

TERESA MCNEILL

A VISIONARY LEADER SHAPING THE FUTURE OF DIGITAL EDUCATION IN AFRICA



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MY LEADERSHIP STYLE IS HIGHLY HANDS-ON, FOCUSING ON ACCOUNTABILITY, COMMUNICATION, MEASURABLE OUTCOMES & SYSTEMS ALIGNMENT

TERESA MCNEILL
GROUP CEO
DEGSA

Teresa McNeill is the Group CEO of DEGSA, with over three decades of experience across finance, HR, telecommunications, education technology, and digital transformation. She is recognised for driving operational excellence, workforce innovation, and HR technology solutions that bridge education, employability, and organisational growth across Africa.

Women leaders in the EdTech sector are increasingly shaping the future of digital learning through innovation, operational excellence, and people-centric leadership. As educational institutions and organisations continue to embrace technology-driven transformation, female executives are playing a crucial role in building sustainable learning ecosystems, improving accessibility, and aligning technology with evolving workforce needs. Their ability to combine strategic vision with organisational transformation is helping redefine how education is delivered in a rapidly changing world. One such leader making a notable impact is Teresa McNeill, Group Chief Executive Officer of DEGSA. Teresa's professional journey began in 1993 in finance and administration, where she quickly earned recognition for her strategic thinking, operational improvements, and ability to transform business processes.

Over the course of her career, she gained extensive exposure across industries including telecommunications, education, HR consulting, technology, and software development. This diverse experience enabled her to build a strong understanding of organisational operations, business strategy, and people management. Working across multiple business functions and environments further strengthened her expertise in leadership development, HR transformation, operational strategy, and digital innovation. Her professional experience with organisations such as Nokia South Africa, Comtech, Altech Netstar, and IMM GSM helped shape her leadership philosophy and strategic approach toward business growth.

Today, Teresa continues to focus on aligning people, systems, technology, and strategy to create sustainable organisational success within the digital education and HR technology landscape. Her journey reflects the growing influence of women leaders who are not

only driving innovation in EdTech but also redefining leadership through adaptability, transformation, and long-term vision. Let's read.

How would you define Degsa's mission and vision, and its contribution to advancing education, skills development, and employability across Africa?

At DEGSA, our mission is to drive transformation through digital innovation, Human Capital development, and integrated education technology solutions. Our vision is to become a globally recognised leader in HR technology, qualification administration platforms, and digital transformation through innovative solutions like BettaSuite.com. We support institutions and organisations with scalable digital platforms that improve learner engagement, workforce development, operational efficiency, and employability readiness. Our focus is on bridging education and workplace functionality, ensuring individuals and organisations are better equipped to succeed in an evolving digital economy across Africa and beyond.

As Group CEO, how do you balance strategic thinking with operational efficiency while driving alignment across cross-functional teams?

I believe effective leadership requires balancing visionary thinking with strong operational execution. Strategy without delivery creates limited impact, while operations without direction restrict innovation and growth. My leadership style is highly hands-on, focusing on accountability, communication, measurable outcomes, and systems alignment. I ensure cross-functional teams understand how their roles contribute to broader organisational goals, creating stronger collaboration and transparency. Because my experience spans finance, HR, education systems, operations, and software development, I can bridge communication gaps between technical and strategic environments. This integrated leadership philosophy is strongly reflected in the development of BettaSuite.com and our broader digital transformation initiatives.

How do you view the evolving EdTech and workforce development landscape in Africa, and what role is Degsa playing in bridging the gap between education and employability?

Africa's EdTech and workforce development landscape is evolving rapidly due to digital transformation and

the increasing demand for workplace-ready skills. One of the biggest challenges remains bridging the gap between traditional education and practical employability. At DEGSA, we address this through integrated qualification management systems, workforce functionality platforms, and Human Capital solutions that create scalable digital ecosystems. Through our HR Strategic Auditing and HCM solutions, we help organisations develop, manage, and retain talent more effectively while ensuring learners are better prepared for real-world workforce environments.

How does Degsa engage with students at the college level, and what strategies do you adopt to identify, nurture, and transition young talent into the workforce?

At DEGSA, we focus on exposing students to practical workplace systems, digital platforms, and operational processes while they are still within educational environments. Through integrated qualification administration and learner support systems, we help students understand real business functionality and workforce expectations. From an HR transformation perspective, I prioritise adaptability, resilience, innovation, communication skills, and growth potential rather than relying solely on academic performance. Our HR and HCM initiatives also support organisations in developing succession pipelines, graduate integration programmes, and sustainable workforce development strategies.

Being recognized as the 'Top Group CEO of the Year from Africa – EdTech 2026' is a significant milestone—what does this recognition mean to you, and what advice would you offer to aspiring women leaders aiming to create impact in education and technology?

Receiving the 'Top Group CEO of the Year from Africa – EdTech 2026' recognition is deeply meaningful because it reflects years of perseverance, resilience, innovation, and commitment to transformation through technology and Human Capital development. It validates the vision behind DEGSA and acknowledges the collective efforts of the teams, mentors, and organisations that contributed to this journey. My advice to aspiring women leaders is to never allow fear, limitations, or external perceptions to define their potential. Success requires resilience, continuous growth, authenticity, strategic thinking, innovation, and the courage to lead with purpose and integrity. **GWL**