Skribble

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THRESHOLD

Life on the edge of what's next

MOMENTS THAT CHANGE EVERYTHING

OLD PATHS, NEW POSSIBILITIES

20th ANNIVERSARY Resource Intermediaries Limited

- **COVER STORY** By Dr. Alex A. Okoh
- **HIGHLIGHT** RIL @ 20 Anniversary
- **RIL 20 YEAR JOURNEY** By Ademolasoye Awonaike
- **MUST READ** Almost There: the in-between season

HONOURING A MILESTONE

... easing business burdens

Resource Intermediaries Limited

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I am Olufunmi Akerele, the founder and creative force behind Rele Apparel, a contemporary fashion brand creating refined, well-tailored pieces for men and women who appreciate structure and thoughtful design.

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Beyond technology, Ade is committed to creating opportunities for people to thrive through innovation, inclusion, and community impact.
He is a sought-after speaker, mentor, and thought leader who believes that the greatest transformations occur when people have the courage to step beyond what is familiar and embrace what is possible.



DR. EMMANUEL S. ABAYOMI

Dr. Emmanuel S. Abayomi
MBBS (Ib), FMCPsych (Nig), Cert. REBT (AEI, New York)
is a psychiatrist, psychotherapist, and human optimisation expert with over a decade of experience supporting mental and emotional wellbeing.
A TEDx speaker, he uses digital platforms to help people navigate everyday emotional struggles.
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OLUFUNMI AKERELE

Olufunmi Akerele is a Nigerian entrepreneur and the founder and creative director of RELE APPAREL, a Lagos-based fashion brand specialising in bespoke tailoring and refined corporate dressing for men and women.
Born and raised in Kogi State, Akerele brings together two worlds that have shaped her entrepreneurial journey: business and fashion. Her professional career spans Jumia, OmniBiz, Shuttlers, and Autochek, where she gained experience in sales, business development, strategic partnerships, and commercial growth.
In 2020, she launched RELE, beginning with a collection of jackets before expanding into bespoke suits and contemporary corporate wear.
Today, she leads the brand with a focus on quality, thoughtful design, and personalised service.
Beyond the clothes, Akerele is building a brand that reflects her understanding of business, her appreciation for craftsmanship, and her ambition to establish RELE as a distinctive name in the fashion industry.
Her story is one of enterprise, creativity, and the courage to build something of her own.



LANRE POPOOLA

Lanre Popoola is a senior finance transformation leader and infrastructure specialist based in Saudi Arabia. He brings deep functional expertise across capital-intensive sectors, with a focused concentration on Ports & Terminals, Maritime Logistics, Shipping, and large-scale Infrastructure Development.
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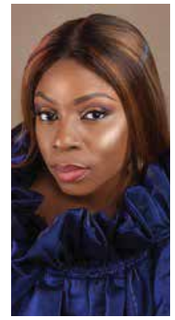
A Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria (FCA), 'Lanre holds an Executive MBA from Lagos Business School and a degree in Economics Education from the University of Lagos. His technical credentials include CFA Level 2 (CFA Institute), ACCA Diploma in International Financial Reporting, and associate memberships with CITN and the Chartered Institute of Stockbrokers.
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MARTIN ADEBAYO

Martin Adebayo is a Business Development Manager, Product Manager, analyst, writer, and editor with a Bachelor's degree in Philosophy from the University of Benin.
He began his career at ChrisadronSolutions UCH, Ibadan, before joining theBUNKer Ibadan as a Business Support Officer.
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His interests span product and service management, business analysis, customer experience, and people management. As a writer and contributor, he has explored different articles and contributed to different publication right from his teenage years. His guiding philosophy is that humanity should be at the centre of every pursuit, advancing human dignity, meaningful innovation, and societal progress.



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Shola Adekoya is a Legal and Community Impact Professional with over a decade of Human Resources experience in recruitment, talent development, and conflict resolution.
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Passionate about child protection, family justice, and equity, Shola integrates legal advocacy, people leadership, and community engagement to support families and drive positive change across communities.



My dearest Skribble Community,

Welcome to the Latest Edition of Skribble! There is a precise, electric moment right before a major shift occurs—a quiet breath suspended between where we have been, what we have achieved, and where we are heading. That space is The Threshold.

While some ponder how to move, others debate where or when to take the step. Wherever you find yourself in this season, this edition of Skribble is your compass. Living on the edge of what's next demands both courage and vision, and inside these pages, we explore the future and what it truly means to occupy this dynamic boundary.

We invite you to reflect on two decades of institution-building in an inspiring feature on page 16 by Ademolasoye Awonaike, MD/CEO of Resource Intermediaries Ltd: 20 Years of Purpose, People, and Progress. Alongside it, our special RIL at 20 Anniversary Highlights celebrates the longstanding clients, dedicated staff, and Board members who demonstrate that true organizational sustainability is always rooted in its people.

Further in, we address the real-world challenge of workplace dynamics. Head to page 27 for essential insights on navigating workplace toxicity, and turn to page 84 for a fresh perspective dedicated to job seekers—a reminder that the market is not against you, but simply waiting for you to effectively demonstrate your value. For those navigating personal transformation, Daniella Awuma's poignant piece on page 45, The Soft Power of Becoming, explores how we evolve through heartbreak, loss, and healing.

In a world moving at unprecedented speed, remaining static is no longer an option. The world has grown too noisy for quiet passivity. Threshold is more than a theme; it is a call to action. Our sincere gratitude goes out to our brilliant contributors, the dedicated editorial team, and every brand that partnered with us to bring this issue to life. As always, your voice matters to us. Help us foster a vibrant community by sharing your thoughts and feedback—send us a DM on Instagram @Skribble_magazine.

Step across the line. Enjoy the read!

Yours Faithfully

KOM





THRESHOLD: Life On The Edge Of What's Next

By Dr. Alex A. Okoh

In 1975, Kodak engineer Steven Sasson invented the world's first digital camera. Management saw the technology but feared it would undermine Kodak's highly profitable film business. For decades, the company resisted the transition to digital photography while competitors embraced it. By 2012, the once-dominant Kodak had filed for bankruptcy protection. Kodak's failure was not that it missed the future; it was that it refused to embrace it.

By contrast, Reed Hastings, co-founder of Netflix, built a successful DVD rental business in 1997 but recognised early that streaming would eventually replace physical media. In 2007, while DVDs still dominated the company's revenues, Netflix pivoted aggressively into streaming. The decision transformed the company into a global entertainment leader, while Blockbuster, the industry's dominant player, filed for bankruptcy in 2010. Hastings succeeded because he was willing to disrupt his own success before the market did it for him.

There are moments in the life of every individual, organisation, and nation when the future arrives before we are fully prepared for it.

These moments are rarely announced. They do not come with warning signs or ceremonial declarations. Instead, they emerge quietly at the intersection of change and necessity, forcing us to confront uncomfortable realities while presenting opportunities that previous generations could scarcely imagine. Such moments define history.

The Industrial Revolution transformed economies and societies. The rise of the internet redefined communication, commerce, and knowledge. The mobile phone revolution altered the way billions of people live and work. Today, humanity stands at another such moment. We are living through a period of unprecedented technological advancement, demographic shifts, economic realignment, climate transition, and institutional transformation. We are standing at the threshold of what comes next.

The theme of this edition of Skribble Magazine could not be more timely. A threshold is more than a point of transition. It is a point of decision. It is where familiar assumptions are tested and where the future begins to separate itself from the past. It is where individuals, organisations, and nations must decide whether they will merely react to change or actively shape it. As I reflect on this theme, I am reminded of how dramatically the world has changed over the past two decades.

When Resource Intermediaries Limited was founded in 2006, the business environment was fundamentally different. Smartphones were not yet ubiquitous. Artificial Intelligence was largely confined to research institutions. Remote work was uncommon. Digital banking was still evolving. Social media had not yet become a defining force in politics, business, and society.

Today, these technologies are woven into the fabric of everyday life. The speed of change has accelerated to a degree rarely seen in human history.

Artificial Intelligence is transforming the workplace and industries. Renewable energy technologies are reshaping global energy markets. Automation is redefining productivity. Digital platforms are changing consumer behaviour. Data has become one of the most valuable assets in the global economy.

According to the International

It is where familiar assumptions are tested and where the future begins to separate itself from the past. It is where individuals, organisations, and nations must decide whether they will merely react to change or actively shape it.



Monetary Fund, the global economy now exceeds US$110 trillion in annual output. At the same time, the World Economic Forum estimates that nearly a quarter of existing jobs worldwide will undergo significant transformation within the next five years due to advances in technology and changing economic conditions.

These developments present both opportunities and challenges. For leaders, the challenge is not merely understanding what is changing. The greater challenge is understanding what those changes mean and responding effectively.

History demonstrates that the organisations and nations that thrive are not necessarily those with the greatest resources. They are often those that recognise change early, adapt quickly, and execute effectively.
This reality is particularly relevant for Africa. The continent is entering a period of profound significance in global affairs. By 2050, Africa's population is expected to approach 2.5 billion people. One in every four people on Earth will be African. The continent will possess the world's largest workforce and one of its largest consumer markets.
Few regions in history have entered the global stage with such demographic potential. Yet demographic advantage alone does not guarantee prosperity. Population growth becomes an asset only when supported by education, skills development, infrastructure, governance, innovation, and economic opportunity.
This is where leadership matters. Throughout my professional journey, across banking, consulting, entrepreneurship, and public service, I have come to appreciate that sustainable development is fundamentally an institutional challenge.

Countries do not prosper because of good intentions. They prosper because of strong institutions. Businesses do not succeed because they have ambitious mission statements. They succeed because they consistently execute sound strategies. Likewise, individuals do not achieve excellence through aspiration alone. They achieve it through discipline, continuous learning, resilience, and purposeful action.

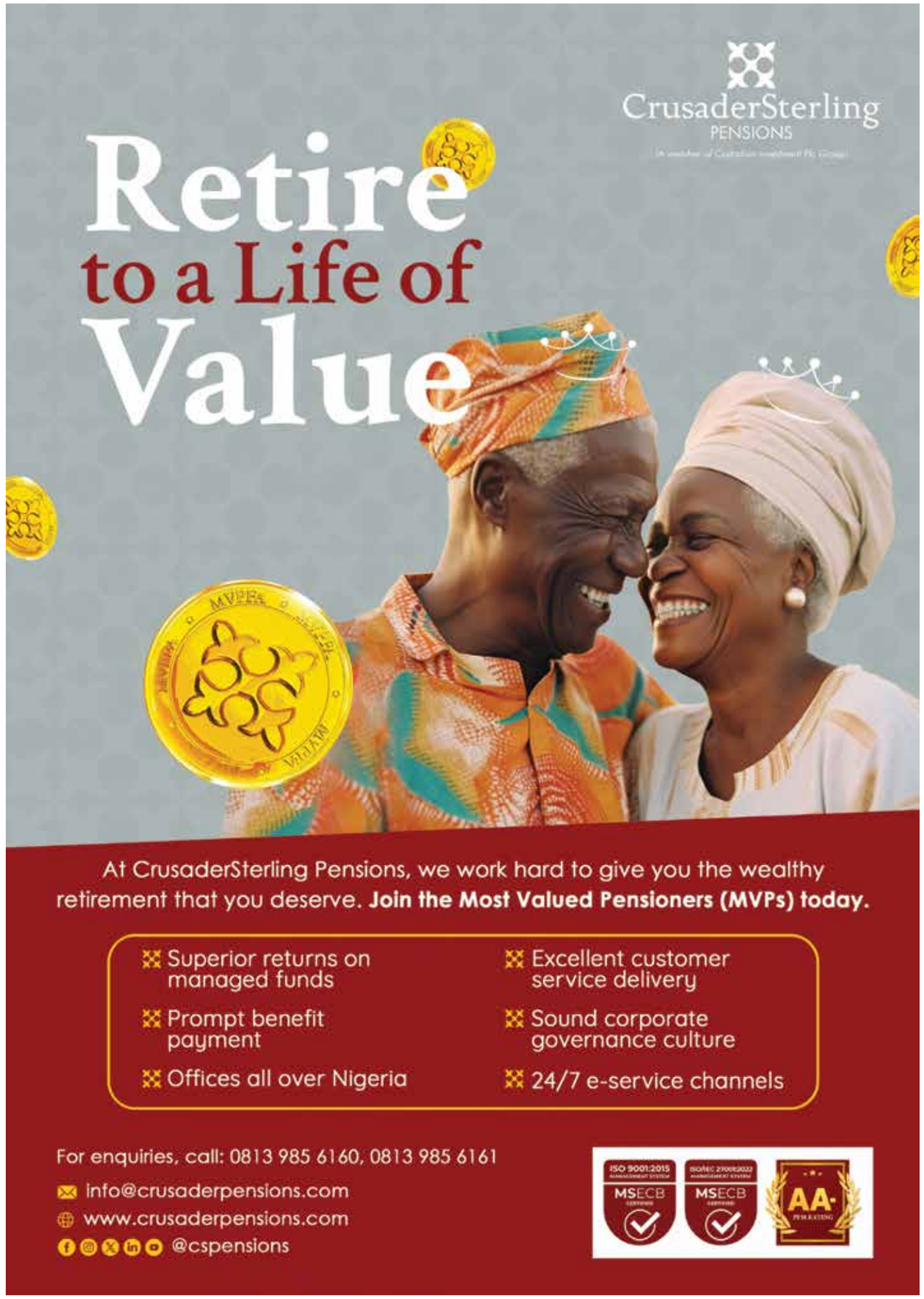
The future will demand these qualities more than ever before. Perhaps nowhere is this more evident than in the changing nature of work. The workplace of the future will bear little resemblance to the workplace of the past.

Technology will continue to automate repetitive tasks. Artificial Intelligence will increasingly support decision-making. Digital collaboration tools will eliminate traditional geographic boundaries. New industries will emerge while others evolve or disappear.
Yet amid all this change, one truth remains constant: people will continue to matter. Technology can enhance productivity, but it cannot replace character. Algorithms can process information, but they cannot substitute wisdom. Machines can execute instructions, but they cannot replicate vision, empathy, courage, or integrity.
The organisations that will thrive in the coming decades will therefore

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THRESHOLD: Life On The Edge Of What's Next

be those that invest not only in technology but also in people. Human capital will remain the ultimate differentiator. This is particularly significant for Africa. The continent's greatest resource is not beneath the ground. It is not oil, gas, minerals, or agricultural land. Its greatest resource is its people.

The future competitiveness of African economies will depend largely on their ability to educate, empower, and deploy their human capital effectively. This requires a fundamental shift in how we think about development. Economic growth can no longer be viewed solely through the lens of natural resources or public expenditure. Increasingly, growth will be driven by innovation, entrepreneurship, technology, and knowledge.

The most valuable companies in the world today derive much of their value from ideas rather than physical assets. Intellectual capital has become a critical driver of wealth creation. For Africa to fully realise its potential, it must create environments where ideas can flourish. This means strengthening institutions, improving infrastructure, enhancing access to quality education, supporting entrepreneurship, encouraging investment, and fostering a culture of innovation.

It also means embracing reform. Reform is rarely easy. It often requires difficult decisions, patience, and perseverance. Yet history repeatedly demonstrates that societies willing to undertake necessary reforms are better positioned to achieve long-term prosperity. Progress rarely occurs by accident. It is usually the result of deliberate choices made by leaders who are willing to look beyond immediate challenges and focus on future possibilities.

As Africa navigates the complexities of the twenty-first century, this mindset will become increasingly important. The continent is uniquely positioned to benefit from several global trends simultaneously. The energy transition presents opportunities for investment in renewable energy and critical minerals. Digital transformation offers pathways to financial inclusion and economic participation. Expanding regional integration through initiatives such as the African Continental Free Trade Area promises to create larger markets and enhance competitiveness. These opportunities are real, but they are not automatic; they require leadership. Leadership today is fundamentally different from leadership in previous eras. The command-and-control models of the past are becoming less effective in an increasingly complex and interconnected world. Modern leadership requires collaboration, adaptability, emotional intelligence, strategic thinking, and the ability to inspire confidence amid uncertainty. It requires leaders who are comfortable navigating ambiguity. It requires leaders who understand that learning is a lifelong process. Most importantly, it requires leaders who recognise that their primary responsibility is not merely managing the present but preparing for the future. This brings us back to the concept of the threshold. A threshold represents possibility. It is the point where old limitations begin to dissolve and new opportunities emerge. It is where courage becomes more important than comfort. It is where vision becomes more important than certainty. Today, individuals, businesses, institutions, and nations are all standing at such a threshold. The choices we make today will shape the opportunities available to future generations. Will we invest sufficiently in education and skills? Will we embrace innovation and technological advancement? Will we strengthen institutions and improve governance? Will we create environments that encourage entrepreneurship and enterprise? Will we build organisations capable of adapting to change? These questions will determine whether we merely witness the future or actively create it. The future is not a destination waiting to be discovered. It is a reality being built through the decisions we make every day. As we stand on the edge of what comes next, we should remember that every significant achievement in human history once appeared uncertain. Every transformative idea was once considered improbable. Every breakthrough began with individuals willing to see beyond present limitations.

The threshold before us is therefore not something to fear. It is something to embrace. For beyond it lies the possibility of a more prosperous, innovative, inclusive, and resilient future. And the responsibility for building that future belongs to all of us. ▪

As we stand on the edge of what comes next, we should remember that every significant achievement in human history once appeared uncertain.

BEYOND EFFICIENCY: The Human Edge, Human Dignity, Work, And Artificial Intelligence - A Reflection Inspired By Pope Francis.

By Martin Adebayo

INTRODUCTION

On May 26th, 2026, Pope Leo XIV promulgated his first Encyclical titled Magnificat Humanitas, which addresses a central question of the modern age: how to safeguard human dignity in a world increasingly shaped by artificial intelligence. His concern is not technology itself or against technology, but the tendency to reduce human persons to functions within systems driven by data, automation, and efficiency. He insists that the human person must remain the ultimate goal of all technological advancement. In a rapidly evolving workplace, the critical challenge is ensuring that innovation enhances rather than diminishes human dignity. True progress, therefore, must always be measured by how well it protects the human person. This write-up will reflect on the areas Pope Leo XIV outlined in his work, and its effects on the Human Person, the workplace, and the labor market today and tomorrow

HUMAN DIGNITY AS THE FOUNDATION OF WORK

At the heart of Leo XIV's writing is the conviction that human dignity is intrinsic. It does not depend on productivity, economic Value, or social Status alone. Modern workplaces often fail in this regard by treating individuals as outputs or data points, valued only for performance. This reduction is not merely a technical flaw but a moral failure.

Work should serve the human person, not define them. Without respect for dignity, work loses its meaning. This perspective is rooted in the belief that humans are created in the image of God (Gen. 1:27), in Kant's principle that people are ends in themselves, not means to an end, in which the work is the subject of work, not the other way round. These traditions emphasize that the value of work lies in its contribution to human Flourishing.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND HUMAN IDENTITY

The rise of artificial intelligence raises a deeper question: How can humanity remain fully human in a technologically saturated world? For Pope Leo XIV, this is fundamentally a moral issue. Technology shapes not only external conditions but also human identity, autonomy, and decision-making.



While AI can enhance life, it must never redefine what it means to be human. A significant danger lies not only in external control by machines but in an internal shift where humans and governance has led to what can be described as "silent ethical displacements" where responsibility is gradually transferred from human judgment to technical processes. This weakens moral accountability and diminishes human agency.

Across traditions, this concern is echoed. Scripture emphasizes freedom (Gal.5:1), while the Qu'ran (18:29) affirms moral choice. Aristotle's concept of Phronesis highlights the necessity of practical wisdom in ethical decision-making, resisting reduction to calculation. These perspectives affirm that human identity must not be subordinated to technology.

LABOR AS HUMAN FULFILMENT

Work is more than a means of survival; it is a space for meaning, creativity, and self-realization. Pope Leo XIV describes labor as participation in creation, in which individuals express purpose and responsibility. When reduced to mere output or survival, work loses its deeper significance.

In an age of automation, labor risks becoming purely transactional rather than formative. Efficiency and speed, while valuable, do not necessarily reflect human value. The greater danger today is not simply unemployment but the loss of meaningful work. Without meaning, work cannot sustain the identity of purpose.

This understanding is reflected in both religious and philosophical traditions, which view labor as a form of stewardship and personal development. Work contributes not only to economic systems but to the growth and dignity of the individual.

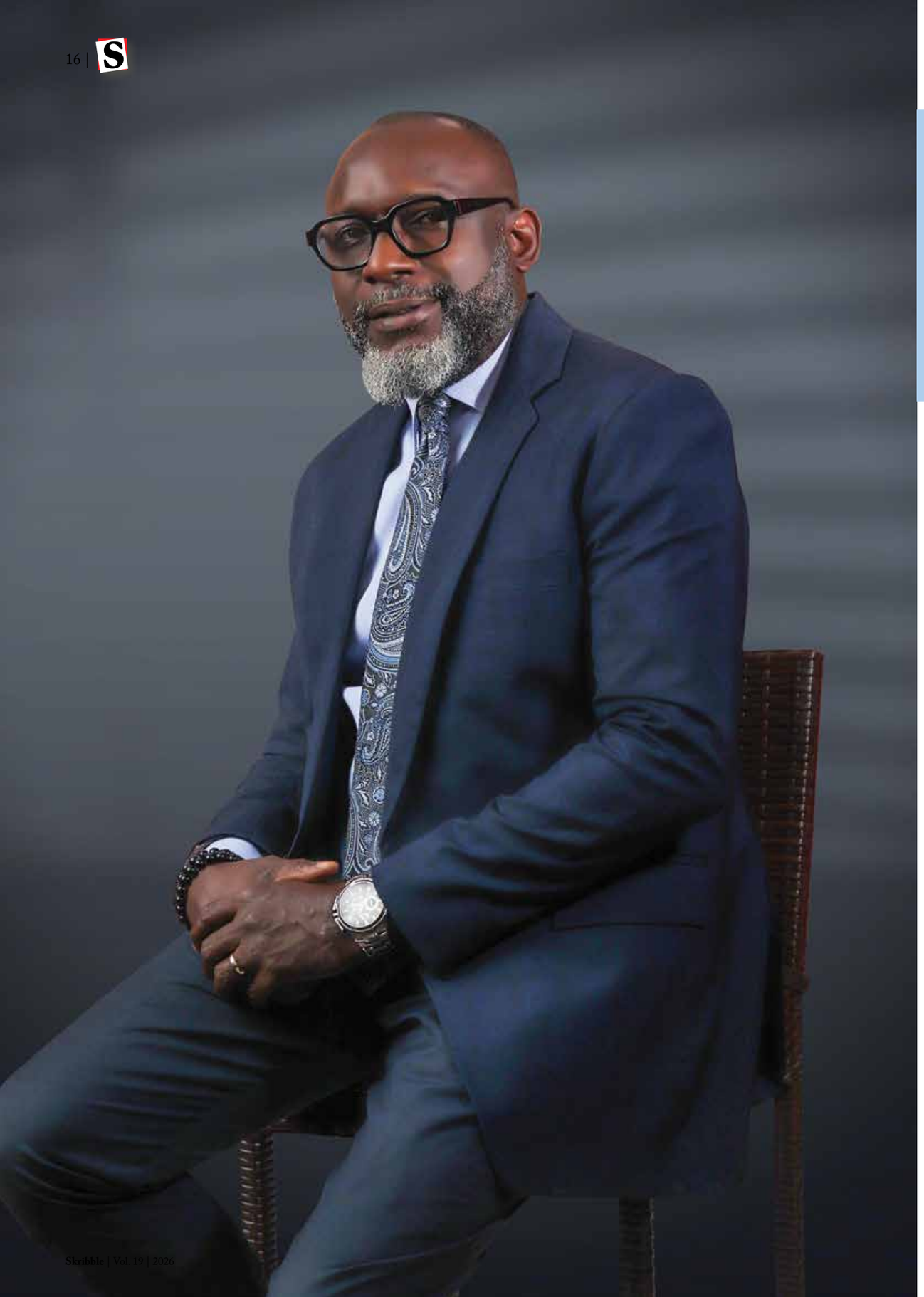
Labor is a form of stewardship and personal development. Work contributes not only to economic systems but to the growth and dignity of the individual.

Work must also be evaluated in light of the common good. Systems of labor are not neutral; they shape inclusion, opportunity, and human flourishing. Structures that benefit only a few while excluding many fail the test of justice. He emphasizes that true progress enables all individuals to participate meaningfully in work and realize their potential. Economic systems must therefore be judged by how well they uphold dignity and promote inclusive growth. Pope Leo XIII also emphasized that work is not a commodity and that workers should never be treated as tools.

LEADERSHIP IS SERVING OTHERS WITH TRUTH AND INTEGRITY

Leadership, for Pope Leo XIV, is fundamentally ethical and rooted in services, not control or domination.

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BUILDING AN INSTITUTION

Twenty Years Of Purpose, People And Progress

By Ademolasoye Awonaike; MD/CEO Resource Intermediaries Limited

True resilience is rarely measured when the waters are calm. It is revealed in moments that demand unwavering conviction. Looking back over the past twenty years, I have come to appreciate that organizations are not built by chance. They are shaped by purposeful decisions, quiet acts of courage, and an unwavering commitment to remain faithful to a vision even when the path ahead is uncertain. As Resource Intermediaries Limited marks its twentieth anniversary, I find myself reflecting not only on the milestones we have achieved but also on the convictions that inspired our journey. Ours has never been simply the story of building a successful business. It is the story of embracing purpose, earning trust, creating opportunities, and laying the foundation for an institution designed to endure.

My professional career began in Nigeria's financial services industry, where I had the privilege of serving across four leading new generation banks (Citizens International Bank, Broad Bank of Nigeria Limited, NNB International Bank and Unity Bank). Those years provided an invaluable foundation for everything that followed. Rising through the ranks to become a Branch Manager exposed me to the discipline, pace, and strategic demands of leadership. Banking taught me the importance of excellence in execution, accountability, and earning people's confidence through consistent performance. Over time, however, I realized that growth is not always about climbing higher within familiar surroundings. Sometimes it requires the courage to leave behind certainty in pursuit of purpose.

When Nigeria's banking industry underwent its historic consolidation in 2006, many regarded it as one of the most exciting periods for career advancement. New opportunities emerged almost overnight, and many colleagues encouraged me to remain within the industry and take advantage of the possibilities ahead. By every conventional measure, staying appeared to be the wiser decision. Even my wife, who also came from a banking background, understandably approached the idea of leaving with caution. Like many people close to me, she recognized the uncertainty that accompanied such a decision. I did not have every detail carefully planned, nor could I confidently predict what lay ahead. What I did possess was conviction. I believed there was another assignment waiting for me, and although I could not yet see the complete picture, I trusted God to order my steps. Looking back today, I recognize that this decision became one of the defining moments of my professional life. Leadership often requires us to move before every answer becomes available, trusting that purpose will reveal itself one step at a time.

On July 1st 2006, Resource Intermediaries Limited was formally incorporated, marking the beginning of a journey that none of us could have fully imagined.

Not long afterwards, that conviction found unexpected confirmation. One morning, I received a call from my General Manager, Mr. Olusoji Oyawoye. At the time, I was with Unity Bank, which had emerged from the merger of several legacy banks, including NNB International Bank. He invited me to meet him over coffee. Like many professional conversations, it began informally. Before long, however, it became clear that this meeting would change the direction of my career.

During our discussion, Mr. Olusoji Oyawoye shared a bold and carefully considered vision. He spoke passionately about establishing a company that would address a significant gap we had both observed within the banking sector. While organizations increasingly relied on outsourced personnel, many of those employees functioned without clearly defined employment structures or the level of professionalism they deserved. He believed there was an opportunity to build an organization that would redefine the outsourcing industry by placing professionalism, structure, and respect for people at its core. What impressed me most was not simply the idea itself but the depth of preparation behind it. This was not a passing ambition. It was supported by a well-developed business plan and a compelling vision for creating meaningful change within an emerging industry. More importantly, he was looking for people who shared that conviction and were willing to commit themselves to building something that had never been attempted at that scale.

The opportunity immediately resonated with me because it aligned with my own desire to build an organization capable of creating lasting value for clients, employees, and the wider business community. I embraced the vision wholeheartedly.

Out of respect for the professional relationship, I had built with my then Managing Director, Mr. Alex Okoh, now Dr. Alex Okoh, I requested a short period to manage my transition appropriately before committing fully to the new venture. The response I received remains one of the most memorable moments of my career. Mr. Olusoji Oyawoye smiled and explained that our meeting had taken place at the specific request of Dr. Alex Okoh, who had personally recommended that I be invited to join the proposed organization. Unknown to me, my reputation had already opened a door I did not know existed. That experience reinforced a lesson I have carried throughout my career. The reputation we build through integrity, professionalism, and consistent performance often creates opportunities long before we become aware of them. Leadership is not measured only by the positions we occupy but by the confidence others place in our character and our ability to contribute meaningfully when new opportunities arise.

With the decision made, there was no turning back. On July 1st 2006, Resource Intermediaries Limited was formally incorporated, marking the beginning of a journey that none of us could have fully imagined. What had started as a conversation over coffee became the foundation of an organization that would grow into one of Nigeria's leading Human Resource Outsourcing and business support companies. The months leading to our official commencement were both exciting and demanding. While office renovations were still underway, we were simultaneously recruiting employees, developing operational processes, and preparing to serve our first clients. Those early days were filled with uncertainty, yet they were equally filled with optimism. Every interview conducted, every process established, and every decision made contributed to laying the foundation upon which Resource Intermediaries Limited would be built.

Recruitment quickly became one of our earliest lessons in leadership. We searched not merely for competent professionals but for individuals who genuinely believed in the vision we were pursuing. Some accepted our offers and resumed work even while our office was still under renovation, choosing to believe in a future they could not yet see. Others collected their offer letters and never returned. At the time, those experiences were understandably disappointing. Looking back, however, they became valuable reminders that institutions are not built by the number of people they attract but by the quality of those who choose to remain committed to the journey. Those formative months shaped far more than the beginning of a company. They established the mindset that would guide every chapter of our journey. Before we could contribute to transforming an industry, we first had to build an organization anchored on conviction, discipline, and purpose.

From its earliest days, Resource Intermediaries Limited was established with a legacy mindset. Our ambition was never simply to build a successful company, but to create an institution capable of outliving its founders and remaining relevant across generations. We understood that enduring organizations are not sustained by individuals alone. They are strengthened by sound governance, deliberate systems, shared values, and a culture that empowers capable people to succeed long after the founders have stepped aside. Turning that aspiration into reality required intentionality from the outset. Rather than allowing the organization to evolve without direction, we established a clearly defined organizational structure and reporting framework from the very beginning. We believed that sustainable growth demanded discipline, accountability, and clarity of responsibility. By laying a solid institutional foundation early, we positioned Resource Intermediaries Limited to grow with consistency while remaining true to its purpose. Equally important was the deliberate articulation of our corporate vision and mission. These were never intended to be statements displayed on office walls or referenced only in corporate publications. They became practical guides for decision making and shaped the culture we wanted every employee to experience. We built an environment founded on freedom and responsibility, a culture that encouraged initiative, innovation, and ownership while expecting every individual to exercise sound judgement and remain accountable for their actions. Our approach to talent reflected the same philosophy. We looked beyond qualifications and experience, seeking individuals whose personal values aligned with our organizational purpose and who could thrive within the culture we were intentionally building. Technical competence was important, but we recognized that character, commitment, and cultural alignment were equally essential to building an organization designed for longevity.

In those formative years, creating value for our clients remained our overriding priority. Profitability was important, but it was never the immediate objective. We believed that organizations that consistently solve problems, earn trust, and deliver value would naturally achieve sustainable commercial success. That conviction shaped our decisions, influenced our relationships with clients, and became one of the defining principles of Resource Intermediaries Limited. To ensure that our values remained more than aspirations, we embedded them into every stage of the employee experience. Our onboarding process was intentionally designed to do more than familiarize new employees with policies and procedures. It introduced them to our purpose, our culture, our expectations, and the responsibility every individual shared in protecting the reputation of Resource Intermediaries Limited. That commitment continued through a structured and self-driven Performance Management system anchored on the 360-Degree Balanced Scorecard (BSC). Rather than treating performance evaluation as an annual administrative exercise, we adopted the Balanced Scorecard as a leadership framework that aligned individual performance with organizational objectives. It created clarity, encouraged accountability, promoted

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Resource Intermediaries Limited was established with a legacy mindset. Our ambition was never simply to build a successful company, but to create an institution capable of outliving its founders and remaining relevant across generations.



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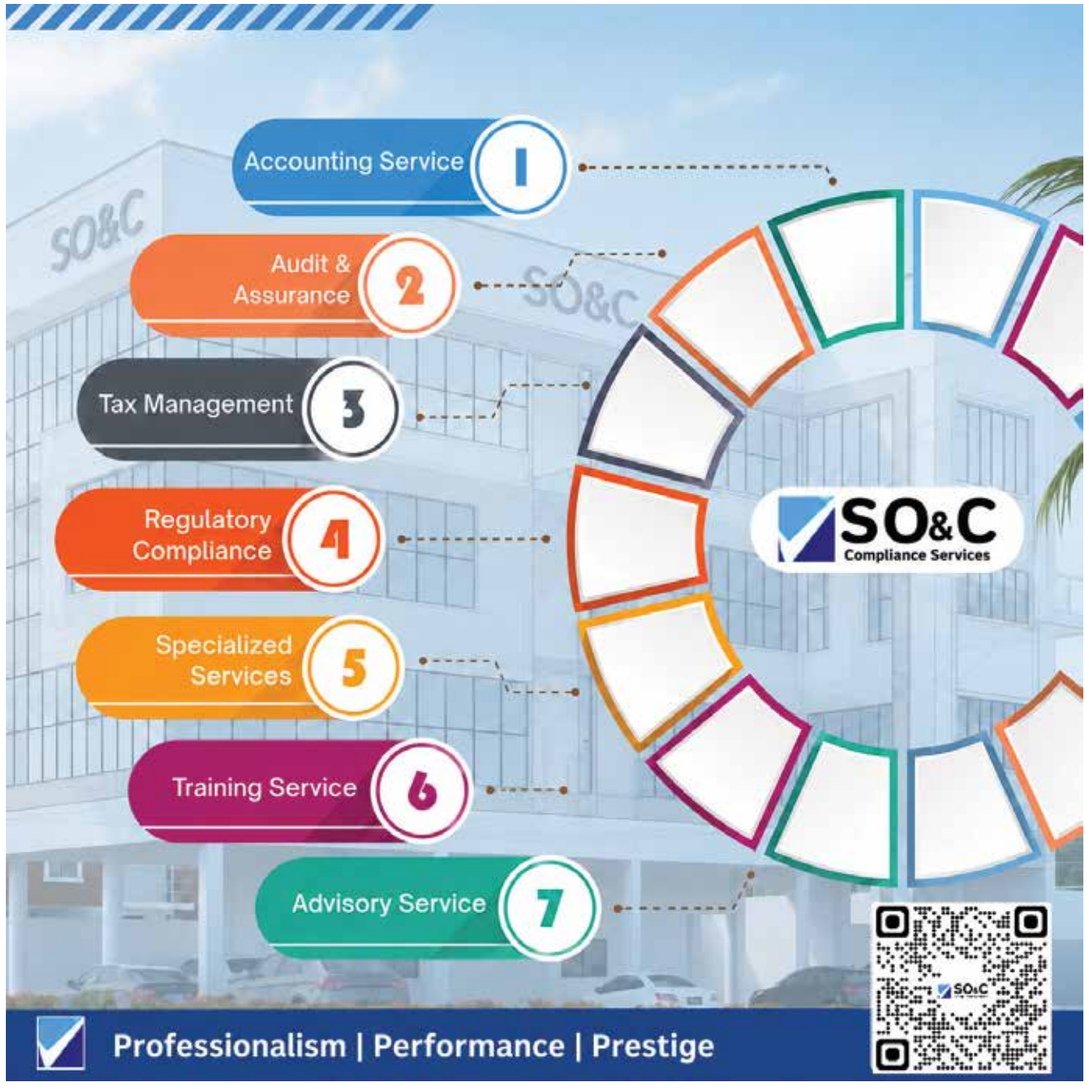
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BUILDING AN INSTITUTION

As the future of work continues to evolve through technology, changing workforce expectations, and new business realities, we remain committed to learning, adapting, and innovating without compromising the principles that have guided us from the very beginning.

continuous improvement, and ensured that every employee understood how their contribution supported the broader vision of the organization. Looking back, I now recognize that many of the decisions we made during those early years appeared ordinary at the time, yet they became the building blocks of an institution. They shaped our culture, strengthened our governance, reinforced our standards, and established a shared understanding of what Resource Intermediaries Limited stood for. More importantly, they prepared us for the next phase of our journey, where our aspiration would extend beyond building a successful organization to helping shape the future of an industry. It was the natural evolution of our commitment to Future Forward: Beyond Outsourcing; Sustainable Growth.

As our understanding of the outsourcing industry deepened, it became increasingly clear that Resource Intermediaries Limited had been established for a purpose far greater than building another successful business. From the very beginning, we carried a bold vision to transform Nigeria's outsourcing landscape and provide leadership in an industry that, at the time, operated without clearly defined professional standards or a recognized regulatory framework. That vision was championed by our Pioneer Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Olusoji Oyawoye, whose foresight and unwavering commitment provided strategic direction during our formative years. Equally instrumental was the guidance of our Board of Directors, ably led by our Chairman, Dr. Alex Okoh, whose leadership and governance ensured that our ambition was supported by strong institutional discipline. Together, they laid the foundation for an organization that aspired not merely to participate in the outsourcing industry, but to help shape its future.

One of the earliest expressions of that commitment was our decision to pursue certification with the International Association of Outsourcing Professionals (IAOP), the globally recognized body dedicated to advancing professional excellence within the outsourcing industry. This decision was far more than the pursuit of an international certification. It was a deliberate statement of intent. We wanted to send a clear signal to the market that Resource Intermediaries Limited was committed to delivering outsourcing services in accordance with globally recognized professional standards. At a time when the industry lacked a structured framework, we believed professionalism, ethical practice, and operational excellence should become the defining characteristics of our organization.
Our relationship with IAOP soon produced another landmark achievement. Through the auspices of Resource Intermediaries Limited, the IAOP Outsourcing Master Class was conducted in Africa for the first time. Members of our Executive Management Team participated in the intensive five-day Programme, earning certification as Certified Outsourcing Practitioners. More importantly, the experience strengthened our internal capacity and reinforced our determination to build an organization whose standards could confidently stand alongside the very best in the global outsourcing industry.
As our influence within the sector continued to grow, we recognized another significant gap. Although outsourcing had become an increasingly important component of Nigeria's business landscape, there was still no recognized professional body responsible for promoting industry standards, encouraging collaboration among practitioners, or providing strategic direction for the profession. Seeing this need, Resource Intermediaries Limited played a pivotal role in the establishment of the Association of Outsourcing Practitioners of Nigeria (AOPN). Our objective was not simply to contribute to another industry association. We wanted to help create an institution that would promote professionalism, encourage collaboration, advocate best practices, and provide a unified voice for outsourcing practitioners across Nigeria.
Our commitment to strengthening the profession extended even further through our decision to champion the inaugural Outsourcing EXPO, bringing together service providers, client organizations, regulators, policymakers, and other key stakeholders to engage in meaningful conversations about the future of outsourcing in Nigeria. It was never simply about organizing an event. It was about creating a platform where ideas could be exchanged, partnerships developed, and collective solutions identified for the advancement of the industry. Today, it is immensely gratifying to see the Outsourcing EXPO continue as a flagship annual conference organized by the Association of Outsourcing Practitioners of Nigeria. For us, it serves as a lasting reminder that some of the most meaningful achievements are those that create opportunities far beyond the boundaries of our own organization.
Looking back, I believe one of the most important lessons from those early years is that true leadership is never measured solely by the success of an individual organization. It is measured by the willingness to build institutions, strengthen industries, and leave behind structures that continue creating value long after one's own contribution has ended.
As our capabilities matured and our reputation continued to grow, new opportunities naturally followed. With an expanding portfolio of clients across manufacturing, financial services, entertainment, and several other sectors, Resource Intermediaries Limited gradually reached an important milestone. By our seventh year of operations, we had attained break even, validating not only our business model but also the disciplined approach that had guided us from inception. For us, however, growth was never pursued for its own sake.

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Every milestone represented another opportunity to strengthen our systems, deepen our impact, and demonstrate that sustainable organizations are built through consistency rather than speed. We learned early that capability must always precede expansion, and that institutions grow best when they expand in response to readiness rather than ambition alone.

As many Nigerian financial institutions extended their footprint across Africa, we recognized an opportunity to grow alongside clients whose confidence we had earned over the years. Guided by the strategic direction of our Board of Directors and the dedication of our Executive Management Team, we aligned our own aspirations with the evolving needs of the organizations we served. This journey led to the establishment of RIL Ghana in 2011 and, more recently, RIL Kenya in 2024. These milestones represented far more than geographical expansion. They affirmed that the principles upon which Resource Intermediaries Limited was founded, namely professionalism, integrity, operational excellence, and people centred leadership, could create meaningful value beyond Nigeria's borders.
Like every organization that has endured for two decades, our journey has also been shaped by seasons of uncertainty. The economic recession of 2015 challenged businesses across the country, demanding prudent financial management, disciplined leadership, and the courage to make difficult decisions. A few years later, the COVID-19 pandemic fundamentally changed the world of work, compelling organizations everywhere to rethink how they served clients, supported employees, and sustained operations. Those experiences reinforced one lesson above every other: resilience is not the absence of disruption; it is the ability to adapt without abandoning your principles.

Through every challenge, we remained anchored by the wisdom and strategic guidance of our Board of Directors, the unwavering confidence of our shareholders, the commitment of our Executive Management Team, and the remarkable resilience of our employees. Above all, we acknowledge the grace of God, whose faithfulness has sustained every stage of our journey.

One initiative that continues to give me particular satisfaction is the establishment of the RIL Finishing School. Throughout our interactions with graduates entering the labor market, we observed a recurring challenge. Many possessed strong academic qualifications but lacked the practical workplace competencies required to thrive in professional environments. Rather than viewing this solely as an employer's challenge, we saw it as an opportunity to contribute meaningfully to Nigeria's future workforce. The RIL Finishing School was therefore established to bridge that gap. Through a carefully designed Programme covering critical workplace soft skills, complemented by mentoring sessions on entrepreneurship and career development, we have sought to prepare participants not merely for employment, but for long term professional success. To date, nearly 4,000 young professionals have benefited from this initiative. Every participant represents more than a statistic. Each represents another opportunity to improve workplace standards, strengthen organizations, and contribute positively to Nigeria's human capital development. Watching many of these young people grow into accomplished professionals and business owners has been one of the most rewarding reminders that institutions leave their greatest legacy not through the buildings they occupy, but through the lives they influence.
As I reflect on the past twenty years, I realize that the greatest achievement of Resource Intermediaries Limited has never been measured by the number of clients we have served, the markets we have entered, or even the milestones we have celebrated. Our greatest achievement has been remaining faithful to the convictions that inspired our beginning. We chose to invest in people before pursuing profit, to establish governance before pursuing rapid expansion, to build systems instead of depending on personalities, and to create value before expecting reward. I have no doubt that those choices shaped the institution we celebrate today. Our story has never been about becoming the biggest organization in our industry. It has always been about becoming one of the most trusted. As the future of work continues to evolve through technology, changing workforce expectations, and new business realities, we remain committed to learning, adapting, and innovating without compromising the principles that have guided us from the very beginning. We look ahead with confidence, not because we expect the road to be free of challenges, but because the values that sustained us over the past twenty years remain timeless.

At this milestone, my gratitude is both profound and heartfelt. I pay tribute to our founders, whose vision gave birth to Resource Intermediaries Limited, and to our Chairman, Dr. Alex Okoh, together with every member of the Board of Directors, for their wisdom, guidance, and unwavering commitment to good governance.
I acknowledge our immediate past Managing Director, Mr. Olusoji Oyawoye, whose visionary leadership laid a solid foundation upon which we continue to build. I sincerely appreciate our shareholders for believing in our dream, our clients for placing their trust in us, our partners for walking this journey with us, and our Executive Management Team for their steadfast commitment to excellence. Most importantly, I celebrate every member of the Resource Intermediaries family, past and present. Your professionalism, resilience, dedication, and belief in our shared purpose have shaped this organization far more than any strategy or structure ever could.
Twenty years is indeed a remarkable milestone, but I believe it is only the prologue. The responsibility before us is not simply to preserve what has been built, but to strengthen it, expand its impact, and ensure that future generations inherit an organization that is stronger, wiser, and even more purposeful than the one we celebrate today.

That, to me, is the true measure of leadership.

That is the true measure of stewardship.

And that is the institution we will continue building.

Thank you, and may God continue to bless Resource Intermediaries Limited. ▪

Most importantly, I celebrate every member of the Resource Intermediaries family, past and present.

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BEYOND EFFICIENCY:
The Human Edge, Human Dignity, Work, And Artificial Intelligence - A Reflection Inspired By Pope Francis.



True leadership respects human dignity and places responsibility on protecting the worth of every person. It is not defined by results alone, but by the fairness and integrity behind decisions. Leadership becomes a lived reality, shaping workplaces and human relationships.

Honesty must underpin all systems. Transparent communication strengthens collaboration and fosters accountability. Olusoji Oyawoye opines that trust grows when leaders share truth without delay. Information must move fast, in every direction, so no one misreads intent. Clarity like this keeps teams aligned and expectations visible. Surprises fade, doubt fades too, and hidden motives lose their place here. Factually, the Bible supports leadership as an avenue to serve others without deception, rather than to be served Matthew 20:26. Whether technological or organizational, without truth, trust erodes, relationships weaken, and institutions lose legitimacy. Truth is the foundation of a justified leader. In the absence of integrity, even the most advanced systems cannot sustain human flourishing.

AUTOMATION, UNEMPLOYMENT, AND EXCLUSION

The expansion of automation raises pressing ethical concerns about participation and belonging. Pope Leo XIV makes it clear that machines are not the problem; rather, it is how they are used. When technological systems exclude individuals from meaningful participation, they undermine both dignity and community.

Unemployment is not merely an economic issue but a social and existential one. Work provides identity, purpose, and a sense of belonging. Its absence can lead to exclusion and loss of self-worth. For this reason, technological progress must be guided by principles that ensure inclusion, participation and protection of human dignity. The Pope calls for systems that prioritize the common good, ensuring that no one is left behind in the process of innovation.

Conclusively, Magnifica Humanitas presents a compelling moral vision for the age of artificial intelligence. At its core is a simple but profound principle: the future must remain Human. Technology, no matter how advanced, must serve the dignity, freedom, and purpose of the human person. As societies continue to innovate, the challenge is not only to build efficient systems but to create just human ones. Human dignity must remain the guiding standard, because without it, no form of progress can truly endure. ▪



Handling Workplace Toxicity

By Dr. Emmanuel S. Abayomi

The time was 11:00am. it was Matilda's first day at work. And she had just resigned her job.

Three hours earlier, as she walked into the office building, she wasn't exactly sure what it was, but something 'felt off' within her. Perhaps because the faces at the right from the security entrance to the reception were different from the ones she had encountered at the interview two months earlier. But she had prayed for this job. She badly needed the pay, even though it was less than the industry standard for an entry level staff., let alone a master's degree holder that she was.

No sooner had she been ushered into her desk than her phones and gadgets were retrieved from her. Why? For security reasons. Apparently, that was all there was to her 'onboarding'. When she asked for job descriptions, she was met with a smirk that hinted, "go figure it out yourself'. After struggling for about two hours, and when she finally seemed to have got a handle of it, she was told the MD had instructed that she work stay back at work for a meeting at 11:00pm. Shocked, she asked if the organization had any arrangements for her to stay overnight, or safely drive her home after the meeting. No, was the curt response she got. Shocked, she walked to the HR to complain, only to be told that it was against company policy to complain about MD's decisions. Immediately, she felt a sharp pain and tightness around her chest, and her heart began to race fast. A wave of dizziness washed over her, with a throbbing headache. It was a resurgence of an old panic attack she suffered during childhood.

Fifteen minutes later when she felt better, she concluded; "this place is toxic! I quit!"

What is workplace toxicity? How common are toxic workplace toxicity? What causes workplace toxicity? What are the signs of Toxic Workplaces? What are the Mental Health Effects of toxic workplaces? How to Handle Workplace Toxicity?

What is Workplace Toxicity?

At every workplace, occasional disagreements or stressful deadlines may occur. That is not a toxic workplace. However, when there is a culture of unhealthy organizational practices, behaviours, policies and interpersonal relationships that consistently undermine employees' mental health, dignity, well-being, and ability to perform effectively; that is toxic. For context, an organization that prides itself with a culture of disrespect for work-life boundaries, excessive workloads and unrealistic expectations, bullying and intimidation, poor communication and suppression of feedback and complaints is anything but health.

How Common Are Toxic Workplaces?

Unfortunately, workplace toxicity is more common that many think. A study by the MIT Sloan School of Management found that approximately 1 in 10 employees describe their workplace culture as toxic, even in large organizations with generally healthy cultures. In Nigeria, workplace toxicity often manifests through: unclear job descriptions, unpaid overtime, job insecurity, workplace favouritism and authoritarian leadership styles

What Causes Workplace Toxicity?

Workplaces rarely become toxic overnight. Instead, the pattern builds over time and depends on such systemic factors as: poor leadership styles, lack of psychological safety, unclear roles and expectations, dysfunctional organizational culture that unintentionally encourage gossip, hostility, public humilation and chronic overwork. Economic and structural pressures such as financial instability, understaffing and poor remuneration can also contribute to workplace toxicity.

Signs of a Toxic Workplace

"Prevention is better than cure" is a popular public health maxim. When it comes to toxic workplaces, this is apt.

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After struggling for about two hours, and when she finally seemed to have got a handle of it, she was told the MD had instructed that she work stay back at work for a meeting at 11:00pm.



THRESHOLD: Standing Between What Is and What Could Be

By Dr. Adebayosoye Awonaike

Looking back over my life and career, I have come to realise that the most defining moments rarely announce themselves in advance. They often arrive disguised as uncertainty, disappointment, disruption, or even failure. At the time, they feel uncomfortable and unsettling. It is only in hindsight that you recognise them for what they truly were: thresholds.

A threshold is that space between what is and what could be. It is the place where the familiar ends, but the future has not yet fully revealed itself. Most of us spend far more time at thresholds than we would like. We stand there wondering whether to stay where it is safe or take a step into territory we cannot fully see.

I have found myself at many such moments.
As a data transformation professional, I have spent much of my career helping organisations navigate change. Many assume that digital transformation is about technology, data, systems, or artificial intelligence. Those things matter, but they are rarely the hardest part. The real challenge is helping people let go of what has worked in the past and embrace what is possible in the future.
I remember working with organisations that had invested heavily in new technology, sophisticated reporting platforms, and modern data capabilities. On paper, everything needed for success was in place. Yet progress remained slow. The issue was never the technology. The issue was that people were standing at a threshold. The future was available to them, but stepping into it required a different mindset, different behaviours, and a willingness to leave familiar ways of working behind.

What I learned from those experiences is that transformation is rarely a technical challenge. It is a human one. The same lesson applies far beyond the workplace.

Several years ago, I found myself standing at a personal threshold. Like many people, I had a vision for something that did not yet exist. The idea eventually became rentt, a technology platform designed to simplify renting and property management. The vision was clear, but the path was not. There were moments of doubt, financial pressure, setbacks, and countless reasons to conclude that the timing was not right.

Yet every meaningful journey begins before all the answers are available. If we wait until every risk disappears, every resource arrives, and every outcome is guaranteed, we never move. Growth happens when we take responsible steps forward despite uncertainty.

Perhaps that is why the theme of thresholds resonates so strongly with me.

I have also seen thresholds in the communities and people I have had the privilege to serve. Sometimes the difference between struggle and opportunity is not talent, intelligence, or ambition. It is access. Access to information. Access to guidance. Access to systems that work. Access to someone who believes in your potential before you fully believe in it yourself.

I have witnessed individuals whose lives changed because one door opened at the right moment. I have seen organisations unlock extraordinary value because they finally had the courage to confront long-standing challenges. I have seen communities transformed when people chose collaboration over isolation and possibility over pessimism.

In every case, there was a threshold.

Growth happens when we take responsible steps forward despite uncertainty.

The challenge with thresholds is that they rarely feel exciting when you are standing in them. More often, they feel uncomfortable. They demand courage before confidence arrives. They require movement before certainty appears. They ask us to trust that what lies ahead may be worth more than what we leave behind.

We are living in a world that is constantly presenting us with new thresholds. Technology is evolving at unprecedented speed. The way we work is changing. The expectations of society are shifting. New challenges are emerging alongside new opportunities. For many people, this creates anxiety. For others, it creates hope. For all of us, it presents a choice.

Will we retreat to what feels familiar, or will we move towards what is possible?

As I reflect on my own journey, I have become convinced that some of life's greatest opportunities exist just beyond the edge of our comfort zones. The future is rarely built by people who have all the answers. It is built by those willing to take the next step, learn along the way, and keep moving forward even when the destination is not fully visible.

Every generation encounters its own thresholds. Every organisation does. Every community does. Every individual does.

The question is not whether we will face them.

The question is whether we will have the courage to cross them.

Because on the other side of every threshold is the possibility of becoming more than we are today.

The challenge with thresholds is that they rarely feel exciting when you are standing in them. More often, they feel uncomfortable.























The Art of the Leap: Dancing on the Edge of Your Own Threshold

By Olusoji Oyawoye

There is a peculiar moment, just before the elevator doors close, just as your foot hovers over the gas pedal, just after you've signed your retirement papers and handed over the company you built from scratch. That moment is not empty. It is the loudest silence you will ever hear.

For 18.5 years, I knew my address.

As Co-Founder and pioneer MD/CEO of Resource Intermediaries Limited, my identity was woven into every boardroom decision, every team meeting, every strategic pivot. Then, at 60, I stepped off that known map. I retired. And just like that, I was standing on my own threshold.

The theme of this edition of Skribble magazine, Threshold, Life on the edge of what next, is not merely a poetic phrase. It is the most practical reality of growth. Whether you are a 25-year-old entrepreneur or a 60-year-old "retiree" (a word I now laugh at), the threshold is where your past success meets your future potential. It is the boundary between the known story and the unwritten one.

Today, I run House 12 Workspaces and Lifestyle Limited, a multi-space hospitality business offering workspaces, short-let apartments, meeting rooms, event hall, a vibrant café, and a top-rated photoshoot location. I coach leaders, speak at conferences, and mentor rising stars. I am, at an age when many slow down, living my best life, raising people, resetting brains, creating impact, attracting good revenues, and having a ridiculous amount of fun.

How did I move from closing one door to opening an entire building? By learning to dance on the edge.

Here are three actionable tips for individuals and businesses standing at their own threshold.

1. For Individuals - Unlearn the "Arrival" Mentality

We are taught that life is a ladder. You climb, you reach the top, you stop. That is a lie. Life is a series of thresholds. When I turned 60, I could have seen the number as a FINISH line. Instead, I saw it as a LAUNCH pad.

Your Actionable Tip … Every time you achieve a major goal (a promotion, a retirement, an exit), immediately ask yourself, "What part of my identity am I leaving behind, and what new curiosity am I willing to follow?" Do not unpack your bags on the threshold. Keep moving.

2. For Businesses - Hostage to Legacy is a Slow Death

Resource Intermediaries Limited (RIL) was 20 years old on July 1, 2026. That is a magnificent milestone. But any business that reaches 20 and only looks backward is already closing. The question for House 12, and for your organization, is not "What did we do right?" but "What is the next iteration of our relevance?"

Your Actionable Tip … Create a "Threshold Committee" in your company. Not the usual senior executives. But a mix of young hires, departing retirees, and even one loyal customer. Give them one task, "What would we do if we were launching today from scratch?" Their tension will be your breakthrough.

3. For Navigating Change - Revenues Follow Relevance, Not Age

At House 12, we didn't just open a workspace. We noticed the creative economy was exploding, photographers, content creators, freelancers, needed beautiful, functional spaces. A 60-something ex-MD/CEO running a photoshoot location? Why not? Because I stopped asking "What is appropriate for my age?" and started asking "Where is the genuine need?"

Your Actionable Tip … The next time you face a "what next" decision, ignore your resume. Ignore your job title. Instead, list three problems you see around you that annoy you. Then ask, "" That is your threshold.

My Final Word

Standing on the edge of what next is not scary. It is sacred. It means you are still growing. Resource Intermediaries Limited has spent 20 years helping people find resources. But the most important resource you will ever manage is your own willingness to step forward when the ground feels unsteady.

I retired at 60. I started a new company. I am coaching, speaking, mentoring, and laughing. And I have only one regret, that I didn't learn to love the threshold sooner.

So go ahead. The doors are open. The edge is safe. Your next chapter is waiting just beyond what you currently know.

See you on the other side.

— Olusoji Oyawoye
Founder, House 12 Workspaces and Lifestyle Limited | Life & Business Coach | Conference Speaker | Mentor | Pioneer Editor, Skribble Magazine



YOUR BEST IDEAS ARE PROBABLY WAITING FOR A BETTER CHAIR

By theBUNKer Services Nigeria Limited

There is a popular belief that brilliant ideas arrive in the shower.

If that's true, then someone needs to explain why so many million-naira business ideas have also been born in traffic, at roadside buka tables, during power outages, and somewhere between "I'll start tomorrow" and "Maybe next month."

Ideas, it turns out, are not picky. Execution, however, is. We've all met them. The entrepreneur with twelve notebooks filled with groundbreaking ideas but no first customer. The freelancer who spends three hours choosing the perfect productivity app before replying to a single client email. The startup founder who says, "We're in stealth mode," when, in reality, nobody has simply started. And then there is that one friend whose business plan changes every Tuesday because they watched another motivational video on Monday night. We've laughed because we've seen them. Sometimes, we've been them. The truth is, success has never been about collecting ideas. It has always been about creating the right environment to consistently act on them.

Environment Is the Silent Business Partner

When people think about business growth, they often think about funding, marketing, technology, or hiring the right people. Few people stop to consider something surprisingly simple:

Where do you actually do your best work?

Your environment quietly shapes your habits. A noisy room makes deep thinking difficult. An unreliable internet connection turns a thirty-minute task into a three-hour frustration. Constant interruptions steal momentum. And before long, the business itself begins to feel harder than it really is. Sometimes the biggest obstacle isn't your strategy. It's your surroundings. Imagine trying to write a bestseller inside a nightclub. Possible? Maybe. Efficient? Not even close. The same principle applies to entrepreneurs, remote workers, consultants, creatives, students, and growing teams.

The Myth of "I'll Work Anywhere"

Many of us proudly say, "I can work anywhere." Technically, yes. Practically, not always. There's a difference between *working* somewhere and *working well*. The world's highest-performing athletes don't train on random fields. Professional chefs don't cook award-winning meals in broken kitchens. Pilots don't learn to fly by imagination. Great performance usually has great environments working quietly behind the scenes. Business deserves the same respect.

Success Loves Community

One unexpected advantage of shared workspaces isn't the desk. It's the conversations.

Sometimes your next client is sitting two tables away. Sometimes the person solving the exact challenge you're facing is grabbing coffee at the same time. Sometimes the introduction that changes your business begins with, "Is this seat taken?" Innovation has always been social. Ideas grow faster when people do. Communities create momentum that isolation rarely can.

Your next breakthrough may not require a new idea. It may simply require a better place to bring that idea to life. Because sometimes, success is only one chair away.

Five Lessons Every Professional Should Remember

1. **Don't confuse being busy with being productive.**

Answering messages all day can feel productive. Building something meaningful is different. Create time for work that actually moves the needle.

2. **Your calendar reveals your priorities.**

Everyone says they value growth. Very few schedule time for learning. The calendar never lies.

3. **Invest in places that invest back in you.**

Whether it's a library, an office, a studio, or a collaborative workspace, the right environment often pays for itself through better focus, stronger connections, and improved results.

4. **Relationships are business assets.**

Networks aren't built by collecting business cards. They're built by showing up consistently, helping others, and remaining curious. Opportunity has a habit of recognising familiar faces.

5. **Stop waiting for perfect conditions.**

The perfect time rarely sends an invitation. Progress belongs to those willing to begin before everything feels ready.

Here's the Funny Thing...

People will spend hundreds of thousands of naira on a new laptop because they believe it will make them more productive. Then they'll work eight hours from a place where the Wi-Fi disappears every fifteen minutes, the chair feels like punishment, and somebody is blending pepper beside their Zoom meeting. Perhaps the laptop wasn't the biggest productivity upgrade after all. Sometimes, changing your environment changes your output.

Building More Than Workspaces

Across **Lekki, Yaba, Ibadan, Abuja, Abeokuta, and Uyo,** one lesson continues to reveal itself. People don't simply need desks. They need places where ideas become conversations, conversations become collaborations, and collaborations become businesses. They need spaces where freelancers become founders. Where students become innovators. Where startups become employers. Where professionals discover that growth is rarely a solo journey. That belief continues to inspire every theBUNKer community across Nigeria. Not because great things happen inside buildings. But because great people create extraordinary things when they're given the room to do so.

So wherever you are on your journey starting your first business, building your next product, writing your first proposal, preparing for an interview, or chasing the next big idea remember this:

Your next breakthrough may not require a new idea. It may simply require a better place to bring that idea to life. Because sometimes, success is only one chair away. ▪



Through the years...

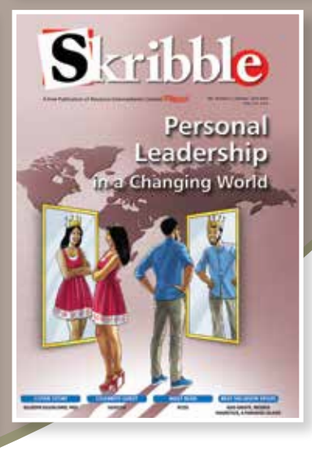


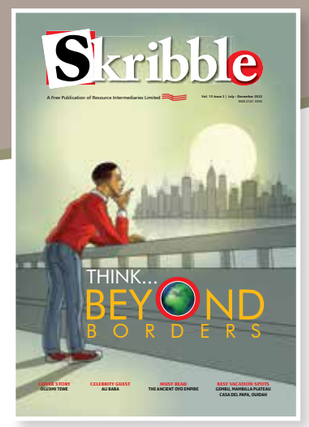


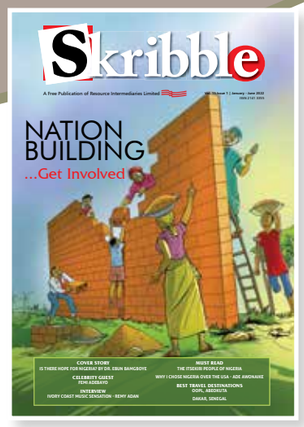






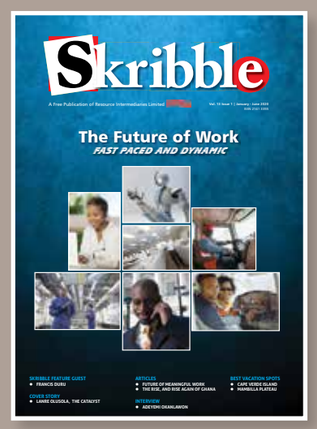


























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Handling Workplace Toxicity

Should you notice the following signs in any organizations, you're probably in a toxic workplace. Remember the Duck Test: "If it looks like a duck, swims like a duck, and quacks like a duck, then it probably is a duck."

- High staff turnover and frequent resignations
- Persistent conflicts and constant crises and firefighting
- Lack of trust in leadership
- Absence of effective HR processes
- Bullying and harasmment, public criticism and humiliation
- Gossip, backstabbing, and exclusion



The Mental Health Effects of Toxic Workplaces

No workplace or paycheck is worth the loss of your mental health. Research has linked toxic work environments with quite a number of mental health conditions such as: Anxiety disorders, Depression, Burnout, Substance misuse, Sleep disturbances

How to Handle Workplace Toxicity

In the course of my professional clinical work, I've met many employees who came to me convinced that quitting was the only cure to toxic workplaces. interestingly, it is not. There are a few other steps to take before consider quitting.

1. **Shine Your Eyes:** I've met employees who spend months or years minimizing and rationalising their toxic experiences, saying things like: "Maybe I'm overreacting." "Everyone else seems fine." or "I just need to be tougher and more resilient." This is simply living in denial. Shine your eyes and see this for what it is: toxicity.

2. **Notice Your Thoughts:** Many times, when we're exposed to toxic environments, our minds generate powerful narratives such as, "I'm incompetent", or "I'm the problem." While these thoughts may feel true, they are not necessarily facts. And you don't have to believe or obey them. Only notice them. One good way to do this is ask: "Is this thought helping me move toward the life I want?"

3. **Reconnect with Your Values:** Values, the people and things that matter to you, can serve as a compass during difficult times. It is important to ask yourself: What kind of professional do I want to be? What matters most to me in my career?

4. **Build Supportive Relationships:** It is common knowledge that toxicity thrives in isolation. Getting help by speaking with trusted colleagues, mentors, professional associations, family members, and mental health professionals can be quite helpful.

5. **Establish Healthy Boundaries:** It is important to, where possible, clarify expectations, protect personal time, document inappropriate incidents, and learn to communicate assertively.

6. **Respond, not React:** Many people, while in the middle of a toxic work experience, are trapped by fear, anger, or shame, and react negatively. By learning to respond, rather than react, you are able to make intentional choices aligned with your values.

7. **Know When to Leave:** Sometimes the healthiest intervention is not adaptation but exit. If a workplace consistently undermines your safety, dignity, mental health, or professional growth, leaving may be an act of courage rather than failure. No job is worth sacrificing your psychological well-being indefinitely.

Dr. Emmanuel S. Abayomi
Consultant Psychiatrist & Psychotherapist
Medical Director, Psychesed Consulting



PENSION: Beyond Monthly Contribution And Terminal Benefit Application

By Ogechi Ewuru {PhD, FCA} (Trustfund Pensions Limited, Otta)

For an average worker, if pension deductions are made optional, they will opt out, primarily because current take-home pay is not enough to meet family needs and societal expectations. Fortunately, participation in the scheme is not optional, especially for organizations with more than fourteen (14) employees; the Pension Reforms Act 2014 made it mandatory. Employees seem to forget that the 8% of their basic salary, housing, and transport they sacrifice attracts an additional 10% of the same basic salary, housing, and transport from their employer. The simple explanation is that out of the 18% being invested for you, with pension funds, your company accounts for the greater portion in the employer – employee contributory pension. One of the four cardinal objectives of the PRA 2014 is "to assist improvident individuals by ensuring that they save in order to cater for their livelihood during old age" in line with a Yoruba adage that says "do not use ten fingers to eat". But beyond the deductions, remittances, investments, and terminal payment lie other benefits and privileges contributors can gain by participating in the contributory pension scheme. These include, but are not limited to:

1) **Opportunity to reduce tax liability and build wealth:** Section 4(3) of the Pension Reform Act 2014 allows contributors to make voluntary contributions in addition to the 18% employer-employee mandatory pension contribution. Statutorily, pension deductions are made before the tax rate is applied to the taxable income. Therefore, a worker engaged in voluntary contributions will pay a lower tax than his counterpart not involved in voluntary pension contributions, now called the Personal Pension Plan PPP. Furthermore, 50% of the funds saved in the voluntary purse can be accessed every 12 months, while the remainder will be used to augment his terminal pension benefit upon retirement.

2) **Retirement Savings Account balance as proof of funds:** Most contributors are not aware that the balance in their pension account can be used during visa application at embassies either for themselves or for a family member. At Trustfund Pensions, we have added a feature to our website that allows you to automatically generate the embassy letter and the statement of your pension account. However, fund in your retirement savings account RSA cannot be used as a guarantee for a loan or attached to a garnishee order.

3) **Mortgage equity contribution:** Section 89(2) of the Pension Reforms Act 2014 acknowledges the need for shelter as a human necessity and thus puts a process in place to allow each contributor the opportunity to use 25% of their RSA balance as equity contribution towards securing a residential house during his working period. As at the first quarter of 2026, over 24,500 contributors have utilized 25 percent of their RSA balance for a mortgage facility with a primary mortgage institution in Nigeria.

4) **Evidence of work in a formal organization:** Seeking a job outside the shores of Nigeria sometimes will require that the applicant provides evidence of having worked in a formal organization. The pension fund statement of account with evidence of monthly contributions remains a perfect independent confirmation that the applicant in question has worked in a standard formal environment. Also note that organizations making pension remittances for their workers are first required to obtain an employer's code from the



National Pension Commission as a registered employer in Nigeria.

5) **You have an input on how your contribution can be invested:** The pension fund is subdivided into four (4) funds for active formal workers, i.e., Fund 1, Fund 2, Fund 3, and Fund 6, while retirees are accommodated in Fund 4 permanently. By default, an active worker below the age of 50 is placed in Fund 2 but can opt out in writing to move to Fund 1, which is riskier; on the other hand, contributions from those fifty years and above are domiciled in Fund 3 but can choose to move to Fund 2. The return on each fund differs, but in most cases riskier funds yield higher returns. The implication is that two workers of the same age and rank can have different RSA balances due to their choice of fund type. The major differentiating factor amongst funds is the percentage of the fund invested in Variable income instruments like more volatile equity.

6) **Employers can take full responsibility for staff pensions;** PRA 2014, section 4, subsection 4 goes thus: "An employer may agree to bear the full responsibility of the scheme provided that in such a case the employer's contribution shall not be less than 20 percent of the monthly emolument of the employee." Also be informed that the 10% - 8% deduction rate is only the minimum; the organization can increase the rate in agreement with employees as captured in section 4 subsection 1. Companies can also establish Gratuity funds for their staff members irrespective of compliance with the contributory pension scheme.

7) **Pension as a personal asset is transferable:** contributory pension has a unique advantage over the old defined benefit pension scheme. This advantage is in the fungible nature of pension assets that makes it easily transferable from one Fund to another, from one PFA to another, and to your loved ones at demise. Therefore, pension fund assets should be included in our individual wills to allow for seamless transfer of the fund to your loved ones. An Igbo adage says, 'Nobody asks his wife to boil water preparatory to falling from a tree"

So when next you receive a pension alert from your pension fund administrator, dig deeper, request your statement of account, cross-check that remittances are complete and consistent; in other words, no missing month. In your next management meeting, when you have the opportunity, suggest the establishment of a gratuity fund to management or the union as an additional way to appreciate long service, loyalty, or outstanding performance. Beyond that, look for return on investment across each fund (1, 2, 3, and 6) and move to funds that consistently yield higher returns. Pension is part and parcel of your investment or estate. ▪

"Almost There: the in-between season"

By Shola Adekoya





There's a weird space between who you were and who you're becoming.

That space?
That's the threshold.

It's the moment before graduation.
Before your first heartbreak heals.
Before you finally speak up for yourself.
Before you stop caring so much about fitting in.
Before God opens the next door.

And honestly? Thresholds can feel awkward.

One minute you're excited about your future. The next minute you're lying on your bed at 1:07 a.m. wondering if everyone else secretly has life figured out except you.

Spoiler alert: they don't.

Teen years are full of thresholds. You're constantly standing at the edge of something new:

- new friendships,
- new pressure,
- new dreams,
- new responsibilities,
- new versions of yourself.

Sometimes it feels exciting. Sometimes it feels terrifying.

Because growth rarely feels comfortable.

The "In Between" Season

Nobody talks enough about the in-between stage.

You're not a kid anymore… but adulthood still feels like trying to write WAEC without enough past questions.

You're discovering your voice, your faith, your style, your purpose, while also trying to survive school, social media, family expectations, and group chats that somehow become drama every 48 hours.

It's a lot.

But here's the thing about thresholds: you can't enter something new while trying to stay exactly the same.

That confidence you want?
It starts when you stop shrinking yourself.

That healing you need?
It begins when you admit you're not okay.

That future you dream about?
It starts with small decisions nobody sees.

Stop Being Afraid of the Next Version of You

Some teens are scared to grow because people around them are comfortable with the "old" them.

The quiet version.
The insecure version.
The people-pleasing version.

But growth sometimes sounds like:

- saying no,
- setting boundaries,
- choosing peace,
- leaving toxic friendships,
- taking your faith seriously,
- trying again after failure.

Crossing thresholds means becoming.
And becoming can be lonely sometimes.

But don't let fear trap you in rooms you've already outgrown.

Social Media Makes It Worse Sometimes

Let's be real:
social media can make you feel late in life at 16.

Someone is starting a business.
Someone is getting perfect grades.
Someone is travelling.
Someone is "glowing up."
Someone is posting aesthetic Bible verses while you're just trying not to fail math.

Comparison will convince you that your threshold is actually failure.

It's not.

You are allowed to grow at your own pace.

A seed doesn't become a tree overnight.

Faith at the Threshold

Some of the biggest moments in life happen when you don't fully know what's next.

That's where faith comes in.

Faith isn't always loud. Sometimes faith looks like:

- showing up again,
- praying honestly,
- trying one more time,
- believing your life still has purpose even on confusing days.

You don't need to have your whole future figured out right now.

Most people are still figuring themselves out far into adulthood.

Final Thoughts

Maybe you're standing at a threshold right now.
Maybe you're leaving behind old habits.
Maybe you're rediscovering yourself.
Maybe you're healing.
Maybe you're growing spiritually.
Maybe you're scared about the future.

Whatever it is, don't run from the edge of what's next.

Growth lives there.
Purpose lives there.
New beginnings live there.

And one day, you'll look back and realize the threshold you feared… was actually the doorway to becoming who you were meant to be.

Some of the biggest moments in life happen when you don't fully know what's next.



DANIELLA AKORFA AWUMA: The Soft Power of Becoming

There are women who enter a room loudly, and then there are women like Daniella Akorfa Awuma — women whose presence arrives before their voice ever does. Tall, poised, observant, and impossibly elegant. Daniella embodies a rare duality: softness without weakness and ambition without noise.

Born and raised in Ho, Daniella's story began with laughter. Before the runways, international titles, magazine interviews, and fashion campaigns, she was simply a bubbly young girl who loved making people smile. Humor came naturally to her. So did warmth. But beneath the lightness was a girl being deeply shaped by something greater the guidance of her mother.

"My mother shaped me the most," Daniella reflects. "She constantly advised and guided me. She taught me the ways of the Lord and life itself."

That foundation would later become the anchor she desperately needed.

The loss of her mother became the defining fracture in her life — a moment that permanently altered how she viewed the world, love, and reality itself. Grief stripped life of certainty. It taught her that even the unimaginable can happen without warning.
"It took reality away from me," she says quietly. "I never expected it. I never imagined a day like that would come when it did."





Yet somewhere between heartbreak and healing, Daniella evolved. The woman the world sees today was forged through both faith and disappointment. While many perceive her quietness as distance or arrogance, she sees it differently. Time, betrayal, and experience taught her discernment.

"I used to go overboard for people," she explains. "Now I observe first. I treat people exactly how they should be treated. I no longer give more than I can."

It is this balance — guarded yet graceful — that defines her presence.

Standing at 6'2", Daniella possesses the striking frame of an international editorial muse, but it is her aura that leaves the lasting impression. Her style lives at the intersection of soft femininity and commanding elegance. She gravitates toward silhouettes that elongate movement, fabrics that breathe luxury, and fashion that feels intentional rather than excessive. Whether in sculpted couture, fluid silk, structured tailoring, or understated glamour, Daniella dresses with the confidence of a woman fully aware of her power.

Over the years, she has become one of Ghana's recognizable faces in fashion, working with respected brands and

A woman of both discipline and depth, she has continually invested in education and self-development.

platforms including Woodin, Vlisco, Christie Brown, UNHCR, Rhythms on the Runway, and many others across the African fashion and commercial landscape. Her career has stretched across runway, television campaigns, editorial campaigns, and global fashion platforms. She has also shared her voice in interviews with CNN and BBC, bringing both intellect and authenticity into every room she enters.

But Daniella's story was never meant to stop at beauty.

A woman of both discipline and depth, she has continually invested in education and self-development. After attending Kabore School Complex in Ho and Kpando Senior High School, she pursued higher education through the Institute of Commercial Management and later earned a master's degree from Bharati Vidyapeeth University.

Her ambitions today stretch far beyond the runway.

Daniella is building toward becoming







a global force in fashion, education, and female empowerment. She dreams of establishing a world-class fashion house and launching a fashion school that nurtures creativity, elegance, and excellence in young African talents. Alongside fashion, she hopes to pursue a PhD and elevate her NGO into a platform that transforms lives on a larger scale.

Her passion for mentorship is already evident. Beyond modeling, Daniella trains and groom young women for national and international pageantry, helping prepare contestants for platforms such as Miss Ghana, Miss Tourism Ghana, Miss Tourism World, and Miss International 2017.

Ironically, her own pageant journey laid the foundation for this calling.

After participating in Miss Ghana and winning Beauty with a Purpose, she went on to become second runner-up at Miss Tourism Ghana before representing Ghana in Japan at Miss International 2017. Competing among 73 contestants from around the world, Daniella placed in the Top 15 and earned the title of Miss International Africa 2017 — a moment that cemented her place on the global stage. Still, for all the accomplishments attached to her name, Daniella remains deeply rooted in faith. When asked what sustains her during difficult seasons, her answer is immediate: God.

"Who can I trust except God and His word?" she says. "He always comes through for me." And perhaps that is the true essence of Daniella Akorfa Awuma: a woman becoming everything she prayed for while remaining soft enough to still believe in grace.



The Threshold: Navigating Life on the Edge of What's Next

By Lanre Popoola



In a world increasingly defined by rapid technological innovation, globalization, centralization, and continuously shifting dynamics, we find ourselves standing on a profound threshold. We are living on the ragged edge of what's next, where the concept of relevance has emerged as the critical currency for survival. Unlike traditional currencies, this currency of the future is intangible, yet its value is immeasurable. It is the ultimate measure of how well an individual, an organization, or a skill set aligns with the immediate demands of the present and the unfolding realities of tomorrow.

From my perspective as a person of faith, crossing this threshold successfully requires aligning with God's will. This remains the only reliable foundation for discerning the times and seasons we are currently navigating or are about to encounter. Even as we stand on the brink of unprecedented technological advancement and innovation, the fundamental life principles of seedtime and harvest remain unchanged.

As we step into this discussion, it is important that we do not confuse mere visibility with true readiness for what lies ahead. While visibility can result from being aligned with the times, the reverse is not always the case.

The Shifting Landscape at the Edge of Tomorrow

The marketplace has experienced significant transformations that have pushed us to the very edge of a new era—leaving industries looking hardly recognizable compared to just five years ago. The year 2020, marked by the Covid-19 pandemic, acted as an unexpected accelerator, forcing us across thresholds we anticipated would take another fifty years to reach. Recent technological advancements have introduced possibilities that were once confined strictly to the realm of science fiction and our imagination.

As a finance professional, I have seen roles, responsibilities, and functions changing sporadically. We are operating at the interface where artificial intelligence, machine learning, blockchain, and the Internet of Things (IoT) are actively reshaping industries and redefining the very nature of what we do. The remarkable aspect of this threshold is how rapidly familiar systems and legacy approaches are becoming obsolete, forcing them to give way to fresh ideas and emerging opportunities. It is crucial that we take an active part in this wave of transformation; it is precisely on this edge that the enduring value we all seek is found.

While some traditional roles are phasing out, new ones are cropping up just beyond the horizon. However, stepping through these new doors demands a completely different skill set, placing a premium on our ability to adapt, learn, and cross over successfully.

Surviving the Threshold as an Art

Navigating the edge of change is a multifaceted pursuit that permeates every aspect of our lives, uniquely shaped by our individual sense of purpose, goals, and ambition. The acronym **C.A.C (Continuous Learning, Agility, and Culture)** reflects my perspective on how to sustain our value as we step over the threshold into evolving seasons of life.

Continuous Learning: The most critical determinant of success on the edge of what's next is a steadfast commitment to lifelong learning. With the digital democratization of knowledge, education is no longer confined to formal settings; information on virtually any subject is now easily and readily accessible. In this era, choosing not to upskill is increasingly viewed as a deliberate act of self-sabotage.

Agility: The ability to adapt is a vital



trait when navigating rapidly evolving realities. Being on the threshold requires more than just reacting or responding to change; it demands the ability to anticipate trends and incoming seasons. Individuals who are responsive and flexible are better equipped to absorb shocks and make strategic moves when the ground beneath them shifts.

Culture: This simply means staying true to oneself by embracing originality, recognizing personal strengths, staying connected to one's roots, and standing firmly for what one believes in. In an era increasingly defined by automation and artificial intelligence, what will ultimately stand out on the other side of the threshold is authenticity—those things that cannot be generated by machines, but are deeply rooted in human experience and intentionality.

Crossing Intentionally into the Future

As we navigate the complexities of life on the edge, our adaptability remains the essential currency upon which our ability to survive—and, more importantly, to thrive—is anchored. In today's fast-paced world, success is no longer guaranteed by mere persistence. It hinges entirely on our ability to anticipate change, adapt proactively, and align with emerging realities while staying true to oneself.

Standing on the threshold is not a static position; it is a dynamic and evolving pursuit essential across all seasons of life. It calls for deep self-awareness, vigilance, an insatiable curiosity, and an unyielding openness to growth. For those who embrace it, the edge of what's next becomes a gateway to limitless opportunities in a world where change is the only constant.

In conclusion, true mastery of the threshold is not found in merely reacting or responding to change. Instead, it is found in anticipating the future and staying ahead of the curve through resilience, foresight, and the daily renewing of one's mind.

We are operating at the interface where artificial intelligence, machine learning, blockchain, and the Internet of Things (IoT) are actively reshaping industries and redefining the very nature of what we do.



The Hadzabe Tribe: Tanzania's Ancient Hunter-Gatherers

Introduction

The Hadzabe tribe, also known as the Hadza, is one of the oldest surviving hunter-gatherer communities in the world. They inhabit the dry bushlands around Lake Eyasi in northern Tanzania. With a population of only about 1,000 to 1,500 people, the Hadzabe have preserved a lifestyle that closely resembles the way early humans lived thousands of years ago.

Unlike many modern societies, the Hadzabe depend almost entirely on nature for survival. They hunt wild animals, gather fruits and roots, and move from place to place in search of food and water. Their unique way of life continues to attract anthropologists, tourists, and researchers from around the world.

History

The Hadzabe are believed to be among the earliest inhabitants of East Africa. Historians and anthropologists consider them one of the last true hunter-gatherer tribes on Earth. Their lifestyle has remained largely unchanged for centuries despite increasing modernization around them.

The tribe has survived through deep knowledge of nature, wildlife, and seasonal changes. Over time, however, outside influences such as



tourism, farming expansion, and land encroachment have threatened their traditional territories and way of life.

Culture and Tradition

The Hadzabe culture is deeply connected to nature and communal living. They live in small family groups and do not have formal chiefs or rigid leadership structures. Decisions are often made collectively, and resources such as food are shared among members of the community.

Music, storytelling, dancing, and oral traditions play important roles in preserving their history and identity. Hunting skills are passed down from fathers to sons, while women teach younger generations about edible plants and gathering techniques.

Their language is also unique and contains clicking sounds similar to some southern African languages, making it one of the most fascinating indigenous languages in the world.

Dress

Traditional Hadzabe clothing is simple and practical, designed for survival in the bush environment. Animal skins, leather, beads, and natural materials are commonly used for clothing and accessories.

Men usually wear animal-hide garments around the waist and carry bows and arrows during hunting trips. Women often wear decorated leather skirts and handmade bead ornaments.

Today, due to contact with nearby communities and tourists, some Hadzabe also wear modern clothes such as shirts and shorts, though traditional attire is still used during cultural gatherings and ceremonies.

Marriage

Marriage among the Hadzabe is relatively informal compared to many



African societies. Young people are generally free to choose their partners, and relationships are based largely on mutual agreement.

There are no elaborate wedding ceremonies or expensive bride-price traditions. Couples often begin living together once both families approve of the union. Divorce is also accepted if the relationship no longer works, reflecting the tribe's flexible and egalitarian social structure. Family bonds remain important, and children are raised collectively within the community.

Economy

The Hadzabe economy is centered on hunting and gathering. Men hunt animals such as antelope, baboons, and birds using handmade bows and poison-tipped arrows, while women gather berries, roots, baobab fruit, and wild honey.

In recent years, tourism has also become a source of income. Visitors travel to experience the Hadzabe way of life, observe traditional hunting techniques, and learn about their culture. Some members of the tribe earn money by selling handmade crafts, beads, and cultural souvenirs.

Beliefs

The Hadzabe traditionally believe in the spiritual connection between



humans, nature, and ancestral forces. Their beliefs are closely tied to the environment around them, including animals, the moon, trees, and natural events.

Rather than organized religion, the Hadzabe practice spiritual traditions based on respect for nature and survival. Rituals and storytelling often reflect their understanding of the natural world and the importance of harmony within the community.

Food

Food among the Hadzabe depends entirely on what nature provides. Common foods include wild berries, tubers, honey, fruits, and meat from hunted animals. Honey is especially valued and considered both nutritious and culturally significant.

The tribe is highly skilled at tracking animals and locating seasonal food sources. Meals are usually prepared over open fires, and food is shared among members of the camp.

Because of their natural diet and active lifestyle, researchers have often studied the Hadzabe to better understand human nutrition and health.

Ceremonies

The Hadzabe do not practice large-scale formal ceremonies like many other tribes, but communal celebrations are still important in their society. Singing, dancing, and storytelling are common during successful hunts, social gatherings, and rites of passage.

Dance is used not only for celebration but also for strengthening social bonds within the community. Traditional songs often imitate sounds from nature and wildlife, reflecting the tribe's close relationship with their environment.

Conclusion

The Hadzabe tribe remains one of the world's most remarkable indigenous communities. In an age dominated by technology and urbanization, they continue to preserve a way of life rooted in nature, simplicity, and communal living.

Their story serves as a reminder of humanity's ancient origins and the importance of protecting indigenous cultures and traditions for future generations. ▪







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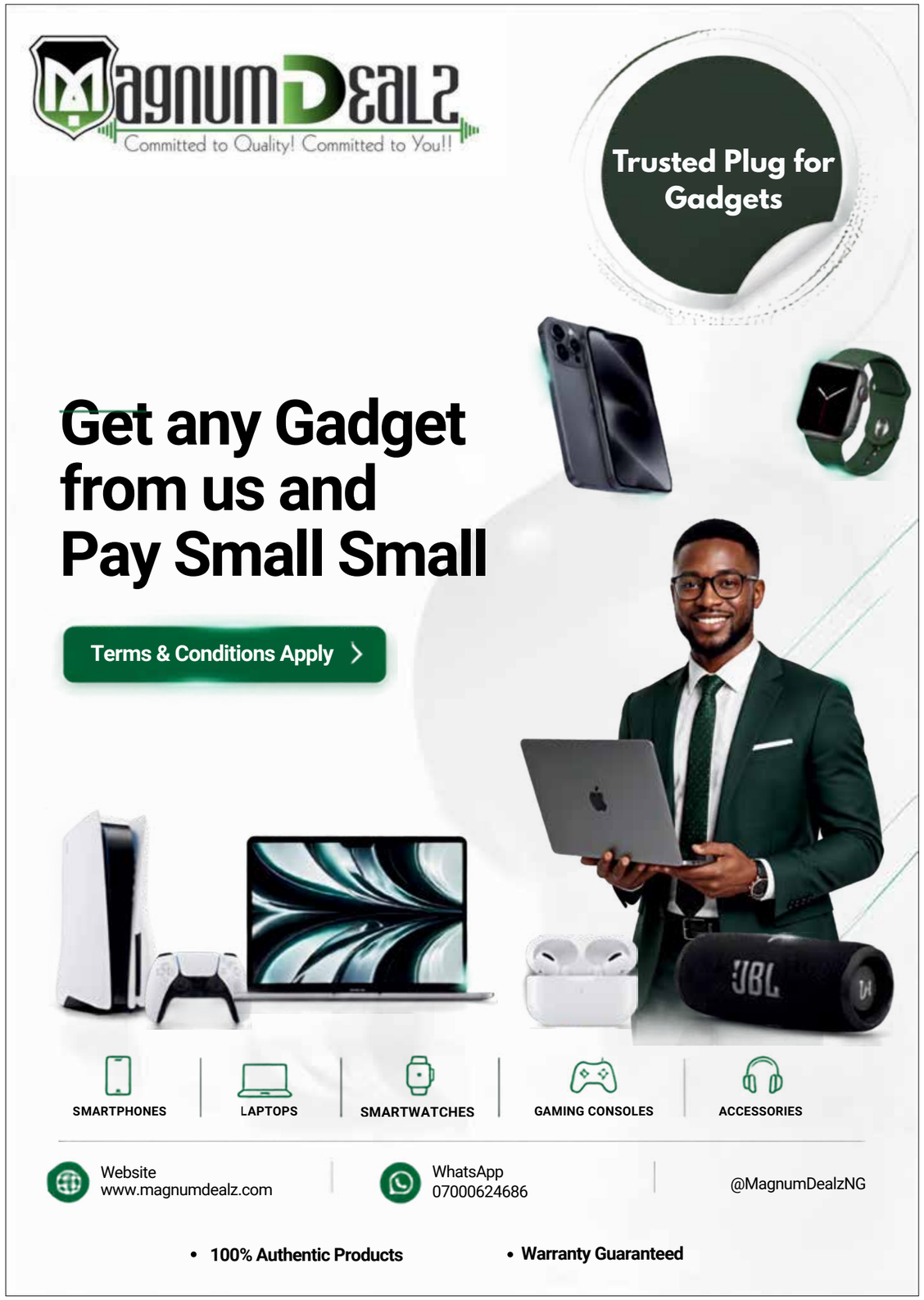




FOR RESERVATION:

Venue: Plot 4, Adejumo Layout Behind Zenith Bank, Challenge, Ibadan, Oyo State

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POEMS

WHEN THE MOUNTAIN CALLS by Toni Giselle Stuart

We answer slowly, listening gently

For the footsteps ahead, then follow

The smell of cape may bush bens towards
then
follow the smell of Cape May bush
bends toward us along the path up
the river's bank here, where impepho* sprouts
there, where we lay our backs
on sandstone, the weak winter sun
soaks our skins warm this mountain
once stood full under sea's reach

the wind sweeps across it whistling
through stone to sing all the whispered
stories rustling in its caves under its
granite ledges

smell the buchu, child taste
the camphor see how the silverleaf
sighs in the wet June light

a voice i cannot name reaches into
my spine and sings out into the hollow
below my ribs i stay
lying flat, skin to sandstone eyes to
clouds sinking further still into the silence

learning for the first time
how prayer and listening are
two names for the same breath.

Source; *https://www.poetryinternational.com/en/poets-poems/poems/poem/103-30845_WHEN-THE-MOUNTAIN-CALLS*

"NO MAN IS AN ISLAND" by John Donne

No man is an island,
Entire of itself,
Every man is a piece of the continent,
A part of the main.
If a clod be washed away by the sea,
Europe is the less.
As well as if a promontory were.
As well as if a manor of thy friend's
Or of thine own were:
Any man's death diminishes me,
Because I am involved in mankind,
And therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls;
It tolls for thee.

Source: *https://commaful.com/play/nora/no-man-is-an-island-by-john-donne/*

"THERE WILL COME SOFT RAIN" by Sara Teasdale

There will come soft rain and the smell of the ground,
And swallows circling with their shimmering sound;
And frogs in the pools singing at night,
And wild plum trees in tremulous white;
Robins will wear their feathery fire,
Whistling their whims on a low fence-wire;
And not one will know of the war, not one
Will care at last when it is done.
Not one would mind, neither bird nor tree,
If mankind perished utterly;
And Spring herself, when she woke at dawn
Would scarcely know that we were gone.

Source; *https://commaful.com/play/sydney/there-will-come-soft-rain/*

"KINDNESS" by Naomi Shihab Nye

Before you know what kindness really is
you must lose things,
feel the future dissolve in a moment
like salt in a weakened broth.
What you held in your hand,
what you counted and carefully saved,
all this must go so you know
how desolate the landscape can be
between the regions of kindness.
How you ride and ride
thinking the bus will never stop,
the passengers eating maize and chicken
will stare out the window forever.
Before you learn the tender gravity of kindness
you must travel where the Indian in a white poncho
lies dead by the side of the road.
You must see how this could be you,
how he too was someone
who journeyed through the night with plans
and the simple breath that kept him alive.
Before you know kindness as the deepest thing inside,
you must know sorrow as the other deepest thing.
You must wake up with sorrow.
You must speak to it till your voice
catches the thread of all sorrows
and you see the size of the cloth.
Then it is only kindness that makes sense anymore,
only kindness that ties your shoes
and sends you out into the day to mail letters and purchase bread,
only kindness that raises its head
from the crowd of the world to say
It is I you have been looking for,
and then goes with you everywhere
like a shadow or a friend.

Source: *https://poets.org/poem/kindness*



Over the years, **RIL Benevolence** have reached out to thousands particularly in times of need. With funds, we have assisted in Major surgeries such as Kidney transplant, optical surgeries, rent support and also support to orphanages and school fees payment for the less privileged. We cannot afford to close our ears to the demands of the less privileged amongst us in the society far and wide, that's why we can only try our best to help in multiple ways that we can.

We think our efforts would go even farther with your funds to achieve our vision of "giving charitable relief to the needy to help them live their best lives at a time they are helpless".

Join the Train

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"The best way to predict the future is to create it."

— Peter Drucker

"Innovation distinguishes between a leader and a follower."

— Steve Jobs

"Success is not final, failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts."

— Winston Churchill

"The future belongs to those who learn more skills and combine them in creative ways."

— Robert Greene

"An investment in knowledge pays the best interest."

— Benjamin Franklin

"Leadership is not about being in charge. It is about taking care of those in your charge."

— Simon Sinek

"You don't build a business. You build people, and then people build the business."

— Zig Ziglar

"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."

— Nelson Mandela

"Do not wait for leaders; do it alone, person to person."

— Mother Teresa



GHANA: The Ultimate Travel Destination for History, Culture, and Vibrant Energy

If you are looking for a travel destination that seamlessly blends rich historical heritage, vibrant street culture, and breathtaking architectural landmarks, Ghana stands out as an unbeatable choice. A recent journey through the heart of Accra reveals why this West African gem continues to capture the hearts of travelers worldwide.

At the center of Accra's historical narrative is Independence Square (Black Star Square), a majestic public space built to commemorate the nation's independence.

The Black Star Gate & Independence Arch: Standing proudly under the inscription "Freedom and Justice" (AD 1957), these towering monuments symbolize African sovereignty and liberation. Visiting this grand expanse offers both a deep sense of reflection and photo opportunities that frame the iconic Black Star emblem.

Memorials & Statues: Surrounding the square are striking soldier monuments and grand archways set against open skies and coastal breezes, offering visitors a firsthand look into the country's journey toward self-reliance.

Heritage and Coastal Charm
A short distance from the bustling city square lies the historic Osu Castle (Christianborg Castle) along the Gulf of Guinea coast. Beyond its deep historical roots, the site now houses key international institutions like the ECOWAS Multinational Maritime Coordination Centre (Zone F). Walking through its white-walled courtyards and palm-lined pathways offers a peaceful moment where history meets modern regional cooperation.
Cultural Expression and Local Vibe









Ghana's magic isn't just in its stone monuments; it is felt in the everyday rhythm of its streets and cultural hubs:

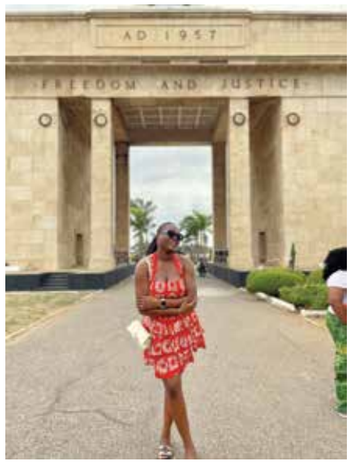
Retro Vinyl & Music Hubs: Dive into cozy local music dens and vintage record shops lined wall-to-wall with classic Highlife and Afrobeat vinyl covers. Sharing stories with passionate record keepers while flipping through decades of West African music history is an unforgettable, intimate experience.

Street Art & Murals: Intricate, colorful murals depicting traditional masquerades, folklore, and contemporary urban life line the walls of creative districts, bringing the city to life with artistic flair.

Plan Your Trip
Best Time to Visit: November to February for pleasant weather and festive cultural events.

Must-Do Activities: Snap pictures under the Black Star Gate, explore the vinyl shops in Jamestown or Osu, and take a guided heritage tour around Osu Castle.

Whether you are seeking historical enlightenment, cultural inspiration, or simply a warm and welcoming escape, Ghana delivers an extraordinary experience that stays with you long after you leave. ▪









MY TRAVEL EXPERIENCE (West Africa)

By Kevwe Osaze-Momoh (KOM)

Tell me why I stepped out of the vehicle in Lomé, Togo, and instantly felt like I had been teleported back to the chaotic pulse of Lagos, Nigeria. No matter how many times my driver insisted, "Madame, this is Lomé," I couldn't shake the uncanny sense of déjà vu. Perhaps it was the sudden shock to my system. I had just spent the last few days floating through the dreamy, slow-paced serenity of Cotonou, the historic quiet of Ouidah, and the sun-bleached shores of Grand-Popo in the Benin Republic. To leap straight from that coastal tranquility into Lomé's electric, bustling energy felt less like crossing a border and more like falling straight back onto the streets of Lasgidi.

My West African road trip began at the legendary Mile 2 park in Lagos, where I boarded a public Toyota Highlander bound for the Seme border. Prioritizing personal comfort, I paid for an extra seat—a luxury that paid off immediately, as my fellow passengers in the front and back were equally eager to hit the road without delay. The journey was remarkably smooth, punctuated only by brief checkpoint stops along the route. Our driver navigated the terrain like a seasoned diplomat, exchanging familiar nods and quick pleasantries with every officer along the way.

Upon reaching the border, we underwent standard security checks. I presented my international passport, stamped through, and hopped onto



a local motorbike that whisked me across the frontier line into the Benin Republic.

The moment my feet touched Beninese soil, I caught a shared cab at the park that swept me into Cotonou in under ninety minutes. Upon arrival, a seasoned Nigerian frequent traveller helped me hail a ride straight to the MTN office to secure a registered SIM card. The second my mobile data kicked in, I downloaded the Gozem app for local transport—thankfully relying on a pre-installed Google Translate app to navigate Cotonou's dominant French dialogue.



My time in Cotonou was nothing short of enchanting. Here, the economic reality hits you immediately: the West African CFA Franc ("Cotonou money") holds a distinct strength against the Nigerian Naira—a vivid, real-world lesson in fixed-anchor currency management versus a free-floating exchange rate.
Culturally, the city is a feast for the eyes. I strolled past the iconic Mur de la Francophonie—the longest graffiti mural in the world—a breathtaking stretch of street art that weaves a visual tale of Benin's rich heritage and ambitious future. I explored sun-kissed open beaches, soaked in the lively night scene, and caught a glimpse of the majestic Amazon Statue, standing tall and cloaked in scaffolding as renovations were underway right across from the mural wall.

No trip to Cotonou is complete without diving headfirst into its culinary scene—and Benin Republic's local fare exceeded every expectation. I indulged in a lineup of must-try delicacies, from traditional Akassa paired with rich Poisson (fish) sauce to flame-grilled Attiéké et Poulet served alongside golden, sweet Alloco (fried plantains), and the deeply comforting Pâte with slimy, savory Sauce Crincrin. The crisp, fresh onions added the perfect crunch, and as a true Nigerian traveler, I loved that I could request extra pepper to give every dish that familiar, fiery kick.

Awalé Plage quickly became the single most enchanting highlight of my entire Beninese getaway.

With my birthday falling on the next day, I made a pitstop at Super U (Erevan)—Cotonou's sprawling flagship shopping complex—to pick up a birthday cake and candles. My special day was pure, unadulterated relaxation: a lazy afternoon culminating in a dreamlike dinner at a chic, upscale beachfront restaurant, where the rhythm of the waves provided the ultimate birthday soundtrack.

On my third day, I made the two-hour road trip to Ouidah—undoubtedly the historical and spiritual heartbeat of West Africa. Over two immersive days, I stepped deep into the region's living history: exploring contemporary African art at the Fondation Zinsou, visiting the sacred reptiles at the Python Temple, standing in quiet reflection before the solemn Door of No Return, and feeling the ancient energy of the Sacred Forest of Kpassè. Craving total tranquility after Ouidah's heavy history, I headed further west down the coast to the sleepy beach town of Grand-Popo, checking into the dreamy Awalé Plage resort.

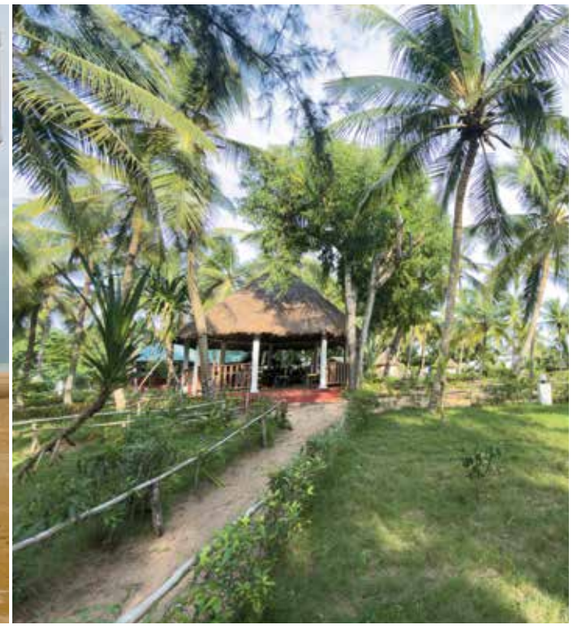
Awalé Plage quickly became the single most enchanting highlight of my entire Beninese getaway. Having booked my stay online, I was utterly bewildered when the staff didn't ask for a single Franc upfront—allowing me to enjoy my stay and settle the entire bill only upon checkout on my third day! Coming from the fast-paced, pay-before-you-breathe hospitality culture of Lagos, this level of trust was a refreshing cultural shock.

To top it off, the resort felt like a home away from home. I crossed paths with a wonderful group of fellow Nigerian travelers exploring the coast. We bonded instantly over shared meals, late-night conversations, and beachside laughter, turning an already idyllic coastal retreat into an unforgettable brotherhood of road-trippers.

Leaving Grand-Popo for Lomé was a breeze distance-wise, but the border crossing was another story entirely. Upon arrival at the border gate, I was hit with an arbitrary ₦3,000 "first-timer fee." When I dared to challenge the charge, the border official simply stopped acknowledging my existence. Ten minutes of silent treatment later—and after a desperate nod from my driver—I surrendered the cash, received my stamp, and was dismissed without a word.

The kick in the teeth? Walking into the immigration center seconds later to find "NO PAYMENT ALLOWED" signs proudly posted every few feet! After a cautious double-check of my





stamps, the officer officially cleared my entry into Togo.

Armed with a fresh Yas SIM card and mobile data, I thought the hard part was over. Wrong. The hotel I had booked on Booking.com turned out to be completely defunct and shuttered! What followed was a swift, improvisational search through the streets of Lomé until I finally landed a decent room. Settling in at last, I locked the door, tuned out the city noise, and fiercely reclaimed the zen I'd built along the Beninese coast.Night life in Lome, Togo was really bubbling, with so many bars. The next day, I had to see Lome through my lens; the ultimate energetic and coastal soul of Togo.

I went to the beach, visited the grand marche and the cathederal at the center of the march was a sight to behold. Stepping into the #SacredHeartCathedral after navigating the bustling energy of Lomé's Grand Marché was an unexplainable shift. The magnificent exterior catches your eye, but the overwhelming calm inside is what completely captured my spirit.

Visiting the historic Palais des Congrès in Lomé served as a poignant reminder that symbols are the quiet anchors of identity—holding us steady when everything else is in motion. Crafted by Georges Coustère and Paul Ahyi to honor Togo's April 27, 1960 independence, the structure remains a towering beacon of national pride.

Seeking tranquility on day three, I took a road trip to Kpalimé—a sanctuary that became the highlight of my trip. Standing before the majestic Cascade de Kpimé and following the trail up to its mountain source, I found myself captivated by West Africa's raw, unpolished natural beauty.



The journey concluded with one last test of endurance at the Togolese border. Togo was marred by one final, frustrating display of border bureaucracy. Boarding a direct cab back to the Seme border, I explicitly informed the driver that I needed to stamp out my passport. At the outer Togolese gate, officials once again demanded an arbitrary cash payment. Having reached my limit, I outright refused—determined to see whether the immigration officers inside would dare demand a levy directly beneath their own "No Payment Required" signs.

Spiteful of our refusal, the gate officer ordered all passengers out of the vehicle, forcing us to make a 10-minute trek under a scorching afternoon sun to reach the immigration post on foot. We were furious, but united in principle: we would rather walk through the heat than line an official's pockets for nothing. Even with "No Payment Needed" signs plastered across the walls, a fee was extracted alongside a manual register entry.

It is astonishing that within our shared West African region, travelers still face these systemic bottlenecks. Yet, even with the border challenges, the memories of Cotonou's vibrant streets, Ouidah's rich history, Grand-Popo's quiet beaches, and Kpalimé's mountain streams remain completely unblemished. ▪




















































THE FACES TH
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KOLA ADESINA







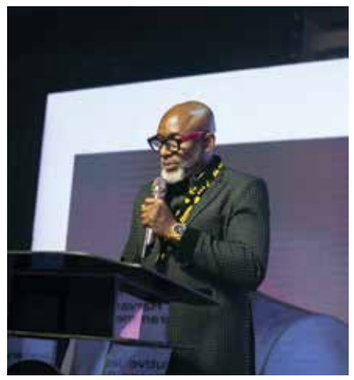










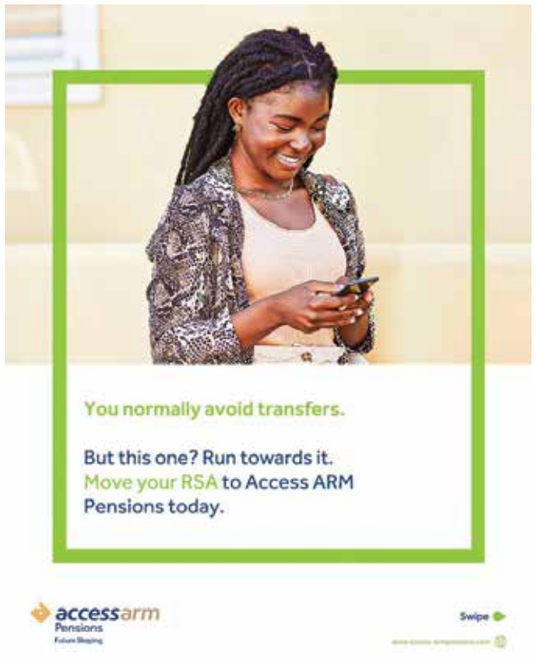


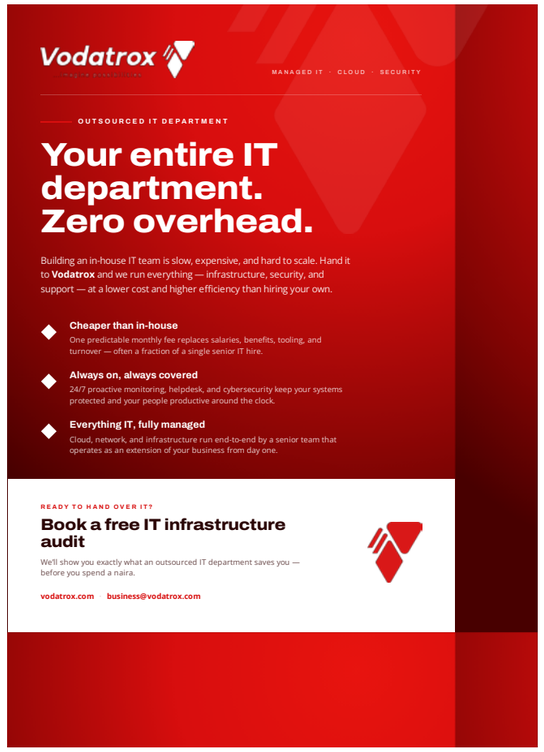


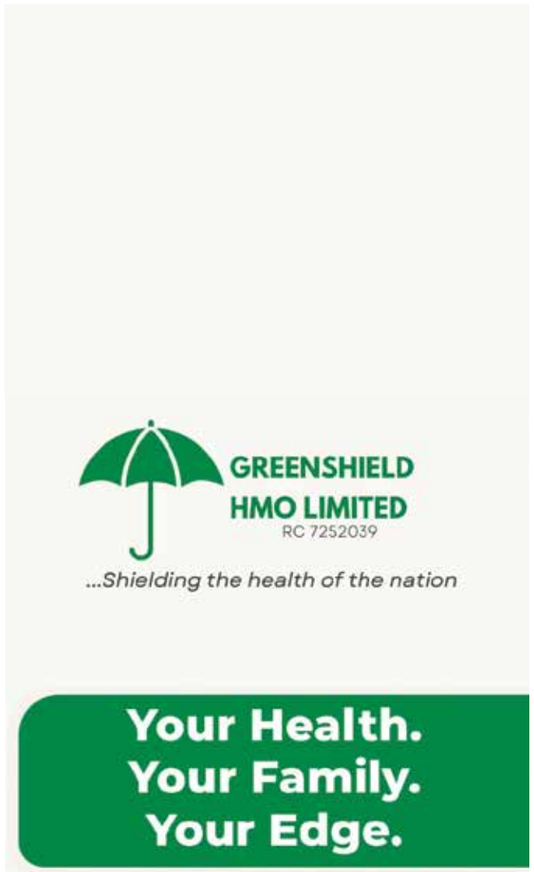





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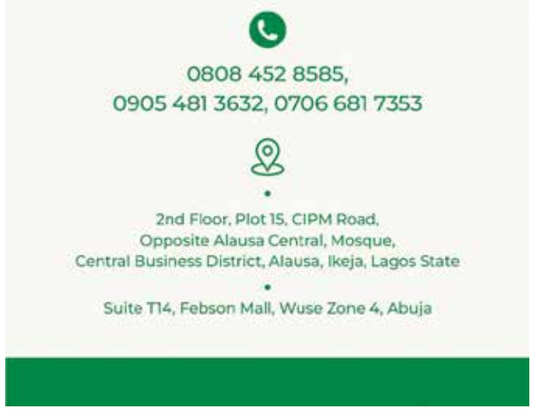

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FEEDBACK FROM RIL PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

I commend the responsiveness, full grasp on the job of the HR Supervisor. I commend RIL processes in comparison with other vendors.

Adaora Nnamani- Production manager Unilever Agbara

I commend RIL processes, changes with HR Supervisors do not generate any problem, it is usually a seamless handover and the new HR Supervisor is excellent on the job.

James Ebah -HR ABDOS

I commend RIL's work and responsiveness

- Bisola Solesi- HR AIICO

I commend RIL's work with the drivers

Emmanuel Odien- Assistant logistics operations manager ATC

Satisfactory operational coordination, PUM are efficient.

Yomi Eleyowo-Friesland

Letters

RIL has highly responsive and dedicated HR Business Partners, with exceptional oversight and ownership of role

- Ipilabo Braide -Head, facility maintenance and projects-NOTORE

It was a great experience while I was there. I look forward to using the space again.

- Peace Okorie, TBSNL

I loved the ambience and the serenity. I look forward to coming back again.

- Edikan Gabriel, TBSNL

I absolutely love using the space here and there has been no issues at all. Asides the chair issue which I believe is being worked on, everything has been perfect.

- Michael Adebayo, TBSNL

I had a very wonderful experience at the facility and I look forward to coming again. I also love the way you keep tabs on your customers.

- Gemo Wonder, TBSNL

Great service and I love the space as well, no issues were expereinced while I was there and it is commendable.

- Favour Akpan, TBSNL

It was a very pleasant experience. i got value for every penny spent and the Manager was very very helpful. the internet was smooth throughout, I also liked that there was an eating area. Keep it up.

- Okikiola, TBSNL

I like the environment for the serenity and peace of mind it gives me. keep doing what you are doing.

- Sharon, TBSNL

TOYIN IRESEMOWO

RIL People on Point



Name:
Toyin Iresemowo

Department/Role:
HR & Operations/ Head, HR Operations

Describe yourself in 3 words:
Resilient, Impact-driven, Dependable

Someone or people you admire:
Apart from myself, I admire Ibukun Awosika

How do you stay organized at work:
I keep a running to-do list, prioritize what matters most, and rely heavily on my calendar and reminders.

Favorite Movie of all times:
24Hrs

Favorite car model:
Toyota Land Cruiser

Favorite genre of music:
Gospel, worship, and inspirational music

Favorite gadget:
My laptop — it's where most of my work and learning happens.

Favorite meal:
Rice and Chicken Peppered Stew

Favorite Fashion Item:
Well-tailored jumpsuits. They're versatile, elegant,and easy to dress up or down

Interests:
Leadership, people development, personal growth, and business strategy

Hobbies:
Listening to music, watching action movies

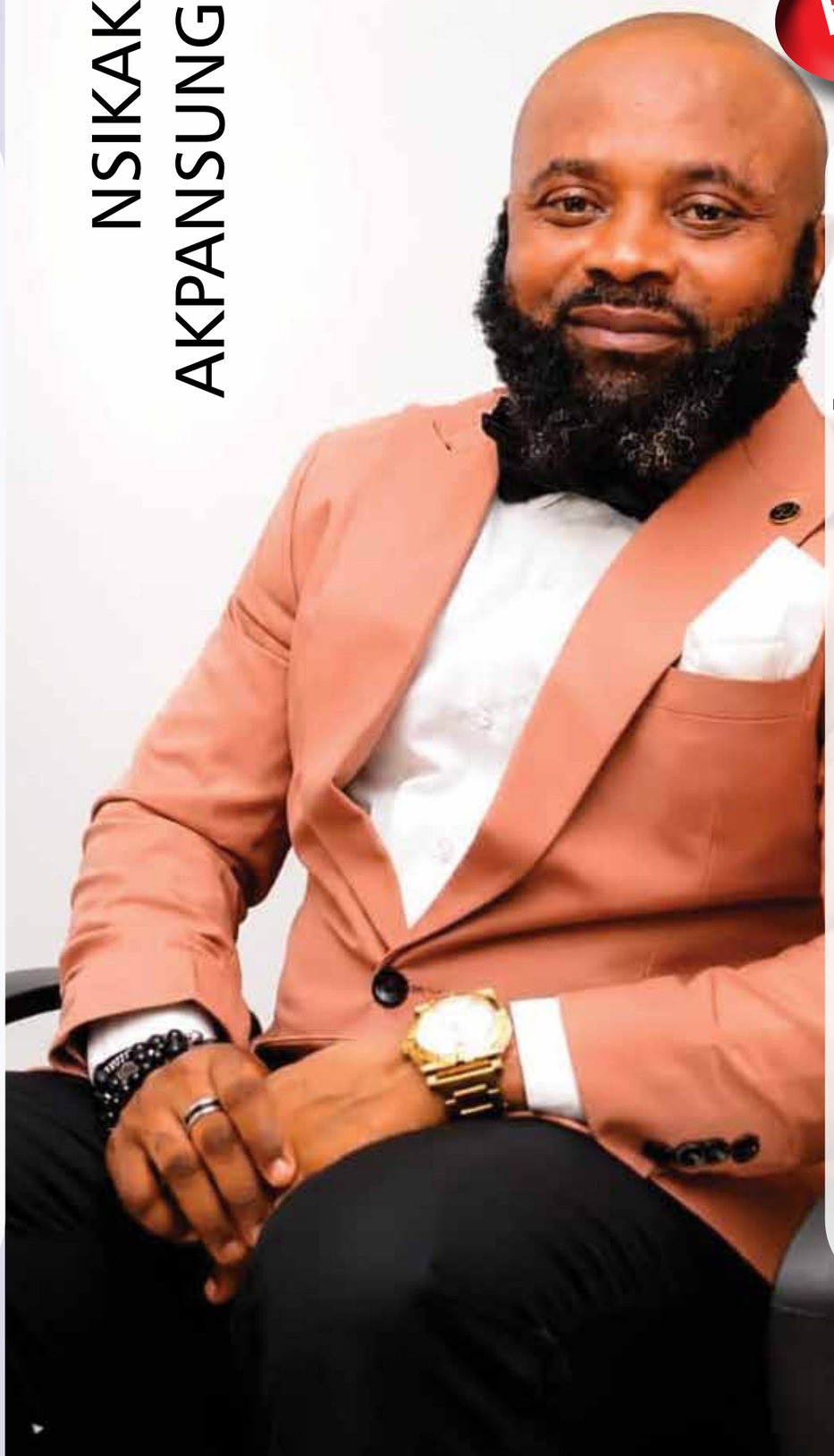
How do you unwind:
Listening to music, watching a good movie, or simply enjoying quiet time.

One item you can't leave home without:
My phone

Favorite quote:
If you don't stand for something, you will fall for anything

NSIKAK AKPANSUNG

RIL People on Point



Name:
Nsikak Akpansung

Department/Role:
Business Development/ Business Manager theBUNKer Yaba

Describe yourself in 3 words:
Ambitious, Smart and Focused

Someone or people you admire:
My late Grandmother, my Mother, Soji Oyawoye

How do you stay organized at work:
Plan my day, daily routine

Favorite Gadget:
Samsung

Favorite Movie of all times:
Home Alone

Interests:
Family, faith,fashion and music

Hobbies:
Cooking, singing, Dancing

How do you unwind:
Watch movies, listen to music

One item you can't leave home without:
Ring

Favorite quote:
Don't downgrade your dream just to fit your present reality, upgrade your attitude, discipline and skills to match your destiny

Favorite Movie:
Home Alone

Favorite Fragrance:
Element

Favorite Fashion Item:
White Sneakers (Adidas)

Favorite car model:
Mercedes Benz (GL)/Ford Explorer

Favorite genre of music:
Gospel

Favorite meal:
Afang and Oha soup with fufu










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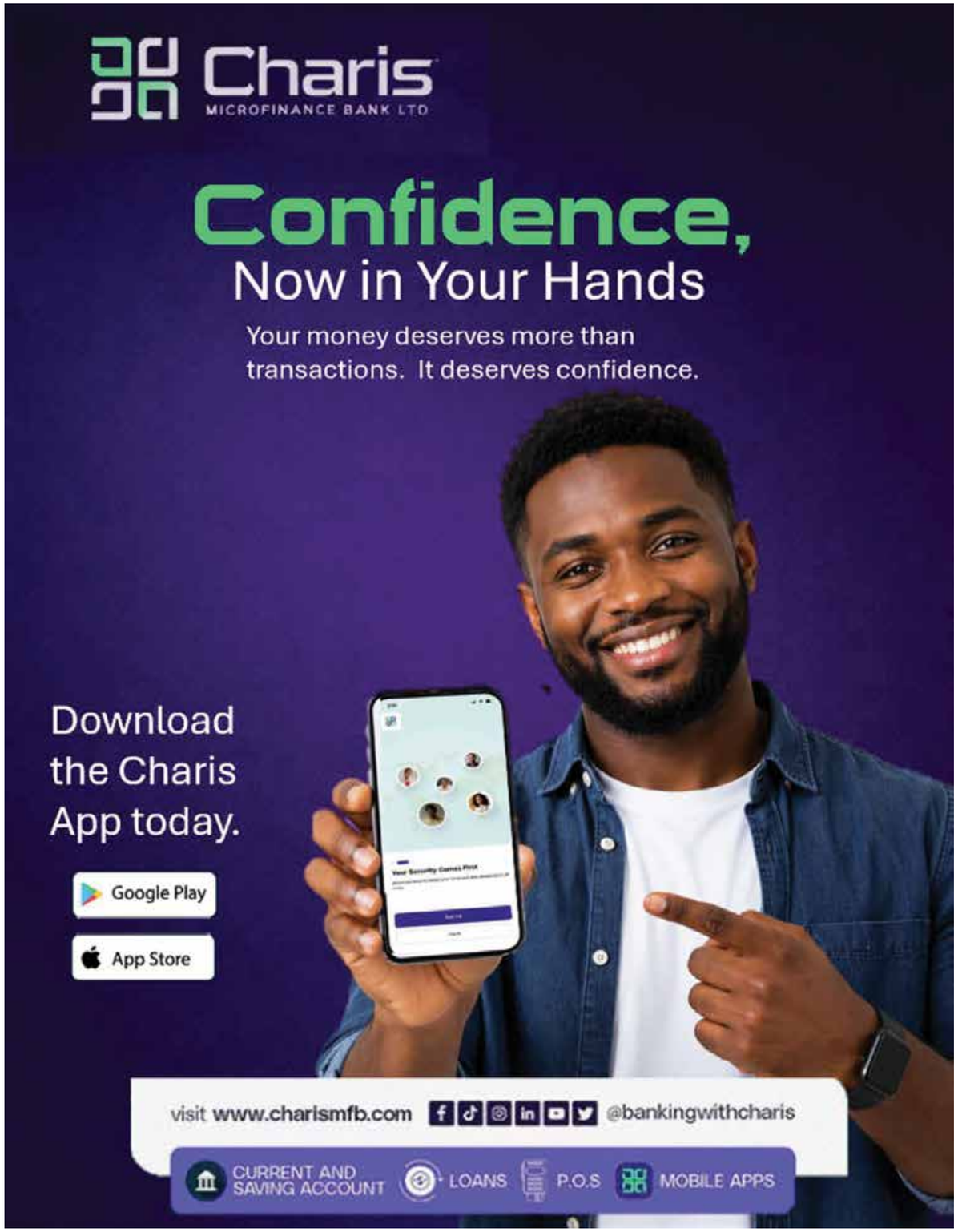











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NAOMI OLAREWAJU
(BPO Team Commendation)



TUNDE OLUBU
(BPO Team Commendation)



GLORY NWOKOLO
(Finance Team Commendation)



TIMILEYIN OLOFIN
Business Manager theBUNKer Abuja



OLAYINKA OLAWORE
(Compensation and Benefits Team Commendation)



SUCCESS OLANREWAJU
(Compensation and Benefits Team Commendation)



OLUCHI DURU
(BPO Team Commendation)



MARY EDMUND
(Cafe Barista TheBUNKer Uyo)



OLADIMEJI OLALEKE
(theBUNKer Lekki Manager)

PUM COMMENDATION



ABDULRAHAMAN SALE
- NBC Challawa



ADEGBITE SIKIRU
- IDL Ota



ADEGOKE MARUF
Sahara Group V.island



ADEYEMO IMOLE
- GODREJ Ota



AFOLAYAN GBENGA
- NBC Asejire



GODWIN RUTH
- MOUKA Benin



BASSEY JOHN
- MOUKA Benin



CHUKWUDI AMALIKWU
- UNILEVER FOODS Agbara



IFEANYI CHINEDU
- NBC Ikeja



JONATHAN YOHANNA
- MOUKA Kaduna



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- UNILEVER FOODS Agbara



OLAJIDE TOBILOBA
- NBC Benin



OLIVER OBUTE
- MOUKA Kaduna



OWOEYE AYDEJI
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OYERINDE ESTHER
- IDL Ota



PAMILERIN ADIGUN
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SHALOM ATAYERO
- UNILEVER Agbara



SUNDAY GODWIN
- NBC Benin



YEKINI OLUSOJI
- GODREJ Ota



YUNUSA AZEEZ
- MOUKA Ikeja

RESOURCE INTERMEDIARIES
GHANA LIMITED

On behalf of Resource Intermediaries Ghana Limited, I extend my heartfelt congratulations to **Resource Intermediaries Nigeria Limited** as you celebrate your **20** incredible years!

Two decades of quality services, excellence, impact, growth and making a difference is a monumental milestone. You have not only grown into an industry leader, but also consistently set the standard for innovation and integrity.

It is a privilege watching your journey with an exceptional leadership and a relentless team that has driven the company to its success. We are proud to celebrate this journey with you, your dedication and commitment to excellence continues to inspire us and the company at large.

We look forward to many more years of success and growth as you embark on this next chapter.

Congratulations once again to your incredible milestone.

Emmanuel Boateng
MD/CEO
Resource Intermediaries Ghana Limited

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DEAR JOB SEEKERS, THE MARKET IS NOT ANGRY WITH YOU

By Abiodun Happiness Temitope



If you've been job hunting in Nigeria for a while, chances are you've said one or more of the following:

"There are no jobs."

"These companies already know who they want to hire."

"I have applied to 200 roles and nobody has replied."

"They are asking for five years of experience for an entry-level role."

Trust me, I have heard them all. As someone who works daily with employers looking for talent and professionals looking for opportunities, I can tell you that there is a strange paradox in today's job market: employers say they cannot find the right people, while job seekers say nobody is hiring.

Both sides are frustrated. Both sides have valid points, and both sides are contributing to the problem.

The reality is that the world of work has changed faster in the last five years than it did in the previous twenty years. Technology, remote work, artificial intelligence, outsourcing, freelancing, and the rise of the global talent economy have completely rewritten the rules.

Unfortunately, many people are still playing by yesterday's rules. One of the most common mistakes job seekers make is believing that a certificate alone is enough. Degrees remain valuable, but employers are increasingly hiring for skills, adaptability, communication, problem-solving ability, and the capacity to learn quickly.

A recruiter today may spend less than a minute reviewing your application. Harsh? Yes. Reality? Also yes.

This means your employability is no longer determined solely by what you studied. It is determined by how effectively you can demonstrate value.

Your CV is not your biography. It is a marketing document.

Many CVs I review read like life stories. Employers are not looking for your entire journey; they are looking for evidence that you can solve their problems.

If you increased sales, mention it. If you managed projects, quantify them. If you improved a process, explain the impact. If you learned a skill independently and applied it successfully, showcase it. In a competitive market, outcomes speak louder than responsibilities.

Another challenge facing many professionals is the assumption that job applications alone create opportunities. They do not. The hidden job market remains very real. Many opportunities are filled through referrals, recommendations, professional communities, industry events, internships, freelance projects, and personal networks long before they ever appear online.

This is why **networking is no longer optional, it is a career skill**. No, networking does not mean sending strangers messages that begin with "Good day sir, please help me with a job." It means building genuine professional relationships, contributing to conversations, attending industry events, joining communities, and becoming visible for the right reasons. People hire people they know, trust, or have heard good things about. Technology has also created opportunities many professionals are yet to fully embrace. Today, a graphic designer in Lagos can work for a startup in Berlin. A customer support professional in Ibadan can support clients in Canada. A virtual assistant in Abuja can manage schedules for executives in London. The talent marketplace is no longer confined by geography. This shift has created a powerful lesson:

Do not compete only locally when you can compete globally.

However, global opportunities require global standards. Communication matters. Professionalism matters. Digital literacy matters. Reliability matters. Many employers would rather hire a moderately skilled professional who is dependable than an exceptionally talented person who consistently misses deadlines. And while we are discussing employability, let's address a difficult truth. Not every problem is the economy. The economy certainly presents challenges. Businesses face rising operating costs, inflation, unstable power supply, and increasing competition. Yet some candidates still submit CVs filled with errors, attend interviews unprepared, arrive late, or fail to research the company they are applying to. When preparation meets opportunity, careers are built. When excuses meet opportunity, opportunities move on. On the employer side, there are lessons too. Organizations must recognize that attracting talent requires more than posting vacancies. Candidates today evaluate employers just as employers evaluate candidates. Work culture matters. Leadership matters. Growth opportunities matter.

The best talent often has options, and companies that fail to create healthy environments will struggle to retain their strongest employees.

Degrees remain valuable, but employers are increasingly hiring for skills, adaptability, communication, problem-solving ability, and the capacity to learn quickly.

This is one reason outsourcing and flexible workforce solutions have gained popularity across industries. Businesses increasingly need access to specialized talent without the complexity of traditional hiring models. The future workplace will likely be a blend of full-time employees, contractors, freelancers, consultants, remote teams, and technology-enabled workforce solutions. Organizations that learn how to effectively combine human talent with technology will have a significant competitive advantage.

Perhaps the most important lesson for anyone navigating today's marketplace is this:

Your career is your responsibility.

Not your university, not your former employer, not the government, not LinkedIn, but **You.**

The most employable professionals are not necessarily the smartest people in the room. They are often the most adaptable, they learn continuously, they embrace technology, they communicate effectively, they build relationships, they stay curious, and most importantly, they understand that learning never truly ends. So if you're currently searching for a job, take heart. Your next opportunity may not come from the hundredth application you submit. It may come from a new skill you learn, a relationship you build, a project you complete, or a conversation you almost didn't have. The Nigerian job market is challenging, yes. But it is also evolving. And for professionals willing to evolve with it, the opportunities are still very much alive. After all, the job market is not looking for perfect people. It is looking for people who are ready for what comes next.

Young Creatives @Work









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Fashion Brand Owner Featuring

OLUFUNMI AKERELE,

Founder of Rele Apparel

Please introduce yourself and tell us about your fashion brand.

I am Olufunmi Akerele, the founder and creative force behind Rele Apparel, a contemporary fashion brand creating refined, well-tailored pieces for men and women who appreciate structure and thoughtful design. At Rele, we believe clothing should do more than simply look beautiful; it should make you feel confident and completely yourself. We create intentional, sophisticated pieces rooted in strong tailoring and meticulous attention to detail. Every piece is designed for the modern man and woman who understands the power of a great fit and isn't afraid to make a statement.

What inspired you to venture into the fashion industry?

My journey into fashion was driven by a genuine love for clothing and the way it can transform how a person feels about themselves. I've always been drawn to beautiful, well-constructed pieces and the confidence that comes from wearing something that fits you



perfectly and feels like an extension of who you are.
Over time, I realized that I didn't just want to admire great fashion, I wanted to create it. I wanted to build a brand that reflected my own understanding of structure and individuality.

That desire became RELE. For me, fashion is not just about making clothes; it's about creating pieces that give people a sense of confidence and identity. That is what continues to inspire me and drive the vision behind RELE.

Was fashion always your passion, or did your career begin in another field?
Fashion was always something I was naturally drawn to, even though it wasn't where my career began. Long before I ever imagined building a fashion brand, I had already earned myself a nickname at home, "Iye Oge," meaning "Mother of Fashion." My uncle gave me the name when I was a child, and eventually the entire family adopted it. So perhaps, in hindsight, fashion was always quietly finding its way back to me.

Professionally, I began my career in sales and business development, working across different industries and learning a great deal about people and what it takes to build and grow a business.

Those experiences have become an important part of my journey with Rele. They taught me that building a brand is about more than creating beautiful products; it's about understanding people and being intentional about how you make them feel.

How did your fashion brand begin?
Rele began quite organically. I would often find myself drawn to images of beautifully styled, elegant pieces, and someone close to me encouraged me to





start sketching the designs I imagined. That simple encouragement became my first step into fashion.

My curiosity grew when I visited a friend who has a fashion brand and saw firsthand how beautifully made garments could be created from scratch. I began asking questions and spending more time around the process. Eventually, I started experimenting with my own designs and creating pieces of my own.

What began as curiosity and a creative hobby gradually became something much bigger as I saw how people responded to what I created. I realized I had an opportunity to bring together my love for fashion and my experience in business, and that became the foundation of RELE.

What strategies have helped you build customer loyalty?
For me, customer loyalty comes down to good quality and a great experience. I listen to my clients, understand what they want, and make sure they feel valued throughout the process.
When people trust your work and enjoy their experience, they naturally come back and recommend you to others. That's what I focus on with Rele.



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What lessons has entrepreneurship taught you?
Entrepreneurship has taught me patience and the importance of being willing to learn. You won't always have all the answers, so sometimes you just have to figure things out as you go.
It has also taught me to trust myself and keep showing up. Some lessons can be very expensive, but they're still lessons!

What opportunities do you believe exist for emerging designers?
I think there are so many opportunities for emerging designers today, especially because social media has made it possible to reach people without needing a huge platform or budget.
There's also a growing interest in African fashion and new perspectives, which gives young designers room to create, experiment, and build brands that are truly their own. I think the biggest opportunity is to find your voice and stay consistent with it.

What changes would you like to see in the fashion industry?
I think the fashion industry is evolving in a lot of positive ways, especially here in Africa. I'd just love to see even more collaboration and opportunities for designers to learn from one another.
I'd also love to see more designers thinking beyond just creating clothes and building strong, sustainable businesses around their creativity.
There's so much talent in the industry, and I think there's room for all of us to grow together.

What message would you like to leave with our readers?
I would love for readers to simply get to know Rele: what we stand for and the thought behind our designs. If you're looking for something different, I hope you'll explore the brand and find something that speaks to you.
And for anyone building a business of their own, I hope my journey shows that you don't have to have everything figured out from the beginning. You can start, make mistakes, and keep building. I'm still learning too, and that's part of the journey.



Creamy Chicken Mushroom Alfredo Pasta (European-Style Comfort Food)

This one na "soft life dinner", the kind of meal you eat and suddenly start acting like you live in a movie where everything is calm, expensive, and emotionally stable.

But good news: all the ingredients dey Nigeria. Supermarket or local market, you're covered.

Ingredients

Main

- Spaghetti or fettuccine (any pasta you can find)
- Chicken breast or laps (boneless preferred but not compulsory)
- Fresh mushrooms (button mushrooms if available)

Creamy sauce base

- Milk (or cooking cream if you see am)
- Butter
- Flour (for thickening)

Seasoning

- Garlic (very important)
- Onion
- Black pepper
- Salt
- Chicken seasoning cube (optional but helpful)
- Thyme or mixed herbs

Extras (for restaurant feel)

- Grated cheese (cheddar or mozzarella if available)
- Parsley or scent leaf (for garnish)
- Small olive oil (optional — if no get, vegetable oil works fine)

Preparation Steps

1. **Cook your pasta**
   - Boil pasta in salted water
   - Cook until soft but still firm (don't overcook am)
   - Drain and set aside

2. **Season and cook the chicken**
   In a bowl, mix chicken with:
   - salt
   - black pepper
   - garlic
   - thyme
   - seasoning cube

Heat a pan with small butter or oil.
Cook chicken until golden brown and fully done.
Set aside (and try not to eat it all before sauce)

3. **Sauté the mushrooms**
   In the same pan:
   - Add small butter
   - Add sliced mushrooms + onions

Cook until mushrooms soften and release their flavor.
This step is giving "fancy restaurant smell" already.

4. **Make the creamy Alfredo sauce**
   In a small bowl mix:
   - 1 tablespoon flour + small milk (to avoid lumps)

Then pour into pan with mushrooms.
Add remaining milk slowly while stirring.
Let it thicken on low heat.

Add:
- garlic
- black pepper
- salt
- thyme

Stir until it becomes smooth, creamy, and slightly glossy.

5. **Bring everything together**
   Add:
   - cooked chicken
   - pasta

Mix gently until everything is fully coated in sauce.
If it's too thick, add small milk.
If too light, let it simmer small more.

6. **Finish like a chef**
   Top with:
   - grated cheese
   - parsley or scent leaf
   - small drizzle of butter (optional but powerful)

Final Result
You should get:
- creamy white pasta
- juicy chicken
- soft mushrooms
- rich, buttery sauce
- full "European restaurant in Lagos" energy

Kitchen Reality Check
- If cream no dey, milk still works, just manage it confidently
- If mushrooms hard to find, just say it's "authentic adaptation"
- If cheese too expensive, don't stress, the sauce still carries grace

Closing Vibe

This meal is for:

"I deserve something soft after everything life is doing to me."

Cook it slow. Eat it slow. Pretend you're in a small café somewhere in Italy where nobody is rushing you.



THRESHOLD, LIFE ON THE EDGE OF WHAT'S NEXT

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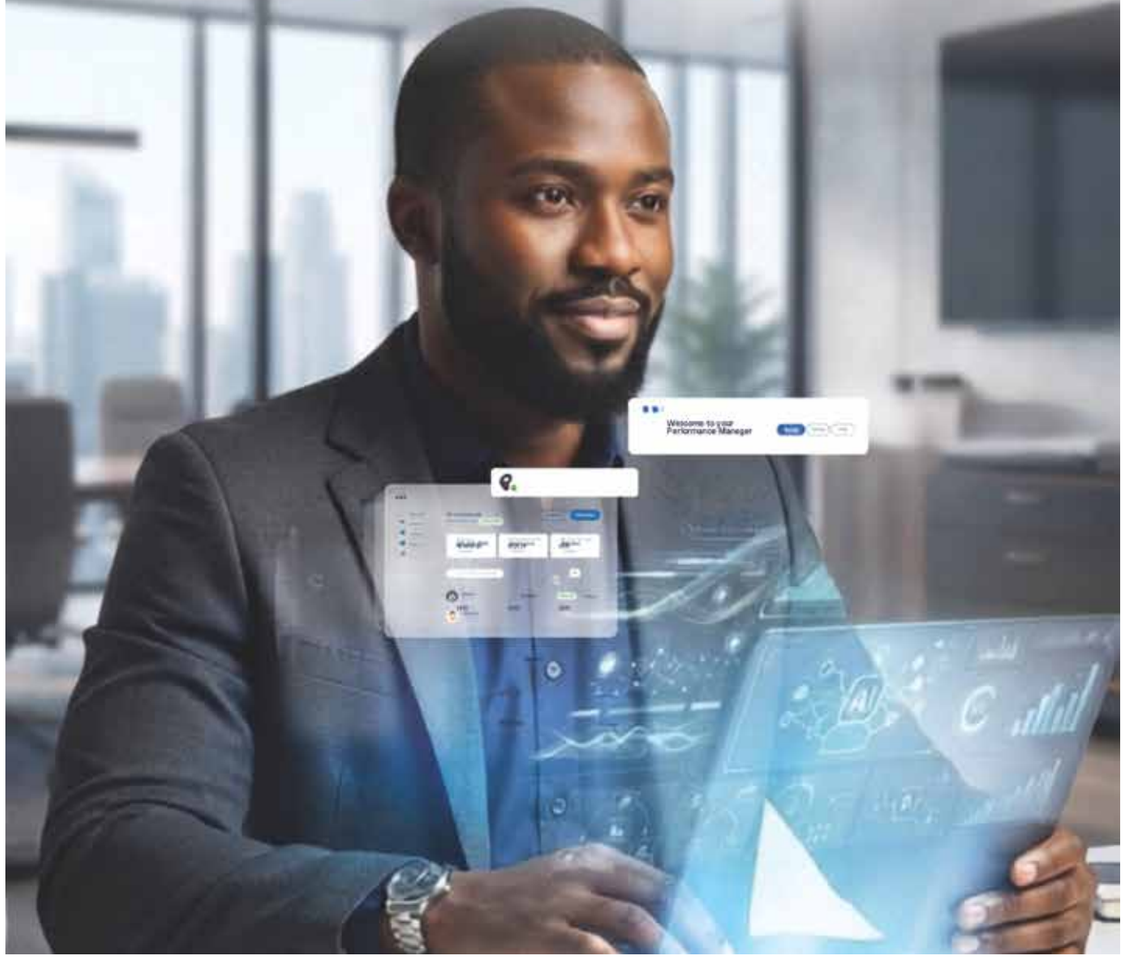
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