in being a lifelong learner. We have a sign at the entrance to Red & Yellow that says “Be A Sponge” and I feel it personifies this notion perfectly. Also, seek to learn. Always look to grow. Never stop absorbing the world around you.

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