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Relevance:

The Currency of the Times



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Chairman, Oyo State AYD.

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- Soft Powers, Hard truth
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■ **REPORT**

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Korean Beef Bulgogi Naija Style!

Sometimes, you don't need to go fancy to enjoy global flavours. This is my go-to when I'm craving something Korean, flavour-packed, but super doable right here in Nigeria—with what I already have in the kitchen or can get from the nearest market. Bulgogi is Korea's classic marinated beef dish. It's sweet, savoury, garlicky, gingery, and oh-so tender.

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NIGERIA:

Lagos: 24A Bashorun Okusanya Street Off Admiralty Road Off Admiralty Way, Lekki Phase 1, Lagos.

Tel: +2348142082543

Ibadan: 49, MKO Abiola Way, Ajeigbe, Ring Road Area, Ibadan. Tel: 0907 021 4107

Abuja: 3, Atbara Street, Off Cairo Street, Off Adetokunbo Ademola Crescent, Wuse II, Abuja.

Tel: +234 907 887 0006

Port Harcourt: Xorint Towers Plaza, 2nd Floor, Block 39, Opposite Golf Estate, Okuru Road,

Off Peter-Odili Road, Port-Harcourt

Tel: +2349161483228

Abeokuta: 125, Olusegun Osoba Way, Oke Ilewo, Abeokuta. Tel: +2349046638337

Website: www.resourceintermediaries.org, Email: info@resourceintermediaries.org

GHANA:

Accra: 13014 Otswse Close, Osu Accra.

Tel: 0302942583

Website:

www.resourceintermediariesghana.com

Email:

info@resourceintermediariesghana.com

KENYA:

Nairobi 215 David Osieli Road, Westlands

Nairobi, Kenya.

SOME OF THE PEOPLE WHO HELPED CREATE THIS MAGAZINE

**SAMUEL VIAVONU**

Samuel Viavonu is a communications strategist helping brands grow profitably through marketing, PR, and digital strategy. Outside client briefs and strategy sessions, he explores storytelling through themes of identity, culture, media, and human experience, with features published on platforms such as BellaNaija and Afrocritik. Follow him on all social media platforms @samuelviavonu

**PRINCE FALANA ADEBOWALE**

Prince Falana Adebowale Adebayo is a distinguished leader with a background in public and private sector administration. He holds an HND in Purchasing and Supply Chain Management and a B.Sc in Business Administration. His career began as a Toll Collector at LCC, where he excelled in communication and negotiation. He then served the Oyo State Government as a Personal Assistant, coordinating critical administrative tasks and ensuring timely information flow. Known for his calm demeanor and methodical approach, Prince Falana is an exceptional organizer and dependable team leader. He is skilled in correspondence, reporting, and interdepartmental coordination. Currently, he chairs the Oyo State Agency for Youth Development, overseeing programs for youth empowerment, entrepreneurship, and civic engagement. He is a strong advocate for youth inclusion, inspiring the younger generation with his commitment to purposeful leadership and service.

**OBAFEMI JENNIFER**

Obafemi Jennifer popularly known as Jenny-Smiles is a dental and public health professional with over 14 years in private dental practice and healthcare. She is the founder of Smilesdotcomdental clinic, an award-winning dental brand that is reshaping dental care access and experience in Africa. She also sits on the board of Oak Aid Dental Clinic in Enugu. As a trailblazing and innovative entrepreneur, Jennifer has continuously sought ways to improve healthcare industry through the implementation of revolutionary ideas, one of which she has pioneered is the game changing mobile dentistry initiative which enables patients to gain access to basic dental services and solutions in the comfort of their homes. She is happily married and a proud mother of two.

**MC LARRY**

Lanre Gregory, aka MC Larry J is an International Events MC, comedian, actor and radio host. He graduated Performing Arts at the Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye, Ogun State. He is the founder of Larry J Live, a comedy show of both original material and exclusive content. He is an awesome story teller. He is married with two children.

**SEUN AJIBADE**

Seun Ajibade is a highly inspired and entrepreneurial executive manager with a professional background in Operations Management. With a unique skillset composed of competence and knowledge management, project management, business, and analytical skills. As a Human Resource Generalist with over 20 years of experience, he has acquired a wealth of knowledge in Personnel Management in various industries, which include Banking & Financial institutions, Manufacturing, conglomerates & others, and Human Resource Consulting. Seun is an Associate Member of the Chartered Institute of Personnel Management (ACIPM), HRPL, and holds a BSc. Honors in Banking & Finance from the prestigious Lagos State University.

**DR. EMEM PETERS**

Dr. Emem Petters is a Consultant Public Health Physician at the University of Uyo Teaching Hospital, Uyo. She holds an MBChB from the University of Calabar, an MPH from the University of Port Harcourt, and she is a fellow of the West African College of Physicians (Public Health). She currently serves as chairman of the Association of Public Health Physicians of Nigeria, Akwa Ibom State Chapter. Dr. Petters is passionate about preventive healthcare and health system strengthening. She is also a proud mother of two beautiful daughters.

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My dearest Skribble Community,

Welcome to the latest edition of Skribble! Shout-out to the contributors, editorial team stakeholders, and every brand that partnered with Skribble. In this edition, we delved into the world of “Relevance”. I found myself particularly drawn to the Management page by Seun Ajibade on page 8. He made a brilliant point: relevance isn't a

status you achieve, but a continuous pursuit you actively maintain through intentionality. That insight really made me rethink things.

Can I get a nod if your biggest distraction is social media, just like our celebrity guest, MC Larry J. Rush, to page 14 to see how he navigates through. In MC Larry J's words, you don't just stay relevant, you must be impactful.

We've also included an insightful report on World Sickle Cell Day hosted by Living Hope Save Cell Foundation and Mirror Mi's Team in partnership with theBUNKer Services Nigeria Limited facilities (Abuja and Abeokuta) and MD / CEO, Resource intermediaries Ltd: Ademolasoye Awonaiké, patron Living Hope Savecell Foundation. The events were packed with purpose. The day was dedicated to raising awareness about sickle cell disease, a genetic blood disorder, and the challenges faced by individuals who will now be referred to as warriors and not survivors. You will find the report on Page 48.

Drawing on his vast experience, the esteemed Esojayiludun, though retired, remains exceptionally active and graciously shared excerpts on our theme. His contribution, titled "From Print to Purpose in a World That Never Stops Moving," appears on page 59. The delectable Dr. Emmem Peters, a consultant public health physician at the University of Uyo Teaching Hospital, shared insights on her leadership experience on page 31.

As always, we value your feedback. Please share your thoughts and suggestions with us. By sharing your insights, you can foster a sense of community and loyalty. Please send us a dm via our instagram handle @Skribble_magazine.

Till we meet again in the next edition and year 2026, stay RELEVANT.

Oghenekevwé Osaze-Momoh (KOM)

Editor

RELEVANCE: The Currency of the Times

By Seun Ajibade

I remember my first day at work like it was yesterday, April 2010. There was no job application, no formal interview. Just a call from the pioneer MD/CEO of Resource Intermediaries Limited Nigeria, Olusoji Oyawoye, asking if I'd consider joining the HR team as the HR, Relationship Manager to manage a newly awarded outsourcing contract involving over 1,000 employees of the defuncted Intercontinental Bank. I had a stable job as a support staff in the banking sector, but this offer represented something more than a title; it was a call to relevance.

That opportunity didn't come because of my qualifications alone. It came because of the value I had built through experience, my network, and the trust I had cultivated. In today's dynamic world, relevance is not just desirable; it's essential. It is, quite literally, the currency of the times. In a workplace climate driven by innovation, digital disruption, economic fluctuations, and social expectations, individuals and organizations must constantly ask the question: How relevant am I today? The answer often lies in five timeless keys, each drawn from experience, shaped by challenges, and reinforced by the wisdom of seasoned professionals.

1. Relationship: The Lifeline of Relevance

In today's increasingly collaborative work culture, your ability to maintain and nurture relationships is often more valuable than your technical expertise. People do business with those they trust, and trust is built over time through genuine relationships.

My job offer in 2010 came through a leader who believed in me—not because of a résumé, but because of past working experiences and the relational capital I had built. In the words of John C. Maxwell, "Leadership is influence—nothing more, nothing less." Relevance is sustained when people remember how you made them feel, how you showed up for them, and how consistently you delivered value.

In a world battling disconnection and digital noise, human relationships are the enduring currency that can never be outsourced or automated.

2. Your Contact: Who You Know Matters

There's a reason networking is a skill—because it can open doors, credentials cannot. It's not about manipulation; it's about mutual value. The contacts you build over time, within and beyond your industry, become your bridge to new opportunities and insights.

However, relevance through contacts is not transactional. It is relational. The late Stephen Covey

"Relevance is not a status; it's a continuous pursuit. It's not something you earn once it's something you maintain through intentionality, growth, and value"

famously said, "Seek first to understand, then to be understood." Those who maintain authentic connections—not just LinkedIn endorsements—are those whose names come up when decisions are made in closed rooms.

For professionals navigating today's complex environment, strategic connections are no longer optional—they are fundamental to staying visible and valuable.

3. Commitment and Loyalty: The Underestimated Differentiator

We live in a gig economy, where short-term contracts and rapid job hopping have become the norm. Yet, organizations still value those who demonstrate loyalty and commitment—not just to their roles, but to the mission and values of the organization.

During my transition from banking into HR outsourcing, I learned that relevance is not just about



delivering results, but showing up consistently, especially when it's inconvenient. Loyalty, when rooted in integrity and purpose, becomes a reputation-defining trait.

Veterans in the business world, like Warren Buffet, often emphasize character and long-term dedication to mere talent. Why? Because commitment is rare—and relevance is born out of what is rare.

4. Be Good at What You Do: Excellence is Non-Negotiable

All the networking, loyalty, and good intentions in the world won't sustain your relevance if you're not good at your job. Competence is the foundation. Excellence is the differentiator.

Whether you're an HR manager or a Tech developer, the quality of your work must speak when you are not in the room. In a fast-paced, results-driven world, relevance is tied to your capacity

to consistently deliver high-quality outcomes.

Research by the World Economic Forum shows that the most future-ready professionals are those who continue to learn, unlearn, and relearn. The key is staying ahead of your field—not just working hard but working smart.

5. Let Your Voice Be Heard: Speak Up with Substance

Many professionals lose relevance not because they lack insight, but because they don't speak up. Presence in a room means nothing if your voice is missing from the conversation. Relevance grows when your perspectives are heard, respected, and acted upon.

One of the greatest challenges I faced in my early leadership journey was learning how to articulate values. I had to move from being a behind-the-scenes executor to becoming a voice that

could influence strategic direction.

Over the years, I have had the privilege of serving on strategic committees and contributing to executive management discussions. These experiences have significantly expanded my relevance beyond the traditional boundaries of my core HR responsibilities. By stepping into cross-functional roles and lending my voice to broader organizational goals, I have gained insight, visibility, and influence that might not have come from staying solely within my lane. It wasn't easy—but it was necessary.

In her bestselling book *Lean In*, Sheryl Sandberg writes, "Speak your truth, even if your voice shakes." In boardrooms, team meetings, and even virtual calls—relevance demands visibility. Speak up. Bring ideas. Ask questions. Let the room feel your presence.

In Conclusion: The Enduring Power of Relevance

Relevance is not a status; it's a continuous pursuit. It's not something you earn once—it's something you maintain through intentionality, growth, and value. Whether you're a young professional or a seasoned executive, your ability to remain relevant will define the sustainability of your impact.

Today's world will always shift—technology will evolve, trends will come and go, and industries will transform. But the five keys remain: relationships, contacts, commitment, competence, and voice.

Relevance is the currency of the times. Guard it. Grow it. Spend it wisely.

Interview with Chairman of the Oyo state Agency for Youth Development (AYD) *Prince Falana Adebowale*

Question: Could you please share a bit of your background and the journey to becoming the chairman of Agency for Youth Development?

It all began in my early years in school; I was a union leader. In my ND days, I was the president of my department- Logistics and Transport Management in 2005-2006. I came back for my HND program in 2009-2010. I was a senior president of my faculty. We had about seven to eight departments, and I was the senate president from the legislative arms. When I graduated, I joined the so-called political class officially in 2009 in Ibadan. From there I joined the Labour Party which produced Mimiko as the governor. Coming down to Ibadan, I joined the Ladoja group which was re-elected in 2011. I was there as the state's student coordinator for them in 2011/12. I had to go back to Lagos. I started working with LTC, Lagos Towing Company in Ikoyi, Lekki Phase 1. In 2016, my company was merged as the State government took over and metamorphosed the company from LTC to LCC – Lekki Concession Company. In my first year in government, I worked as a P.A to the then chief of staff Oso Bisi Laka before a lot of things transpired. I worked with Seyi Makinde who won the election in 2022/23. After that, I wanted to become a local government chairman in Ibadan North, but I was not given. The primary did not favour me, but the government



appointed me in May 2024 as the Chairman Agency for Youth Development (AYD). Here I am today.

What was the driving force or the passion behind your interest in politics from a very tender age?

It is just so natural for me. I can't say what exactly the reason is. As we explore the theme for this publication, which is "Relevance, the Currency of the Times", could you please share a significant challenge you faced in your career,

how you stayed relevant and navigated it?

I would narrow that down to this Agency. To me, in this agency, relevance means aligning our programs and policies with our platform, which meets the needs of the youths in terms of the challenges they face and their aspirations. We had to make sure that we have a platform where we roll-out our policies, so that we can really identify the challenges that the youths are facing. First, I discovered while working here as the chairman for the Agency for

Youth Development, that it is not easy because this place had lacked leadership for almost eleven years. So, it was really challenging. We had to start from scratch. All I needed to do was to set up a management Team that brainstormed with me. We have policies that bring initiatives in entrepreneurship, literacy, leadership training, and mental health advocacy. We crafted out so many things that give us the results we see today. To me, relevance means embracing the innovation that we brought.

Some of these innovations were that - we identified that some of our youths have the energy and interest in acquiring new skills, but no financial strength to set themselves up. We looked for the available government resources and wrote proposals to certain small/medium enterprises and some developmental agencies of Nigeria to assist us with grants. We also sorted for financial help from the local government chairmen and state representatives, honourables and young entrepreneurs. The first digital training we had was held on October 2nd and 3rd, 2024. We identified the likely beneficiaries, which are youths with potential and interest in digital skills. We opened a website (oyods.com) for them. We brought in Coding, Digital Marketing and Amazon Publishing. We went on to collaborate. Precision Automation Company facilitated some training, this impacted thousands of lives of the youths in Oyo state. We also subjected the youths to a learning management system as a backup to the training they have had. Today, we have about 200 youths from this initiative. We have equipped them. We joined forces with a lot of skill acquisition centres to achieve this, one of which is Funke Lasisi.

From your perspective as the AYD

chairman, what can you say are the key qualities and skills that make a young person relevant in today's world?

The number one skill to stay relevant is technology. Daily, tech defines our reality. People who are equipped with modern technology stay relevant for long. Agencies who formerly used the analogy system have switched to digital system of operation.

What is the fate of the categories of youth who are not educated when it comes to becoming tech savvy?

Nigerian youths are sophisticated when it comes to knowledge; they are naturally endowed. Education is not a barrier to learning tech skills. At the agency, we came up with an initiative to teach the youths how to develop websites without the use of coding. The class was 100% practical. So, this is something every layman can do. I believe in practicality over theory.

“My vision as a youth leader is to build leaders that are politically inclined and have the financial strength to determine National policy for future growth.”

What is your vision for youths in Oyo state and how do you see them contributing to the overall relevance on a national and global level?

My vision as a youth leader is to build leaders that are politically inclined and have the financial strength to determine national policy for future growth. I have a

vision to groom selfless leaders who are ready to give all it takes for developmental purposes. In the next 2-3 years, I envisage having thousands of them contributing to the GDP/GNP with at least 10 million annually. The political leaders I am grooming will be ready to give all it takes by making sacrifices that can bring developmental projects to the state and nation. Most of our past leaders are selfish and not ready to shift ground for the younger generation, but we are preaching to ourselves and putting selflessness into practice. Sharing from my personal experience, there was a time I wanted to become the youth leader of the state but a brother-Micheal Ogunshina won the seat. Since his victory, I have worked together with him and chaired some of his programs when he asked me to. This is to show that life is all about giving and taking. Similarly, I tried contesting again for the same post but another brother of mine called Olufade who is now the current chairman of Ibadan North Local government won over me. After his announcement, I was the first to congratulate him and cheer him up. I pledged to support him all through his stay and acted as the DG of his campaign. Today, the three of us are best of friends and often share ideas. Most of the ongoing projects in the AYD are a result of the efforts of all of us. The partnership amongst us is the reason why the developmental projects for the Youths in the state are successful. We let our youths know that nothing is too big to sacrifice and this is the kind of leaders we are grooming.

In terms of economic power, I want to groom young entrepreneurs in thousands with an annual turnover of 10 million minimum to contribute to the IGR and Oyo state financial growth.

Cont'd on page 54



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INTERVIEW

with Larry J

Skribble Magazine would like to start with an introduction. Who is Larry Jay?

Larry J: Larry Jay is me. The brand is about making people happy through fashion, comedy, hosting events, skits, anything that can boost someone's mood. That's my purpose.

Skribble Magazine: *That sounds like a powerful purpose.*

Larry J: It is. That's my core assignment. Making people happy makes me happy.

Skribble Magazine: *How did you discover this purpose?*

Larry J: That journey is long. I'm not even sure where to start. It

includes my educational background and moments of being misunderstood. I tried so many things project management and medicine but none of them stuck.

I was a science student in secondary school. I struggled with subjects like physics and chemistry. Biology was easier because I love understanding how and why things work. Eventually, one of my teachers advised my parents to let me switch to arts, and I did.

But even back then, I was always a class clown. I'd twist the things written on the board to make them laugh. I was known for being unserious, but it brought joy to others. We did a stage play, *The Lion and the Jewel* by Wole

Soyinka. I was assigned a serious role, but I couldn't help making it funny. I remember one line I delivered was supposed to be tragic, but everyone laughed. That stuck with me.

One teacher, Mr. Paul, saw something in me and spoke to my parents. I still wanted to be a doctor at the time because I thought healing people would make them happy. But gradually, I realized all I wanted was to make people happy in any way I could. I studied Performing Arts at the University of Ilorin, aka "Harvard of the West." After graduation, there were no jobs, so I tried project management again, then IT, but nothing clicked. I've never really done 9-to-5.

Skribble Magazine: *Thanks to your purpose, we all get to laugh. Would you say growing up shaped your love for entertainment and your unique style?*

Larry J: Absolutely. A lot of what I say is based on true experiences. I wasn't a troublesome child, but trouble always found me. I'd get disciplined for things I didn't start. I once used my transport fare to buy something and walked from Isolo to Ipaja.

Skribble Magazine: *Is there any pressure to please fans or act outside your true self to stay relevant?*

Larry J: Not really. The only pressure is when people misunderstand the kind of content I create. Some believe you must engage in shady situations to make money. That's false. If you're happy with what you do, manage your resources, and prepare for the next level, you'll be fine. I live within my means. I don't spend ₦200k on fabric when I can look good in something affordable. It's not the cost but how you wear it. Value lies in what you carry inside, not just what you're wearing.

Skribble Magazine: *So, you're big on personal development?*

Larry J: I'm mighty on personal development. I have mentors who are constantly evolving. Some travel just to learn and grow. You can be certified in so many fields—public speaking, creativity—it expands your thinking.

Skribble Magazine: *This year's theme is "Relevance: The Currency of the Times." How do you*

stay relevant?

Larry J: Relevance has stages. You can be relevant today and fade tomorrow. It's about staying creative and adapting without losing your values. Some people criticize me for not commenting on current events, but that's not my fault. My mission is to spread joy. I'm doing my best in my own community. If people want news updates, they know where to find them. I don't owe anyone anything in the name of "awareness."

Skribble Magazine: *Being relevant isn't always the goal, but being impactful is.*

Larry J: Exactly. Relevance is fleeting. I'd rather be impactful have my own crowd, my own voice. Relevance is reacting to trends; impact is creating timeless value.

Skribble Magazine: *So, what would you say distracts you, and how do you stay grounded?*

Larry J: Social media is my biggest distraction. I love it very much. Sometimes I plan to sleep, but then I start scrolling and laughing. Next thing, it's 3 a.m. To control it, I try not to charge my phone in the evening. Once the battery dies, that's it for the night. Sometimes my friends even "confiscate" my phone to help me unplug. It's a discipline issue, really.

Skribble Magazine: *Sounds like a challenge for all of us. You mentioned reading, do you still read it now?*

Larry J: Honestly, I struggle with that now. I used to read a lot before smartphones took over. Now I say I'll read a book a month and end up spending three

months on it. I fool myself thinking I'm listening to something educational, but I'm scrolling through Instagram. If you find a fix, let me know. Some friends give their phones to their spouses at night to help. It works if you're intentional.

Skribble Magazine: *So, on that note, would you say the industry has been good to you?*

Larry J: The industry gives back what you put into it. If you invest time, you'll get rewarded even if it's not always profitable. You can lose money but gain knowledge. Just don't focus only on money. Focus on art and passion. That's how you get what you want. Some people are doing things that seem senseless, but they've spent years building that thing. People are now forced to watch, and they're cashing out. But we keep diving into every trend. My advice: stick to your own lane. Let trends blend into what you do.

“

Relevance has stages. You can be relevant today and fade tomorrow. It's about staying creative and adapting without losing your values.

Skribble Magazine: *what do you do mostly now?*

Larry J: I do more birthdays, burials, and corporate events now. Back then it was mostly weddings. Seasons change.

Skribble Magazine: *That's a good point. So, if not comedy, what would you have been?*

Larry Jay: I'd have been a doctor. One way or the other, I just want to heal people and make them happy.

Skribble Magazine: *Final words on relevance?*

Larry Jay: Be relevant but be impactful. You need depth. Dig yourself deep into your craft so you don't get swept away by the current. Consistency is key be consistently constant. It means doing it every day, but also growing researching, evolving. That's what makes the difference.

Skribble Magazine: *what do you do for fun?*

Larry J: Apart from pressing my phone (and I'm praying to stop that), I rest. That's my fun. I unwind. On Monday, I was "busy" resting in bed. I walked around, watched TV, and went back to bed. That's my own fun.

Skribble Magazine: *what is your favourite food?*

Larry J: I don't have a favorite food. I eat what makes sense at the moment. Except yam I don't like yam at all.

Skribble Magazine: *Even poundedyam?*

Larry Jay: I eat it, but guess what? I can't tell the difference between poundedyam, amala, or semo. They taste the same to me!

Skribble Magazine: *That's wild!*

Larry J: One restaurant owner even got mad at me for that. But I really can't tell the difference!

Skribble Magazine: *Do you have any hobbies?*

Larry Jay: I love hanging with friends as long as the fun doesn't involve financial stress. Let's not go out and start calculating bills.

Skribble Magazine: *Fair enough! Now, your childhood you mentioned coming from wealth, then losing it. How was that journey?*

Larry J: It was rough. I saw money... and I saw it vanish. My mum had four boys, four cars, four maids. We had everything. Then, everything started going. I moved from private school to public, back and forth so now I'm

a mix of both: "privately public."

Skribble Magazine: *That's hilarious!*

Larry Jay: But it shaped me. It prepared me for this journey. Even when I started comedy, there was no support. My mum gave up. She'd just say, "Go do whatever just don't get arrested." But it all started to make sense eventually.


Skribble Magazine: *For people who want to be like Larry Jay, what would you tell them?*

Larry Jay: Whatever you want to do just start. Don't overthink it. Start small. Be consistent. Some of the things I do now, like the "crying" comedy? That started as an experiment on stage. Just do it. Rome wasn't built in a day. Yes! Don't wait until everything is perfect. Once you challenge yourself, you stop being afraid of challenges.

Skribble Magazine: *Thank you so much, Larry Jay! It's been such a pleasure having you. On behalf of the Skribble team, we say a very big thank you.*

Larry Jay: Thank you too. I really appreciate it.





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Reinvention: *The Path to Lasting Relevance*



We live in a time when yesterday's expertise can become irrelevant by morning. Careers, cultures, and conversations evolve faster than ever. In such a world, the ones who thrive aren't those clinging to what once worked—but those who dare to pivot. There's an urgent need for adaptability, reimagining who we are and finding new ways to express our value in the present.

To stay visible, credible, and meaningful, we must loosen our grip on outdated identities. Relevance has become a new currency, and in this shifting economy of value, reinvention is the only sustainable strategy. It's how we stay connected and impactful, not just for today, but for tomorrow. However, relevance

isn't stumbled upon; it's built through daily, deliberate acts of becoming. It isn't granted once and kept forever. It demands that we grow beyond who we were yesterday.

We grow into relevance through reinvention. This is not about discarding who we are, but about expanding it, shedding outdated versions of ourselves, and stepping into who we need to be now. It's the creative force behind relevance. To stand still is to fade. To move with intention is to evolve. In this process, we become both the artist and canvas, redrawing the lines of identity without erasing the past. Done right, reinvention doesn't erase our history; it updates it.

We've seen this unfold time and again. Apple began as a computer

company but didn't build cultural dominance until it transformed into a lifestyle brand. Netflix went from DVDs to streaming, then to original content. These weren't just business decisions; they were intentional acts of evolution. The same applies to individuals. The people who remain relevant aren't the ones who mastered one note; they're the ones who learn to change their tune.

Everyone, at some point, feels the silent tug of evolution. It might come as restlessness, boredom, or the quiet knowing that what once defined us no longer fits. That our identity has grown too small for who we're becoming. That realization is sobering but also sacred. Because relevance is not about popularity. It's not noise, applause, or trend-chasing. It's resonant. It's the ability to stay connected to purpose, to people, and to the present moment and that often requires letting go.

Reinvention isn't always dramatic. Often, it's a quiet act of courage. A woman in her late thirties, secure in her accounting career, begins to feel the dull ache of unlived dreams. Her heart has always leaned toward teaching. Pivoting would mean less money, more judgment, and more uncertainty. But she does it anyway. And in doing so, she becomes newly relevant—not just to her students or children, but to herself.

Reinvention isn't about becoming someone else. It's about becoming more of yourself. Sometimes that

Cont'd on page 37

ZIMBABWE:

Footprints of Mugabe's Ancient Wisdom



Following the successful launch of bridgeAFRIC in Malawi, we had meetings with the daughter in-law of Malawi's president Rudo Chakwera, to work on the release of her new song. We decided to make it a collaboration with Zimbabwe's biggest gospel artiste: Minister Michael Mahindere

After months of virtual planning, it was finally time for us to go to Zimbabwe to record the song & shoot the music video. Friendly advice: if you need to travel to Zimbabwe and need a visa on arrival, ensure to apply for it at least one month ahead or preferably have someone in Zimbabwe who can follow up with immigration on your behalf. Anyways I did my online visa application which was a long story but finally we got someone who was able to obtain the visa on arrival approval for me a night to my flight.

It was travel-day, and I was on my way to the airport when I got a

message from Kenya Airways that the flight had been delayed by 6hrs. We ended up sleeping in Nairobi and having to continue the next morning but please permit me to narrate my misadventure in Nairobi.

We landed in Nairobi around 10pm and proceeded to process our visa on arrival after which we were told to wait at a designated spot for Kenya Airways shuttle to take us to the hotel. After waiting for about 30mins, a rickety 35-seater bus pulled up and asked us to get in. We got on the bus and were told that we had to wait for the bus to fill up as there were other airlines that were expected to land. You would agree that after waiting for a 6hrs delayed flight at the airport in Nigeria and flying for 5hrs 30mins and spending an hour processing visa on arrival, you would already be tired and borderline irritable, having to seat in a badly ventilated bus for another 2hrs waiting for 3 more people to join the bus for it to fill up was pure torture. We attempted to engage the driver who

was quite impolite, we reached out to the Kenya airways help line and when we realized that help wasn't on the way, we resigned to our faith. The bus eventually moved and started driving into town for another 30 mins before we arrived at the hotel. It was already 2am when we got to the hotel and there was just one person attending to everyone, so we didn't get our room keys till about 3am and we were asked to wait till 4am for dinner to be ready. I finally got to my room at about 3:30am, and my room phone started buzzing by 4:00am because dinner had just been served. We were also informed that the bus would pick us up by 5:00am because our flight was leaving by 7:00am and we had to go through immigration etc.

By the time I got downstairs, the bus had left because it was filled and couldn't take everyone, I ordered an uber alongside two other passengers and headed for the airport, when we arrived the airport we had to change dollars to Kenya shillings to pay the driver and as I walked around looking for the driver, he had been asked to wait for us where he dropped us but on return, he was nowhere to be found. Determined not to fuel the impression that we deceived him, I started combing the car park for him while trying to stay time conscious to avoid missing my flight. Boom, loud sound and I realized that I had fallen into a ditch. My phones and tablet screens shattered, and my main phone went off. I sprained my leg as well. Things couldn't be worse than that. My visa on arrival approval was on my iPhone whose screen had gone blank, and my

flight ticket also.

Luckily for me, my smaller phone was still working so as I hurried into the departure hall after paying the driver, I started trying to reach different people to get my Visa On Arrival approval, tickets e.t.c. luckily I had forwarded my visa approval letter to my sister in celebration because of how long it had taken for the visa approval to come through so she sent it back to me while my PA sent me the flight tickets.

I finally arrived in Zimbabwe and sorted my visa sticker at the airport; I must say that I was quite impressed by the airport. It wasn't exactly the Dubai vibe but for a small country like Zim, it is definitely a beautiful airport. I proceeded to pick up my luggage but didn't find my suitcase, I realized that the airline didn't bring it, so I filled in the forms and technically had only my hand luggage to manage. At this point I had had enough, and as if things couldn't get worse, because of my delayed arrival our entire program had been changed and I had missed out on most of the first day's activities, while some things were put on standstill waiting for my arrival. I made a mental note to make the best of my stay there and kept praying for a miracle for my phone screen to come on.

I was picked up by the Malawian embassy in Zim, they had attached 2 vehicles to us, with protocol and security because we were with the president's daughter in-law. They drove me to the hotel, but my partners immediately came out and informed me that they had been waiting for me so that they could move to a different hotel. We started a hotel search and finally settled for a place before heading out to a meeting with our host. I had to go shopping that evening as I had nothing to wear. The mall is in



Downtown Harare, looks almost like Downtown Joburg or even Downtown LA. If you are going to Zim, you had better carry enough US dollars because the local currency is hardly in use, everyone uses US dollars.

We had a good time shopping for lovely pieces at very affordable rates. It was almost a shopping party as Wendy, Rudo and I spent the rest of the evening shopping and trying clothes on before we realized that we were running late for the church service that we were supposed to attend, I put on one of the new clothes and we went to church. The next morning, we went to the Malawian Embassy to meet with the Ambassador as part of the protocol, to officially intimate him about our activities and everywhere that we would be visiting asper diplomats...lol

They made us understand some of the stringent rules that our dear Robert Mugabe had put in place before his demise, at some point it felt easier to pass through the eyes of a needle than to do business in Harare as a foreigner.

We had drawn up a schedule before travelling but the embassy had a diplomatic schedule drawn up for us which involved showing up at an African day event that had several Heads of States, visiting the African museum amongst other things.

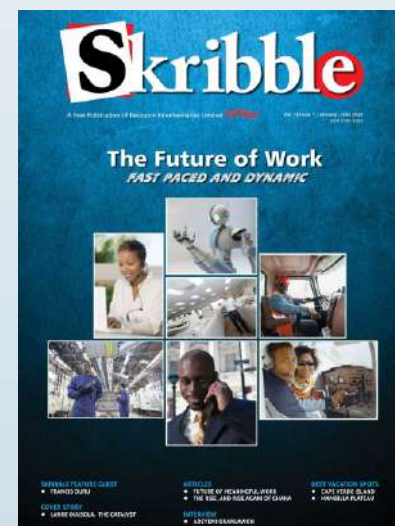
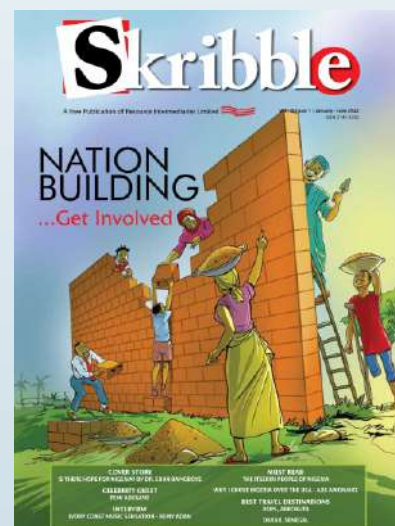
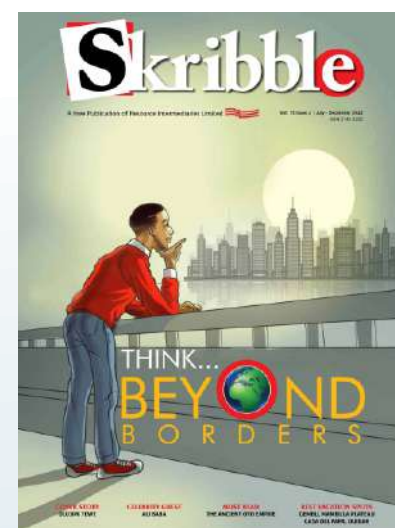
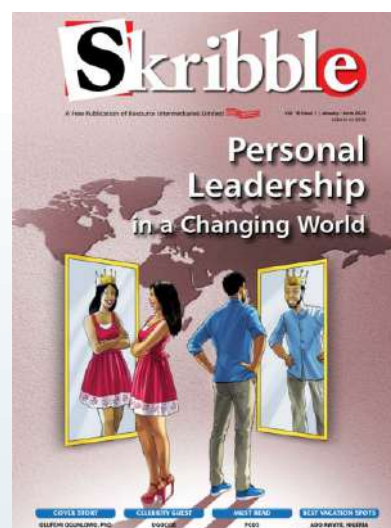
As we drove around Harare, I

could see the footprints of our dear Robert Mugabe and I couldn't help remembering a lot of the social media memes in his name, that made us laugh. The city had tell-tale signs of old wisdom with little touches of archaisms.

We visited an orphanage home, I learnt a lot from that visit, then we went to the studio to record the song between Rudo and Minister Mahindere and I applied my A&R skills a bit, we had photo sessions and connected with udo's elder brother who lives in Zimbabwe then we had this lavish dinner with Minister Mahindere, tasted some street food and a downtown lounge. Best believe my suitcase didn't arrive throughout this time and my phone screen stayed blank but I ensured that it didn't kill my vibe at all. The night before I left Zimbabwe, I got a call from the airport that my suitcase had arrived, and I went to pick it up. For all that is worth, at least I'll get to use my clothes for one night...lol. However, my suitcase was slightly destroyed...I made a complaint with the airline but let me spare you the details of how that went.

By the next day, I was ready to go back home, I had gone through all the possible human emotions but above all, I had bonded so well with the ladies. Did I go back to Zim after that trip? Of course I did, and the second experience was even better.

Through the years...



Skribble



Impact Of Diet And Nutrition On Dental Health

By Dental Therapist Obafemi Feechukwu Jennifer

Introduction

Do you know what you eat affects your teeth? Yes, it is true. Not a popular topic, but a very important one. What we consume daily can significantly influence our oral health, impacting everything from tooth decay to gum disease. A balanced diet rich in specific nutrients helps maintain strong teeth and gums, while a diet high in sugar and acidic foods can lead to tooth decay and other oral health problems. By understanding how specific dietary choices affect dental health, individuals can make

informed choices that promote healthier teeth and gums. Let's discuss this further, shall we?

The Role of Diet in Dental Health

1. Sugary Foods and Tooth Decay

One of the most significant factors affecting dental health is the intake of sugary foods and beverages. When sugar is consumed, it interacts with the bacteria residing in the mouth. This interaction produces acids that can erode tooth enamel, leading to cavities. Sugary snacks and drinks, particularly those that

are sticky or sweet, should be limited to reduce the risk of tooth decay.

A study in General Dentistry indicated that beverages such as soda, energy drinks, and fruit juices can cause dental erosion, with around 30% of participants displaying signs of enamel erosion linked to their frequent consumption of acidic foods and drinks.

2. Effects of Acidic Foods

Acidic foods and beverages can also harm oral health. Ingredients found in citrus fruits, sodas, and some wines can contribute to

tooth erosion by weakening enamel over time. A diet high in sugar is a significant risk factor for dental caries. Starchy snacks can stick to teeth and provide a breeding ground for bacteria. It's crucial for individuals to consume these items in moderation and to follow acidic foods with neutralizing options like water or dairy products to help mitigate their effects.

“ *Proper hydration is essential for maintaining good dental hygiene.* ”

3. Nutritional Deficiencies and Oral Health

A poorly balanced diet lacking vital nutrients can lead to several dental issues. For instance, deficiencies in calcium, vitamin D, and vitamin C can undermine the health of teeth and gums, increasing the risk of periodontal disease. Vitamin C is essential for maintaining healthy gums, while calcium and vitamin D are crucial for tooth strength. Incorporating a

variety of fruits, vegetables, dairy products, and lean proteins can ensure adequate intake of these essential nutrients.

4. Protective Foods for Dental Health

Certain foods can actively promote dental health. Dairy products, such as yoghurt and cheese, not only provide calcium but also help stimulate saliva flow, which can help wash away food particles and neutralise acids. Similarly, crunchy fruits and vegetables, such as apples and carrots, can help clean teeth and stimulate gums due to their natural texture. Foods rich in antioxidants, like berries, can also help reduce inflammation and support overall oral health.

Hydration and Its Impact

Proper hydration is essential for maintaining good dental hygiene. Water is essential in rinsing away food debris and bacteria that can contribute to cavities. Moreover, drinking water that contains fluoride can help strengthen tooth enamel and reduce the risk of decay. The Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) states that fluoridated drinking water can lead to a 25% reduction

in cavities among both children and adults, emphasising the importance of dietary choices, particularly the consumption of fluoridated water. Dehydration can reduce saliva production, making it harder for the mouth to cleanse itself and protect against bacteria. Individuals should aim to stay hydrated throughout the day, especially after meals, to promote a healthier oral environment.

Conclusion

In conclusion, a balanced diet and proper nutrition play a crucial role in maintaining optimal dental health. By being conscious about food choices, reducing sugar and acid intake while increasing nutrient-rich foods, you can significantly lower your risk for cavities, gum disease, and other oral health issues. A balanced diet combined with proper hydration not only enhances dental health but also contributes to overall well-being. Making informed dietary decisions is a proactive step toward achieving and maintaining a healthy smile. So, before you eat that meal, check to see if it is good or bad for your dental health.



WHERE GREAT MINDS MEET

There are places that host sports. And then there are places that *live* sports.

The Moshood Abiola Sports Arena in Abeokuta falls into the second category. More than a stadium, it's a vibrant melting pot of talent, culture, dreams, and the extraordinary human connections that sports uniquely inspire.

If you were among the thousands at the recently concluded National Sports Festival, you know exactly what I mean. The grand finale of both the male and female football events took place in the stadium's mainbowl and what a finale it was! Over 10,000 spectators filled the seats and spilled into standing areas, turning the arena into a pulsating sea of excitement. The energy was electric. It wasn't just the games being played that day it was the spirit of the people, united in support, in joy, in awe.

Just weeks later, the Senior National Women's Team (Super Falcons) hosted Cameroon in a friendly match on that same pitch. The arena once again roared to life as Nigeria secured a confident 2-0 win. The cheers, the drums, the flash of the floodlights were all part of what has become a defining atmosphere in Abeokuta.

Now, with the WAFU B U17 AFCON Qualifiers coming up in September, the MKO Abiola Sports Arena is cementing its place as one of the most important sporting hubs in Nigeria. It's not just about the high-profile matches; it's about building legacy, igniting passion in young athletes, and bringing global attention to local excellence.

But the arena isn't a one-sport wonder.

Step beyond the mainbowl and you'll find an Olympic-sized swimming pool glistening under the Ogun sun a haven for both budding swimmers and seasoned athletes. Tennis courts echo with the rhythmic thwack of practice serves, while the handball courts host thrilling, fast-paced duels. Cricket lovers aren't left out either, with lush pitches designed for both play and passion. And let's not forget the athletics track, where runners chase personal bests and future champions are made.

This diversity in facilities makes the MKO Abiola Sports Arena more than just a venue. It's a playground for excellence across disciplines. Yet, what might be even more impressive than the range of sports is the range of people.

The arena draws in more than just athletes. Coaches, scouts, media personalities, volunteers, vendors, artists, fans from every background they all converge here. In these stands and spaces, you'll meet students from universities, retirees with stories, tech entrepreneurs, grassroots visionaries,

and travelers from across the country. Everyone has a reason to be here and more often than not, it's the people you didn't expect that leave the strongest impression.

This is what makes the MKO Abiola Sports Arena truly special. It's not just where competitions are won; it's where friendships are forged. Where mentors find mentees. Where fans find common ground. Where strangers standing side-by-side in the stands cheer like lifelong allies.

So, if you're not already marking your calendar for the next major event, maybe it's time to change that. And if sports aren't usually your thing, come anyway.

Come for the laughter in the crowd. Come for the energy of a late-night match under world-class floodlights. Come with curiosity, and leave with inspiration. You might meet a future business partner during halftime. Or strike up a conversation that turns into collaboration. Or yes, maybe even find a new friend or more under the glow of the Abeokuta night sky.

Because sometimes, what happens outside the pitch is just as powerful as what happens on it. At its core, the MKO Abiola Sports Arena is a gathering place. A magnet for great minds, big dreams, and shared moments. It's a place where the beauty of sport meets the beauty of human connection. It's where great minds and great moments meet.

And that's something worth showing up for again and again.

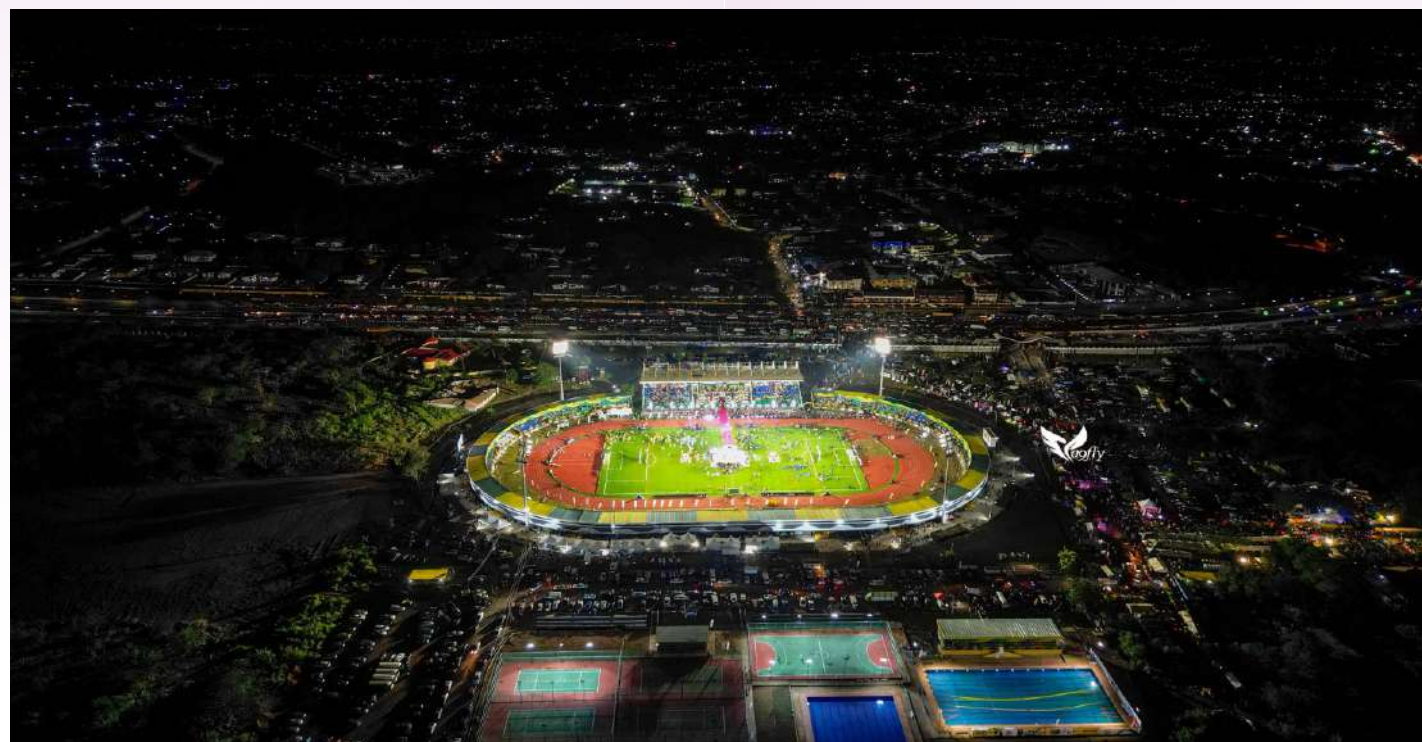


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“
*It's not just where
competitions are won;
it's where
friendships are
forged.
Where mentors
find mentees.*



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MY PERSONAL LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

My name is Dr. Emem Petters, and I am a Consultant Public Health Physician at the University of Uyo Teaching Hospital, Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. I am delighted to share one of my most impactful leadership experiences in the public health sector.

Recently, I had the privilege of serving as the State Coordinator for a major health survey conducted across Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. I felt both honored and anxious when I was entrusted with this responsibility it was my first time managing such a large-scale project. Nevertheless, I was deeply committed to ensuring the survey's success.

As State Coordinator, my primary responsibility was stakeholder engagement across all levels of government in the state. I was also tasked with training and providing oversight to 60 community mobilizers, with the ultimate goal of securing active participation from the state and all 31 local government areas. Additionally, I led efforts to raise awareness, dispel myths, and encourage positive behavioral changes regarding health care.

The communities we targeted were diverse, with significant differences in literacy levels, religious beliefs, and levels of trust in the health care system. The mobilizers themselves also came from varied backgrounds, with different cultural identities, languages, and levels of experience in community engagement. My role was to unify this team and equip them with the appropriate informational, educational, and communication materials to ensure we met the key performance indicators within the given timeframe.

As expected in team leadership and

coordination, we encountered several challenges. Managing a diverse team of 60 individuals came with complexities including cultural sensitivities, varying degrees of enthusiasm, and communication styles. At the community level, we met resistance from some rural areas where suspicion, hostility, or apathy prevailed. These encounters often left our mobilizers discouraged. Additionally, coordinating real-time communication with such a widely dispersed team proved difficult, and sustaining morale throughout the project was a continuous challenge.

To address these issues, I adopted several strategic leadership approaches. I introduced a decentralized model by appointing team leads for every group of five mobilizers. These leads became immediate points of contact, helping to streamline communication and foster peer accountability. To sustain morale, I instituted daily briefing and debriefing sessions sometimes virtually to kickstart each day with motivational insights, celebrate small wins, and provide a platform for team members to share challenges and successes. This enabled prompt problem-solving and strengthened team cohesion.



I also facilitated interactive training sessions focused on empathetic communication, cultural sensitivity, and managing rejection. These sessions significantly boosted team members' confidence and effectiveness.

In leading by example, I regularly accompanied mobilizers on field visits, especially to hard-to-reach or high security risk communities. This hands-on approach demonstrated my commitment, inspired resilience among the team, and reinforced our shared purpose.

Some of the most effective leadership practices I employed included empathetic listening, swift conflict resolution, adapting key messages to local cultural contexts, and consistent communication through WhatsApp groups, phone calls, and face-to-face interactions.

This experience was both enriching and rewarding. I learned that leadership is truly a form of service people are inspired by purpose more than instruction. When a team fully understands the "why" behind a mission, they remain intrinsically motivated. In community engagement, I learned that flexibility is essential; leaders must remain agile and responsive to dynamic situations.

At the conclusion of the survey, we achieved a 100% community participation rate no community rejected the health care intervention. The mobilizers expressed great pride and joy in the success of our collective effort. Personally, I found deep fulfillment in seeing how my leadership contributed to these outcomes. My ability to troubleshoot challenges promptly and keep the team motivated and aligned with our goals stands out as one of my most rewarding leadership experiences.



Huli Wigmen of Papua New Guinea

The Huli people have inhabited their region for many thousands of years, evidenced by their rich oral traditions and archaeological findings. They were known for their extensive travel for trade within the highlands and to the lowlands, particularly towards the south. It is believed they descended from a man named Huli, who was considered a masterful farmer. The Huli's existence remained unknown to the outside world until 1934 when European explorers encountered them. The Huli are an indigenous people that live in the Southern Highlands of Papua New Guinea.

They number over 65,000 and have been living in the area for at least 600 years. They speak Huli, Tok Pisin, and English. The Huli people are famous for their elaborate and colorful dresses. They are proud warriors that have great reverence for birds, imitating them in ceremonial dances and decorating their wigs, woven from human hair, with feathers, flowers, and cuscus fur. Everlasting daisies are especially cultivated for use in wigs while their faces are painted yellow ochre.

Clans have a strong and intricate social system. Ceremonial rituals

are strongly observed, and men and women can still be seen wearing traditional dress, tending their gardens and pigs and building their bush material huts. With a population reportedly somewhere between 250,000 to 300,000. The Huli are the largest ethnic group in the Highlands.

History

The Huli people have inhabited their region for many thousands of years, evidenced by their rich oral traditions and archaeological findings. They were known for their extensive travel for trade within the highlands and to the

lowlands, particularly towards the south.

Culture and Traditions

The Huli are renowned for their vibrant and elaborate cultural expressions:

Dress and Adornment: They are famous for their colorful attire and intricate decorations. Men often wear traditional dress consisting of a woven belt, aprons, and cordyline leaves. Both men and women adorn themselves with various ornaments like shell breastplates, necklaces, and armbands. Their faces are often painted with yellow ochre, and sometimes highlighted with red, white, or black paint, each man having a unique design.

Wigmen Culture: A distinctive aspect of Huli culture is the tradition of men growing and elaborately styling their own hair into wigs (manda hare). This process can take many months and involves specific rituals and care, often under the guidance of a "haroli" or shaman. These wigs are then decorated with feathers from birds like the cassowary and bird of paradise, flowers, and cuscus fur, serving as status symbols for ceremonies.

Gender Roles and Housing: Traditionally, men and women live separately. Unmarried men

“They are the largest ethnic group in the region, with a population estimated between 250,000 and 300,000”

historically resided in large group houses, though this is less common today. Even in family units, men often have their own dwelling, while women and children live in separate houses. This separation is linked to beliefs about potential dangers to men from female contact.

Marriage: Polygyny is practiced, with men allowed to have multiple wives, while women have only one husband. Marriages can be arranged, and a dowry, typically in the form of pigs, is given to the bride's family. Exogamy (marrying outside the clan) is the norm.

Economy: The Huli are skilled farmers, cultivating crops like sweet potatoes (the staple food),

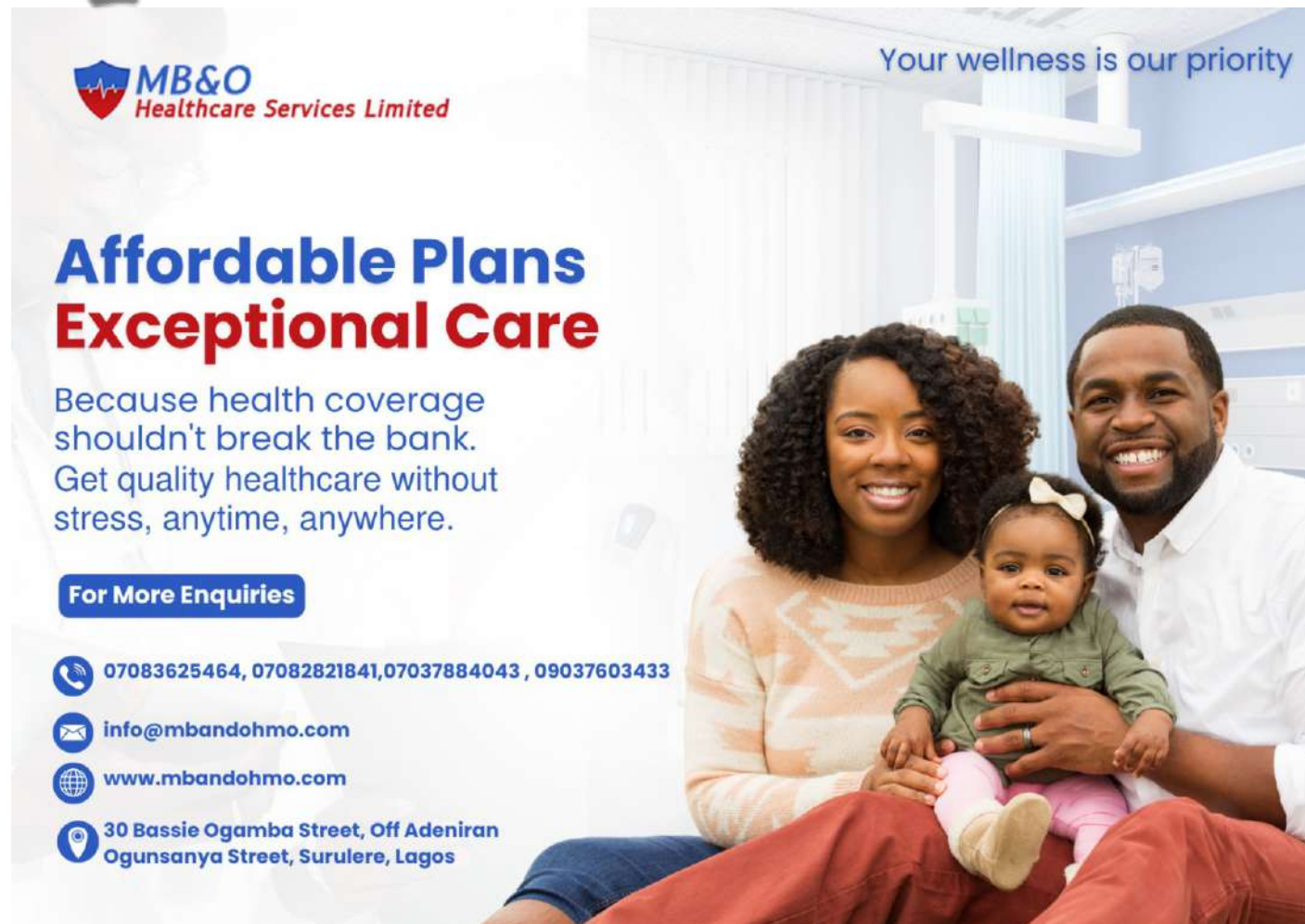
taro, pumpkin, beans, corn, and cabbage. They also raise pigs and are increasingly involved in private businesses.

Ceremonies and Rituals: Ceremonial rituals are deeply ingrained in Huli culture. They have a reverence for birds, which is reflected in their dances and wig decorations. "Sing Sing" ceremonies are grand gatherings where the community comes together in vibrant displays of body paint, headdresses, traditional songs, and dances.

Spiritual Beliefs: Spirituality is central to Huli life, with beliefs in ancestral spirits and the influence of the natural world. Shamans play a vital role as intermediaries between the human and spirit realms, guiding rituals and maintaining harmony.

Food: Sweet potatoes are by far the main staple of the Huli diet and are eaten every day. A meal is considered incomplete if there is only rice and fish, as these were foods introduced by the colonizers. While the Huli consume pork, the importance of pigs as currency and in ritual sacrificial offerings, transcends their value as a food item. Pigs are the basic item of exchange for bride-wealth, major purchases, and compensation payments.





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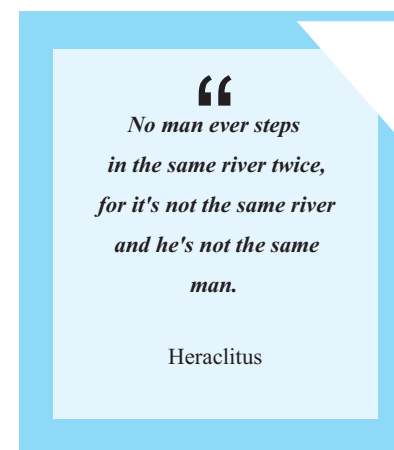
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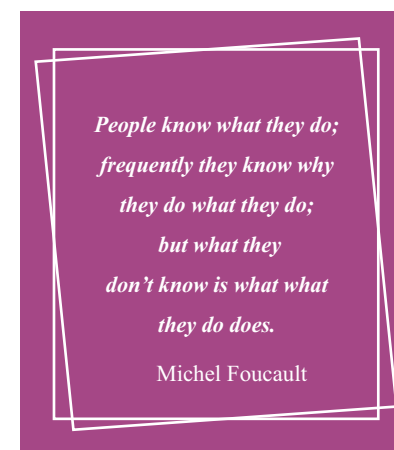
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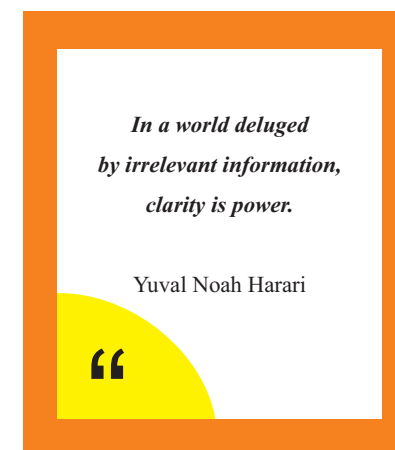
QUOTES



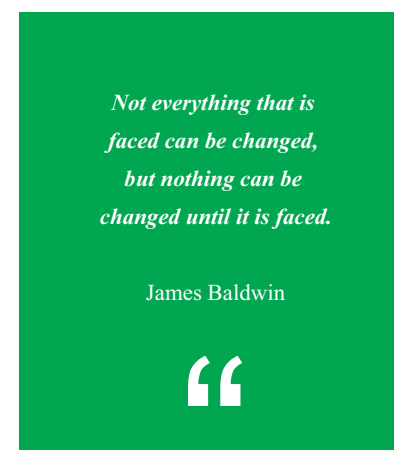
“
*No man ever steps
in the same river twice,
for it's not the same river
and he's not the same
man.*
Heraclitus



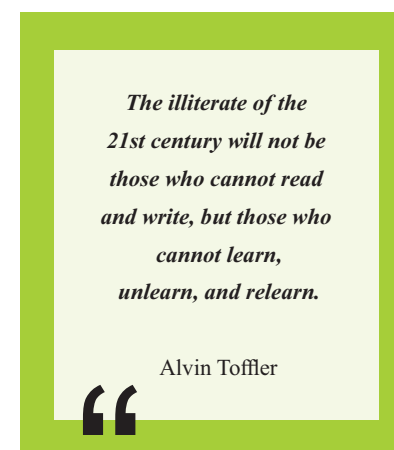
“
*People know what they do;
frequently they know why
they do what they do;
but what they
don't know is what what
they do does.*
Michel Foucault



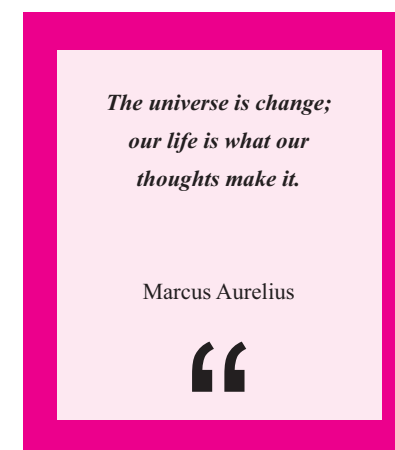
“
*In a world deluged
by irrelevant information,
clarity is power.*
Yuval Noah Harari



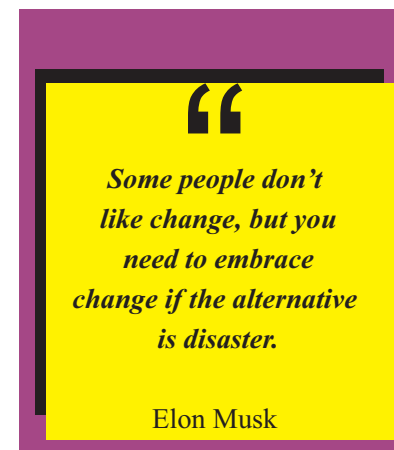
“
*Not everything that is
faced can be changed,
but nothing can be
changed until it is faced.*
James Baldwin



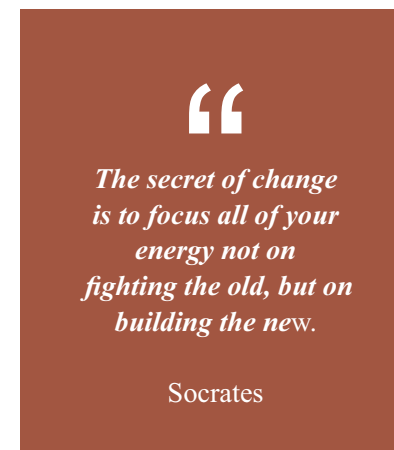
“
*The illiterate of the
21st century will not be
those who cannot read
and write, but those who
cannot learn,
unlearn, and relearn.*
Alvin Toffler



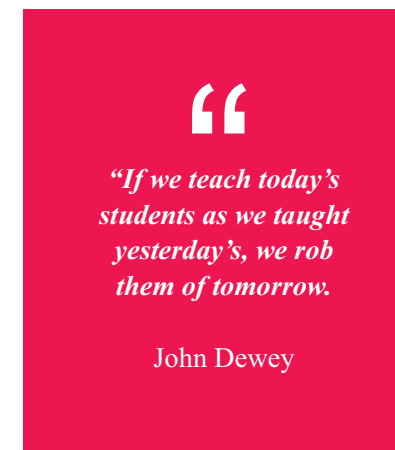
“
*The universe is change;
our life is what our
thoughts make it.*
Marcus Aurelius



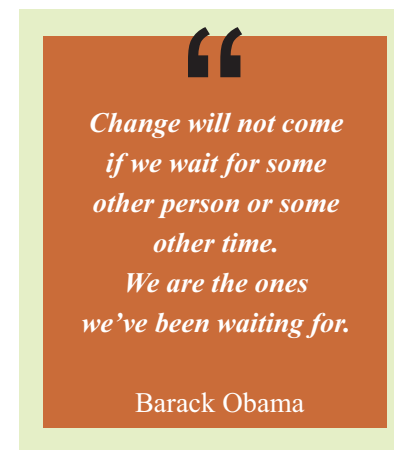
“
*Some people don't
like change, but you
need to embrace
change if the alternative
is disaster.*
Elon Musk



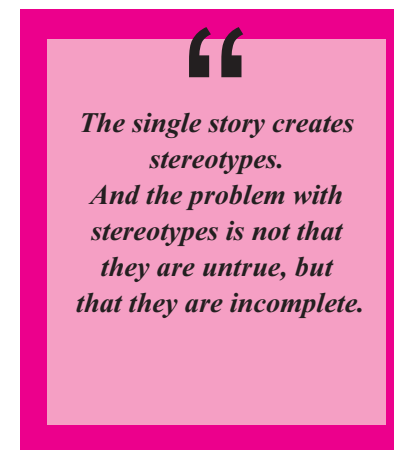
“
*The secret of change
is to focus all of your
energy not on
fighting the old, but on
building the new.*
Socrates



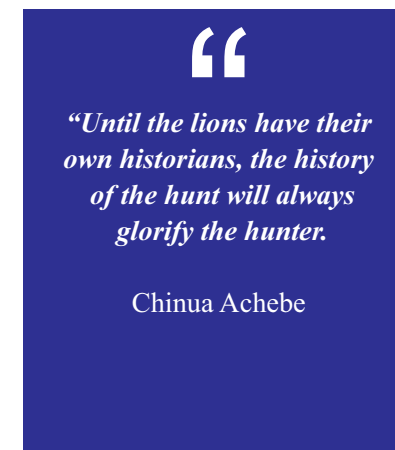
“
*“If we teach today's
students as we taught
yesterday's, we rob
them of tomorrow.*
John Dewey



“
*Change will not come
if we wait for some
other person or some
other time.
We are the ones
we've been waiting for.*
Barack Obama



“
*The single story creates
stereotypes.
And the problem with
stereotypes is not that
they are untrue, but
that they are incomplete.*
Chinua Achebe



“
*“Until the lions have their
own historians, the history
of the hunt will always
glorify the hunter.*
Chinua Achebe



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means unlearning survival tools. Other times, it means daring to show up differently. Often, it begins by slowing down long enough to hear who you're meant to be next. What I've come to understand is that relevance is not sustained by perfection but by renewal. By the willingness to pivot, to listen, and to return to your essence when the world pulls you away from it. You don't earn relevance by being everything. You earn it by being aligned with your season, your strength, and your soul and that takes courage. The courage to grieve identities that no longer serve. The courage to dream again after disappointment. The courage to be seen evolving, publicly, awkwardly, imperfectly. The courage to believe your next chapter holds power, even when the current one feels unclear

Reinvention is not a performance. It's practice. A quiet, sacred unfolding. The art of listening inwardly and responding outwardly with intention. It's how we honor who we've been while leaning into who we're becoming. If you're in a season where relevance feels distant, remember you're not behind. You're becoming.

This is where the truth of relevance begins: self-awareness. It requires us to consistently reshape our identity, purpose, and presence. To pause and ask: *"Does this version of me still fit the world I'm called to build?"*

That question can feel unsettling. But **relevance doesn't grow in comfort zones; it's forged in motion.** It demands courage. The courage to confront self-doubt, face uncertainty, challenge familiar

patterns, to leap into change. Fear is real. But so is the cost of staying still. Stagnation — the slow decay of your potential — is a heavier burden than change will ever be.

We often glorify consistency, as if staying the same is the highest virtue. But today, relevance calls for fluidity. The people making the most impact aren't the loudest or most polished; they're the ones who listen, adapt, and respond. They understand the pulse of the present and evolve with it.

Relevance also comes with responsibility. When you reinvent yourself, you send a signal: that it's okay to outgrow roles, beliefs, and even dreams that no longer reflect your truth. That signal matters to your community, to your peers, to the people watching from afar.

Reinvention doesn't just keep you in the room—it opens doors for others to walk through. It doesn't always begin with action. Sometimes it begins with stillness. With rest, with the courage to be quiet long enough to hear the whisper of who you're meant to become next. So, what does it take to stay relevant? Curiosity. Humility. The courage to be seen mid-transition. The wisdom to see change not as a threat but as the birthplace of growth.

At its core, reinvention is how we continue to contribute meaningfully, inspire deeply, and leave a legacy that matters beyond the moment. Without it, we become relics. With it, we become timeless. This journey doesn't have to be dramatic or instantaneous. It often begins with small, deliberate steps, a new skill, a shift in perspective, and a brave conversation. These small acts of reinvention compound, shaping who we are

and widening how we show up in the world.

The individuals and brands that remain relevant don't wait for a crisis to force evolution. They move toward growth on purpose. Oprah Winfrey didn't stop at being a talk show host; she became a cultural force by evolving her voice and her platform. Apple didn't remain a computer company; it transformed culture through innovation. Their relevance wasn't an accident. It was the outcome of repeated, purposeful reinvention.

Relevance, then, is less about following trends and more about cultivating a mindset of perpetual becoming. It's about understanding that to matter in the "now," we must shed yesterday's skin and dare to evolve into tomorrow's potential.

Because in the end, relevance isn't about visibility alone. It's about connections. It's about being seen, being felt, and being true. And if reinvention is how we earn relevance, then courage is the price we pay for the privilege of becoming.

If you remember anything, let it be this: To matter now, we must become fluent in the language of change. Do that again and again - and you won't just rise to relevance, you'll stay there.

© Samuel Viavonu is a communications strategist helping brands grow profitably through marketing, PR, and digital strategy. Outside client briefs and strategy sessions, he explores storytelling through themes of identity, culture, media, and the human experience, with features on platforms like BellaNaija and Afrocritik. Follow him on all social media platforms @samuelviavonu

Soft Power, Hard Truths:

Why America Can't Afford to Stop Doing Good

By Adewale Badejoko

Aid (noun): Help, typically of a practical nature. Example: He saw the pilot slumped in his cockpit and went to his aid.

When news broke that America was slashing its USAID funding, a ripple of panic surged across continents. Individuals, organizations, and nations particularly those who had grown comfortably reliant on this generous pipeline were visibly shaken. In some quarters, anger flared: What right has America to withdraw aid, as though it were a birthright? The question, laced with entitlement, echoed across policy circles.

Elsewhere, particularly among Pan-African thinkers, the moment was seized as a rallying cry—a chance to push the Pan-African agenda, to tout the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), and to declare, with renewed vigour, that Africa must shake off the dependency yoke. “We are rich in natural resources,” they insisted. And rightly so. One thing is certain: the cancellation or even the mere threat of USAID funding struck more than a few raw nerves.

While opinions diverged wildly—some defending foreign aid as essential to global solidarity, others condemning it as neocolonial in disguise; a few called for reform, not repeal. But amid all the noise, my mind turned not to the recipients, but to the donors, to the United States itself. Not out of pity, but out of curiosity. For this was no mere budget cut; it was a subtle but seismic shift in how America positions itself for relevance on the global stage.

“In truth, doing good was never just a virtue. It was a business model. Scratch that, it was a blueprint for sustained dominance.”

Let's not kid ourselves USAID was never just about charity. The operative word here is strategy. Through development support, America has aimed to secure alliances, mitigate global threats like

terrorism and pandemics, promote trade, and cultivate geopolitical goodwill. Foreign aid is soft power in its most elegant form: influence wrapped in benevolence.

America didn't always wear the superpower crown. That status was earned after World War II, when much of Europe and Asia lay in ruins. The U.S. emerged with an unmatched military (complete with nuclear arsenal), the world's largest economy, a sprawling network of alliances, and the initiative to help establish the United Nations, IMF, and World Bank. When President John F. Kennedy created USAID in 1961, the mission was simple yet profound: “To promote democratic values abroad and help countries progress in their own development journey.” It was hearts and minds diplomacy. The thinking was clear: if we help them build schools and hospitals, they'll stand with us, not with the Soviets.

In truth, doing good was never just a virtue. It was a business model. Scratch that—it was a blueprint for sustained dominance. For generosity, particularly in the

realm of nations, are not selfless. It is strategic. It is the currency. As the Psalmist wrote: “They have freely scattered their gifts to the poor; their righteousness endures forever; their horn will be lifted high in honour.” (Psalm 112:9, NIV)

There is a kind of elevation that comes with giving. A quiet authority. A moral high ground. And in the realm of foreign policy, that ground is not just moral; it's political!

Now, I hold no judgment on how a nation spends its wealth. The U.S. like any individual is free to manage its resources as it deems fit. But let us not be naïve. The decision to cancel or curtail USAID is more than fiscal tightening; it is a geopolitical statement. Whether as a tool to “school” the world or to

signal a strategic pivot as it appeared under the Trump administration, it reshapes the power dynamic, emboldening new contenders and unsettling old arrangements.

Because if aid is power and modestly speaking, it is—then the one who gives is elevated, and the one who ceases to give, quietly fades. In stepping back from its aid commitments, America risks transforming from the global leader to merely a global participant. One voice in a growing choir.

And power, like energy, is never destroyed. It doesn't vanish. It merely shifts.

While Africa may not currently wear the superpower mantle and truthfully, the current contest seems centered around China, with its deep-pocketed

investments, and Russia, flexing military and energy influence, our continent is far from a bystander. With its demographic dividend, vast natural resources, and increasing strategic relevance, Africa could very well be the kingmaker in tomorrow's power game.

Because the future of global influence may not lie in who gives the most, but in whom the world chooses to receive from. As power realigns and old hierarchies shift, one truth remains: influence flows not just from wealth, but from the willingness to uplift others.

“Bí òpè ẹ̀ ẹ̀ dún nílẹ̀ là ń mọ̀ ibi tí a ti fí mọ̀.”

—It is by the way the palm tree stands that we know where it was nurtured.





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VENDOR AGENCY BANKING- FIDELITY BANK

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YUSUF AKILU
- PRODUCTION MGR- LORNA

Our experience with RIL has been satisfactory, and we have also experienced timely payment of salary to our staff. We hope it is sustained.

DEBORAH BAMBOSE
- HR- HABARIPAY

So far, the experience has been good. The response time from the Business Manager is commendable and she is always in touch with us.

ODION EMMANUEL
- FLEET MANAGER-ATC

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JIMOH ADEDEJI
- theBUNKer ABUJA

Service was great and the staff were quite exceptional

AYODEJI
- theBUNKer Yaba

The space is great and I had a good time while I was there. No complains at all

GBOLADE
- theBUNKer Uyo

theBUNKer services is home to me, I love the exceptional service, and there is really nothing I would say that is contrary to the above; everything is perfect.

AMARA
- theBUNKer IBADAN



PATIENCE
AIMUYEDO

Name:
Patience Aimuyedo

Department/Role:
HR Operations/
Compensation and Benefits Officer

Describe yourself in 3 words:
Ambitious, Self-Starter, and
Empathetic

Someone or people you admire:
My mom, Dr. Ngozi Okonji-Iweala
and Blessing Ujawe

How do you stay organized at work:
Plan the day according to priority.
Take it one step at a time.
Listen to music when I'm tense.

Favourite Movie of all times:
The Greatest Showman

Favourite Fragrance:
Good Girl by Carolina Herrera
or Smart Collection (Boss Orange)

Favourite Car Model:
Ford Edge

Favourite genre of music:
No favourite per se.
I listen to music as the spirit leads.

Favourite gadget:
Anything Samsung produces.

Favourite meal:
Pounded yam and Ogbono Soup

Favourite Fashion Item:
High heels

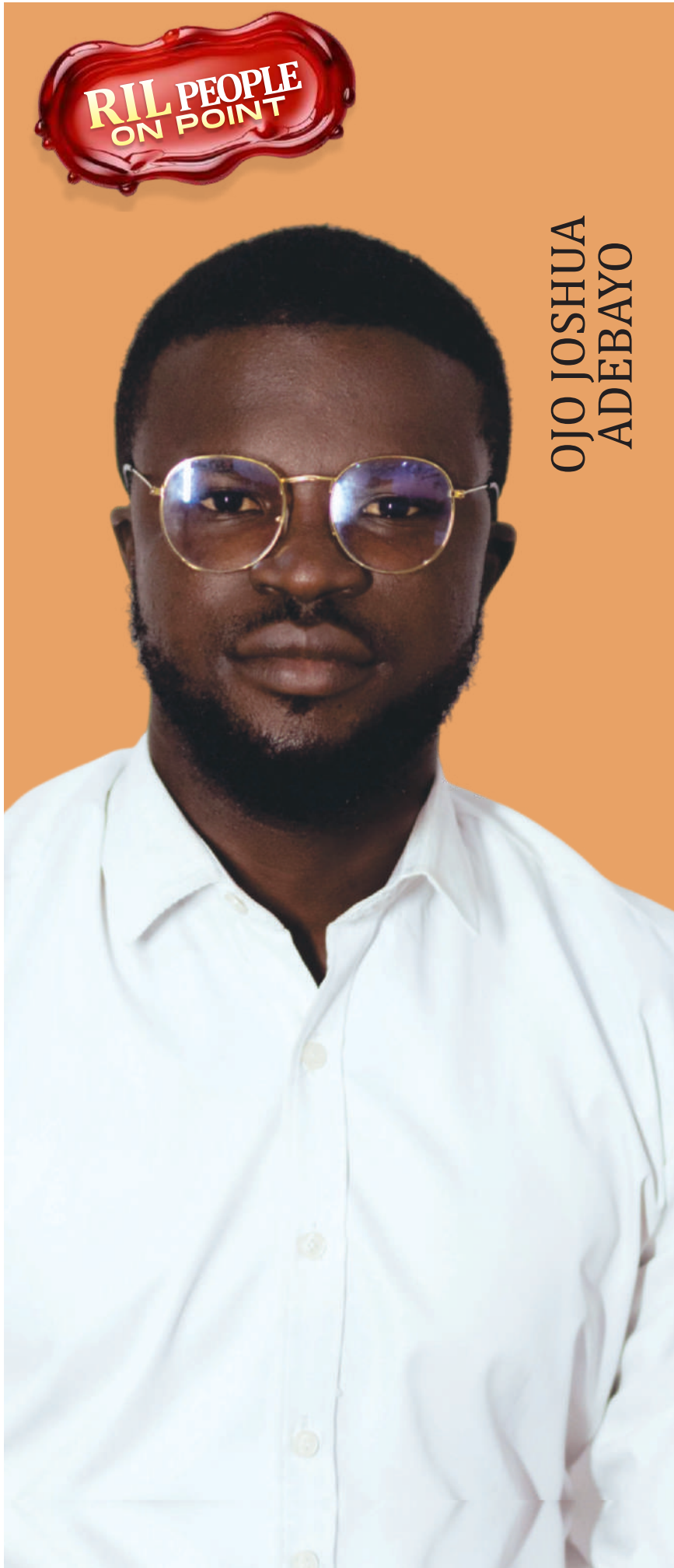
Interests:
Travel, Tech, Volunteering, Family,
Music, Career, and Farming.

Hobbies:
Surfing the net, cooking, learning,
and trying out new things.

How do you unwind:
Watch movies, listen to good music,
hang out.

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

Favourite quote:
"When the going gets tough,
the tough gets going"



OJO JOSHUA
ADEBAYO

Name:
Ojo Joshua Adebayo

Department/Role:
Business Development/ Business
Manager theBUNKer Abeokuta

Describe yourself in 3 words:
Strategic. Empathetic. Visionary

Someone or people you admire:
Arsène Wenger.

How do you stay organized at work:
By structuring tasks with clear
objectives, using scenario planning,
and keeping communication purposeful

Favourite Movie of all times:
Coach Carter

Favourite Fragrance:
Bleu de Chanel

Favourite Car Model:
Mercedes-Benz GLE
(A blend of elegance and performance)

Favourite Genre of Music:
Afrobeats, with a
good dose of soul or conscious rap

Favourite Gadget:
Smartphone

Favourite Meal:
Amala with ewedu and gbegiri

Favourite Fashion Item:
Sneakers

Interests:
Tech, football management,
and empowering African talent

Hobbies:
Watching football,
curating training content,
engaging in thoughtful conversations.

How do you unwind:
By watching a good match or spending
quiet time reflecting and planning

One item you can't leave home without:
My phone (it's my command center)

Favourite Quote:
"Leadership is not about being in charge.
It is about taking care of
those in your charge." – Simon Sinek



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A Day of Purpose and Hope: theBUNKer x Mirror Mi Sickle Cell Awareness Program x Living Hope Savecell Foundation

At theBUNKer Abuja, we have always believed that beyond coworking and entrepreneurship, our space should be a platform for purpose-driven impact. On a bright Thursday morning, that belief came to life in the most heartwarming way as we hosted a Sickle Cell Awareness and Genotype Testing Program in partnership with Mirror Mi Creations, a passionate organization committed to reshaping narratives around sickle cell anemia.

This wasn't just another event. It was personal, it was powerful, and it was packed with purpose..

Welcoming Our Guests: Setting the Tone

From as early as 10 AM, our facility buzzed with energy. Guests arrived, some curious, some concerned, and many just grateful that this kind of conversation was finally happening in a safe and accessible environment. TheBUNKer team, together with Mirror Mi's vibrant crew, welcomed each person with warm smiles, tagged them, and handed out informative flyers on the importance of genotype awareness.

The program began with a short welcome address. On behalf of theBUNKer and RIL (Resource Intermediaries Limited), I explained our role as a hub

for not just work, but change. I highlighted our services: virtual offices, coworking spaces, training halls, and our café, as well as RIL's focus on professional outsourcing and recruitment among others.

The Heart of the Program: Stories, Tests, and Truth

The core of the event was deeply human. There were emotional moments, parents who had never taken a genotype test before, couples seeking clarity before marriage, and young adults learning some of this information for the first time.

One young lady, barely 22, came alone. She later shared that her mother passed away from sickle cell complications and she'd never had the courage to know her own status. She did the test that day. She smiled after. It was a small victory, but it mattered.

Genotype testing booths were set up in one of our private halls. While guests waited, we gave them a tour of theBUNKer, our coworking desks, meeting rooms, and training halls. Some were pleasantly surprised. One guest joked, "So I can get my genotype tested and book a boardroom on the same day?" We laughed, but knew this is exactly the kind of hybrid value we aim to offer.

Conversations That Matter

We didn't just test. We talked. Mirror Mi led a powerful session where a sickle cell warrior shared her experience, from managing pain crises to navigating loneliness. You could feel the silence in the room. People were truly listening.

Key takeaways included:

- Get tested early. Know your genotype.
- Love isn't enough, compatibility matters.
- Sickle cell isn't a death sentence, but prevention is easier than management.

What This Meant for theBUNKer

This event reminded us that our walls should host not just work but healing, growth, and human impact. We saw people walk in unsure, and walk out empowered.

We saw conversations that will continue long after this day. And for us, it was a reminder that purpose scales better than profit.

A Note of Gratitude

To Mirror Mi Creations; thank you for your drive and persistence. To everyone who came; thank you for trusting us with your stories. To our community; this is just the beginning. theBUNKer will continue to open its doors to initiatives that shape society. We don't just create workspaces. We host moments that matter and that is why our motto is: your personal space

Jeremiah Audu

Business Manager, theBUNKer Abuja

Voices from the Day: Testimonials

"Before today, I had so many fears about sickle cell. I grew up hearing so many scary things that I just assumed the worst," shared Zuliha. "But this program changed everything. I took the test, I asked questions, and for the first time in years, I felt a sense of belief. It's helped clear a lot of the misconceptions I've lived with. Thank you to theBUNKer and Mirror Mi for this eye-opener."

"As a father and a community leader, I can't overstate how impactful this event has been," said Mr. David. "Many of us walked in with wrong ideas, but today we walked out with truth. The awareness shared, the real-life stories, and the free testing have given me clarity and renewed hope. I believe more people need this kind of exposure and support."





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COMMENDATION



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Head, Control and Audit



MARY EDMUND
*Cafe Barista
theBUNKer Uyo*



DICKSON UWEM
*HR, Business Partner
Unilever, Agbara*

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Nura Iliya
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Abiodun Oduntan
MOUKA BENIN



Erhinure Edwin
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Alabi Afeez
NBC ASEJIRE



Ajayi Adewale
IDL OTA



Kehinde Lawal
NBC BENIN

Cont'd From page 11

What do you do to ensure that youths are politically inclined?

Character places a major role here. Youths around you look up to leaders and want to emulate those with good character. It took me years of patience and dedication (since 2003 till May 2024) to get my first political appointment. I want to thank Governor Abiodun Seyi Makinde who identifies youths by their potential. He is not cut out for partiality; he rather sees the potential and identifies it. That was how he gave me this role to play and today he is happy with my input. I believe he is convinced that we can do more. I am encouraging the youths to sacrifice more than Seyi Makinde if they want to become like him. Becoming a politician goes beyond wishful thinking of wanting to become rich overnight without putting in work. Gov. Seyi Makinde has taught us that to become like him, we have to work more than he does. I have been politically shattered and discouraged severally, but I was never discouraged because I vowed to become successful in life. This has made me work around the clock. For instance, I refuse to let people carry my bags for me or call me "my honour". This culture of humility was taught to us by Gov. Seyi Makinde.

What initiatives are in place to ensure that education and skill acquisition programs are aligned with the current job market?

The Polytechnic Ibadan Skill Acquisition Centre approached us on how to develop the skills of the youths in the state. We will be signing the MoU in a couple of days. Our plan is to send those who do not have the skills but are ready to learn to the centres, for those who have the skills already, we will



have them undergo a brush-up class and give them the certificates through this partnership. What advice would you give to the youths of Oyo state who are striving to find their relevance and have a meaningful life? I would advise youths to remove the sense of entitlement of any form that they might have. This will help them go the extra mile in making a living. They should acquire sellable skills; this will help them remain relevant for a long time. They should do away with MLM and ponzi schemes. People who do this are products of laziness. They should upgrade themselves constantly.

In your experience, what are some key strategies you use to motivate and build resilience in your team, especially when faced with setbacks?

Determination is first on the list, followed by responsibility. What role do you play in mentoring and developing the next generation of leaders in Nigeria? The AYD is a group for mentoring the next generation. I have turned down bigger offers because I want the state to see the potential in me that the youths can emulate, part of which is sacrifice. I have worked with leaders who when they see me

now won't feel happy not because they don't like me but because they don't want my potential to be known. I am a political orphan who won't be known if not for the sacrifices I have made. As the chairman of AYD, I have become an emulation to others who want to follow my footsteps. My life has been an example to others because they have learnt so much from me and I use any given opportunity to my advantage and that of others.

Is the program for the Youths in Oyo state limited to only indigenes?

No, it is not limited to only indigenes if you are a youth within the age range of 18-40 years of age. The form was previously out for registration and will soon be out again. The website is <https://smedan.gov.ng>



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RELEVANCE AS CURRENCY: FROM PRINT TO PURPOSE IN A WORLD THAT NEVER STOPS MOVING

By Olusoji Oyawoye

In the 15 years I spent steering the helm of Skribble® Magazine a bi-annual corporate magazine published by Resource Intermediaries Limited as Editor, one truth became undeniable: relevance is not a static achievement but a dynamic pursuit. Like currency, its value fluctuates with context, demand, and timeliness. Today, as the Founder and CEO of House 12 Workspaces and Lifestyle Limited, I've discovered that the principles of relevance I learned in publishing are the very same forces driving success in entrepreneurship. The question is not "whether" we adapt, but "how" we do so with intention.

As an editor, relevance meant anticipating readers' needs before they articulated them. It meant balancing evergreen insights with breaking trends. A magazine that thrived for decades didn't do so by chasing fads. My editorial team and I did so by connecting to cultural shifts, economic undercurrents, and human aspirations. The lesson? Relevance requires both a microscope (to scrutinize the present) and a telescope (to envision the future).

“
If you want
to remain
relevant,
stay curious.”

In the corporate world, this meant evolving our content from our desire to audience needs, integrating multimedia storytelling long before it became

an industry standard. It meant recognizing that our audience's hunger for authenticity outweighed their patience for polished, detached prose.

When I retired as Editor of Skribble® Magazine, I carried this ethos into House 12. The modern workforce isn't just seeking desks and Wi-Fi; they crave "connection" and "meaning". Hybrid work, mental well-being, and community have become non-negotiable. House 12 Workspace isn't a "facility" - it's an ecosystem designed for collaboration, creativity, and balance. By staying attuned to these needs, House 12 has thrived not by competing with traditional offices, but by redefining what a workspace means in a post-pandemic era.

Relevance here isn't about chasing buzzwords like "flexibility" or "wellness." It's about embedding those ideals into every touchpoint: ergonomic design and creative spaces that supports productivity, curated events that foster networking, and quiet zones that respect the need for solitude.

Whether in media or entrepreneurship, three principles anchor relevance from my two decades experience: -

1. **Listen Aggressively** - Relevance begins with empathy. What are your customer's pain points? What excites them? At House 12, we survey members monthly, not to tick a box, but to spark innovation.
2. **Adapt Fearlessly** - Skribble® Magazine's pivot to

include digital wasn't optional; it was existential. Similarly, when remote work surged, House 12 launched 24 hours Workspace service to meet the unspoken time zone needs of our members who service clients globally.

3. **Lead with Values** - Trends fade, but purpose endures. House 12 isn't selling square footage. We are selling a philosophy: work should enrich life, not eclipse it.

In today's economy, relevance is the ultimate currency. It's what turns readers into loyal audiences and customers into advocates. But like any currency, it demands investment. If you want to remain relevant, stay curious, embrace discomfort. And remember, "relevance isn't about shouting louder in a crowded room. It's about knowing "which room to enter" and "what language to speak when you get there."

As you navigate your own journey, whether leading a team, building a brand, or reinventing yourself, ask, "Does this create value today while laying groundwork for tomorrow?" If the answer is yes, you're not just staying relevant, you're becoming indispensable!

Authors Bio:

Olusoji Oyawoye, former Editor of Skribble® Magazine and MD/CEO of Resource Intermediaries Ltd, is now the Founder/CEO of House 12 Workspaces and Lifestyle Limited, where relevance meets reinvention. Connect with him on LinkedIn/Instagram/Facebook/TikTok or explore House 12's vision at www.house12.org

YOUNG CREATIVES AT WORK

Submission from: SPRING FORTE LEAD SCHOOLS



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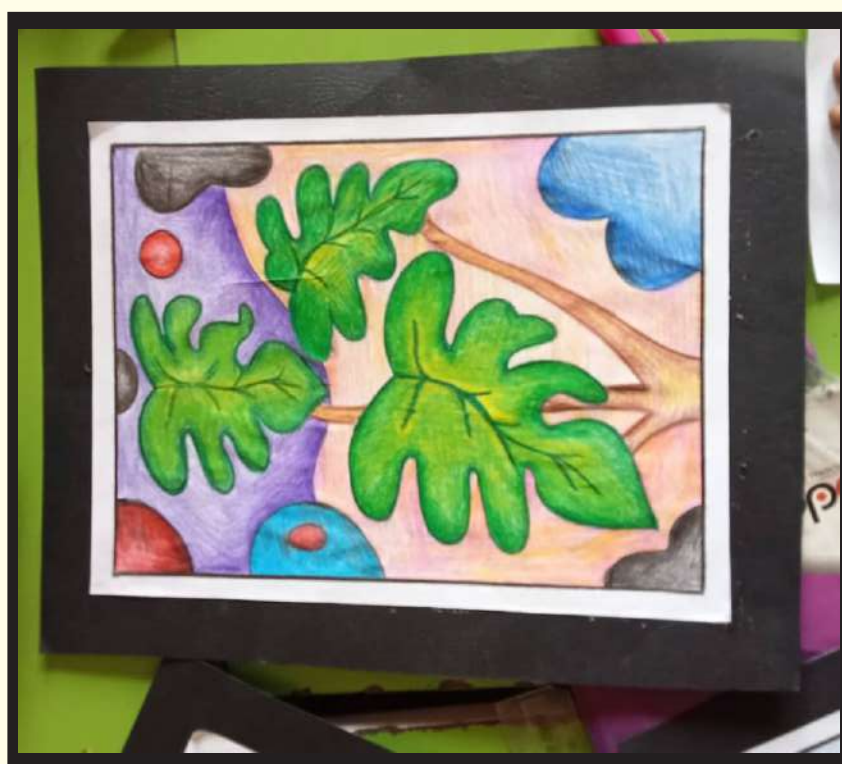
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NAOMI OLAIYA

Relevance: The Currency of the Times

By Shola Adekoya

What does it really mean to be relevant?

Is it about getting 10k followers on Instagram? Is it being the loudest voice in the group chat or going viral on Tik Tok for a few days? That's what the world tries to tell you, but I've learned, through every win, failure, and stretch of the journey, that *true relevance has nothing to do with popularity and everything to do with purpose.*

Let me explain.

Today, I'm on my path to getting licensed in Canada. While in Osgoodehall Law School, Toronto, I won two major committee positions: one as the **LLM Student Representative** and another as the **Postgraduate Representative on the Faculty of Law**. I'm also studying to become a **community social worker** (to legitimately pursue my passion to help youths) at the Canadian Business College, I run a **youth foundation** that supports and mentors teens and youths, I serve as a **singer and worship leader** in my church, I lead the **Youth Section** in my church, I volunteer at the Salvation Army to **Train New Immigrants**, I **run a HR Consulting Firm**, I am also married with 3 kids who have heavy sports schedules, I also go the gym 4 times a week and I **work in a Law firm**.

But life didn't always look this full, there were seasons I felt unseen, unheard, and even unworthy. When I started my Masters, I remember sitting quietly in class,

wondering if my voice mattered. I felt lost while trying to grasp the new legal concepts, I was older than most of my classmates, way ahead in work experience and coming from a different background and a different country. I questioned if I could even fit in, let alone lead. But then, something clicked: relevance isn't about being *everything to everyone*, it's about being *something to someone*.

The Shift that Changed Everything

I stopped trying to impress and started trying to *impact*. I began offering help to classmates who were struggling with assignments. I volunteered to mentor new students, I used my life experiences to contribute to classroom discussions. I stood up and ran for positions that I once thought were out of reach, because I realized my unique journey made me valuable, not inferior.

I didn't win those committee seats because I was perfect or popular. In fact, not many people knew me at the time, I won them because I was authentic, willing, and committed to serving others. That's the true power of relevance, it's not about shining the brightest; it's about showing up and making a difference in your space.

Relevance Is Built in the Shadows

I know youths today feel the pressure to be "seen." Social media

tells you that if you're not going viral, you're invisible. But some of the most relevant people I know don't post daily, don't have big platforms, and don't get public applause.

Relevance is built when you:

- Encourage a classmate who's going through depression.
- Say no to peer pressure, even when it costs you popularity.
- Help your younger sibling with homework without being asked.
- Use your gift, maybe it's singing, writing, organizing, or coding, to lift others up.

These are acts that don't trend but they transform lives.

“
*true relevance
has nothing
to do with
popularity
and everything
to do with
purpose*
”

Let Me Be Real With You

When I launched my youth foundation, I didn't have all the answers. I just had a vision: to help youths discover their value, build leadership skills, and chase



purpose over popularity. Some days, only a handful of youths showed up. But I kept showing up for them. Why? Because *being relevant means being reliable—even when no one isZ clapping.*

I still get nervous before speaking engagements. I still battle imposter syndrome as a Black woman in a Legal field. But I keep going because I now understand this truth:

Relevance is not about being known by many, it's about being needed by someone.

Whether it's one person or one hundred, when you choose to serve, uplift, and grow, *you are relevant.*

How Can You Become Relevant?

Here are some practical steps:

1. **Know your strengths:** What do people often thank you for? That's a clue.
2. **Serve your space:** Start where you are. Help out at school, community, mosque, church, work or home.

3. **Speak up:** Don't shrink back from opportunities. Your voice is powerful.

4. **Stay grounded:** You don't need attention, you need alignment with your purpose.

5. **Keep growing:** Relevance requires constant growth. Read. Learn. Reflect.

Final Thoughts to My Youths

If you're wondering whether you matter... the answer is *yes*. If you're questioning whether you'll ever make a difference... *you already are*. Don't let the noise of the world drown out the quiet truth of your significance.

Relevance is the currency of the times—not because it's flashy, but because it's faithful.

So go out there. Be consistent. Be kind. Be bold. Don't chase clout, *chase character*. That's what will make you unforgettable. And remember, someone out there is waiting for what only **you** can give.

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PETER AND PAUL

TWO WHITE BIRDS LOOKING AT THE WORLD, ONE NAMED PETER, ONE NAMED PAUL, THEY FLY AROUND TO UPDATE ISSUES AS IT MATTERS FROM THEIR SATIRICAL AERIAL POINT OF VIEW

By Chamberlin Ukenedo

@chamberwwoh @chamberwwoh 08024334674



PETER AND PAUL

MALTA, TURKEY, HUNGARY, ICELAND.. NO AFRICAN COUNTRY SOUND LIKE FOOD.

WE SOUND MALARIAN!



PETER AND PAUL

I LOVE THE EVENING SUN, WHAT HUMAN BODY ORGAN THAT SOUNDS LIKE A PLANET?

.....UTERUS?



PETER AND PAUL

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO AQUARIUMS AND DINNING TABLES IN PEOPLES HOMES... MASLOW??



Chinelo Stella Chukwuelue finds her purpose in the world of fashion, where she thrives as a designer dedicated to crafting exquisite and groundbreaking apparel for individuals of all ages and genders. Her creative energy is poured into designs for men, women, and children alike, showcasing her versatile talent. More than simply a job, fashion is, for Chinelo, a vibrant and expressive medium. It's a means of communicating through creativity, celebrating beauty in its myriad forms, and honoring the individuality of each person. The driving force behind her work is a profound desire to create clothing that not only looks beautiful but also empowers the wearer, instilling a sense of confidence and

undeniable style.

Chinelo's path into the world of fashion design was born from a personal need. Initially, she encountered considerable difficulty in finding tailors who possessed the skill and vision to accurately translate her unique design concepts into reality. Repeatedly facing frustrations with finished pieces that failed to capture the essence of her initial ideas, she made a decisive choice: to take complete control of the design and production process herself. This pivotal decision marked the true beginning of her journey as a fashion designer.

The process of sourcing the finest quality fabrics and working closely with skilled tailors to

meticulously perfect each design has been a true labor of love for Chinelo. While immensely rewarding, this journey has also presented its fair share of challenges and obstacles. However, her unwavering love for fashion, combined with an indomitable determination to achieve success, has provided the strength and resilience necessary to persevere through even the most overwhelming and demanding periods.

Chinelo firmly believes in the transformative power of fashion, recognizing its profound ability to positively impact lives. In her view, fashion is deeply intertwined with confidence, serving as a powerful tool for self-expression. It's about creating



garments that not only reflect her distinct artistic vision but also resonate with the wearer's unique personality and individual style. Her overarching aim is to inspire others to wholeheartedly embrace their own uniqueness, encouraging them to take creative risks and, above all, to feel confident and beautiful in their own skin.

Despite the numerous challenges and demanding nature of the fashion industry, Chinelo remains steadfast in her conviction that she has found her true calling. She wouldn't trade her chosen path for anything. Fashion represents her lifelong dream, a passion that fuels her every endeavor. With each new collection, she intends to continue pushing the boundaries of creative expression, constantly exploring new ideas and innovative techniques. For Chinelo, fashion is far more than just a business or a means of making a living; it is a complete and all-encompassing lifestyle to which she is wholeheartedly committed.



DO NOT BE AFRAID TO SET BOUNDARIES

By Priscilla Fumadorh

When you cannot say no to requests from people, and you accept every invitation or tolerate every behaviour, you are exhibiting a boundary problem. Boundaries are anything that helps to differentiate you from someone else or shows where you begin and end. Boundaries are a defensive tool contrary to the opinion that they are an offensive weapon; appropriate boundaries don't control, attack, or hurt anyone.

Setting boundaries requires defining clear priorities and

recognising your purpose in life; this can be daunting. Not learning to say no to people or situations robs you of your time, peace and purpose because you are so busy pleasing other people.

Many people struggle with boundary setting for some of the following reasons: fear of hurting the other person's feelings, fear of abandonment and separateness, a wish to be dependent on another, fear of someone else's anger, fear of punishment, fear of being shame, fear of being seen as bad or selfish, fear of being unspiritual,

and the fear of guilt.

A boundaryless life often leads to burnout and resentment as we find ourselves overcommitted to and overwhelmed with meeting others' expectations. This overtime produces an unproductive and unhappy life. We should learn to say no to certain people and requests. Stop eluding your voice to make others comfortable. Creating an atmosphere of peace and protection limits the influence of external forces and helps you reclaim control over your life and circumstances.



Examples of Boundaries

Skin

The most basic boundary that defines you is your physical skin. People often use this boundary as a metaphor for saying that their boundaries have been violated: "He gets under my skin." Your physical self is the first way that

Truth

Many people lead disorganised and turbulent lives in an attempt to live outside of their boundaries, refusing to embrace and express their true selves. Integrity and unity come from being honest about who you are. So ask yourself, "Who am I?"

Distance

Maintaining boundaries and rejuvenating one's physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being can be achieved by physically or emotionally withdrawing from a situation. Additionally, it can restrain evil and assist people to avoid danger and abuse in relationships. Sometimes, the most loving thing to do is to protect yourself by creating distance between you and someone

you learn that you are separate from others.

Words

The most widely accepted boundary-setting word is **no**. It lets others know that we exist apart from them and that we are in control of your life. It is important to be clear about your yes and no.

operating under a harmful influence.

Time

Taking a break from someone or an event might help you take back control of an out-of-control area of your life where you need to establish boundaries, whether it is your relationship, work, or family. Time allows you to rethink and evaluate your situation to make better choices.

Other People

As humans, we need relationships, and many suffer abuse to keep them due to their fear of being alone. By allowing ourselves to receive love and support from others, we come to understand that there are other sources of love in their lives

"No, that behaviour is not okay or "I will not participate in that" are examples of appropriate boundaries. People use words to communicate their feelings, intentions, and dislikes. It is difficult for people to know where you stand when you do not use words to define your position.

outside the abusive or unrepentant person.

Consequences

We need to back up our boundaries with consequences. We should say things like "If you do not stop doing this, I will do that".

We must not condone irresponsible behaviour. Hunger is a consequence of laziness. Consequences let people know the seriousness of the trespass and the seriousness of our respect for ourselves.

Do not be afraid to set boundaries. You have the right to protect your peace, to guard your heart and to discern who has access to your life. Do not feel guilty for putting up boundaries that protect your spirit.





KOREAN BEEF BULGOGI

Naija Style!

“Relevance is the currency, but flavour is the vibe.”

Sometimes, you don’t need to go fancy to enjoy global flavours. This is my go-to when I’m craving something Korean, flavour-packed, but super doable right here in Nigeria—with what I already have in the kitchen or can get from the nearest market. Bulgogi is Korea’s classic marinated beef dish. It’s sweet, savoury, garlicky, gingery, and oh-so tender.

Think of it like suya’s polite Korean cousin, still bold, but smoother on the edges .

Ingredients You Can Find Around Town

- **Beef:** Use thinly sliced flank, rump, sizzle steaks, or even suya meat if that’s what you’ve got.
- **Soy sauce:** Easily found in big supermarkets or Asian sections (I usually get mine from Shoprite or neighborhood stores).

- **Sugar or honey:** Brown sugar is traditional, but feel free to Naija it up with local honey or regular white sugar.
- **Garlic:** Fresh, chopped—don’t hold back.
- **Ginger:** Grated fresh ginger adds the zing.
- **Onions:** One medium red onion, sliced.
- **Carrots:** Optional, but they add a nice crunch.
- **Sesame oil (optional):** If you can find it, great! If not, use a splash of vegetable oil or groundnut oil.
- **Crushed pepper (ata rodo):** For that fire (totally optional).
- **Spring onions (if you want to be extra fancy).**
- **1 tablespoon vinegar (white or apple cider)** — acts like the rice wine substitute.

How to Make It – No Stress Edition

Step 1: Slice and Marinate

- Thinly slice your beef (about 500g).
- In a bowl, mix:
 - o 3 tbsp soy sauce
 - o 1 tbsp sugar or honey
 - o 1 tbsp grated ginger
 - o 2 cloves garlic (crushed)
 - o 1 tbsp oil
 - o 1 tbsp vinegar
 - o Pinch of pepper (and ata rodo if you’re bold)
- Add beef to the marinade, mix well, and let it sit for **at least 30 minutes** (longer = deeper flavour).

Step 2: Sizzle Time

- Heat a pan or wok on high heat.
- Add 1 tbsp of oil, then throw in your marinated beef.
- Stir-fry until browned and cooked through—about 4–6 mins. Don’t overcrowd the pan; cook in batches if needed.
- Toss in your sliced onions and optional carrots for the last 2 minutes.

Step 3: Finish with Freshness

- Sprinkle chopped spring onions on top before serving (if available).
- Done. That’s it. Yes, really.

How to Serve

- Serve over hot rice (white, jollof-style, or even fried rice!).
- Or make a Korean-Naija taco with warm wraps or flatbread.
- Or just plate it up with some sautéed veggies or steamed plantain. Trust me—no one’s judging.

Tips from the Bar Exams Kitchen

- Make this when you want to impress your siblings, roommate, or just yourself after surviving a long day of classes.
- Want it saucier? Add a splash of water and an extra spoon of soy sauce while cooking.
- Want a “God when” moment? Plate it in a cute bowl, add chopsticks, and take that food pic.

Final Note:

Relevance isn’t just about what’s trending—it’s about what’s timeless, satisfying, and soul-lifting. Just like this dish. Simple, honest, and packed with love. The kind of meal that

says, “I may be hustling through writing Bar exams and leading in my community, but I can still eat like royalty.”

W *Want a “God when” moment? Plate it in a cute bowl, add chopsticks, and take that food pic.* **W**





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