

ABDULSALAM OGBEMUDIA:

Sterling Symbolic Shining Star

Serengeti National Park:
*One of Africa's most beautiful and
corporate adventure destinations*

Candidate Experience:
Job Seeker's Perspective

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ONE OF AFRICA'S
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SERENGETI NATIONAL PARK:

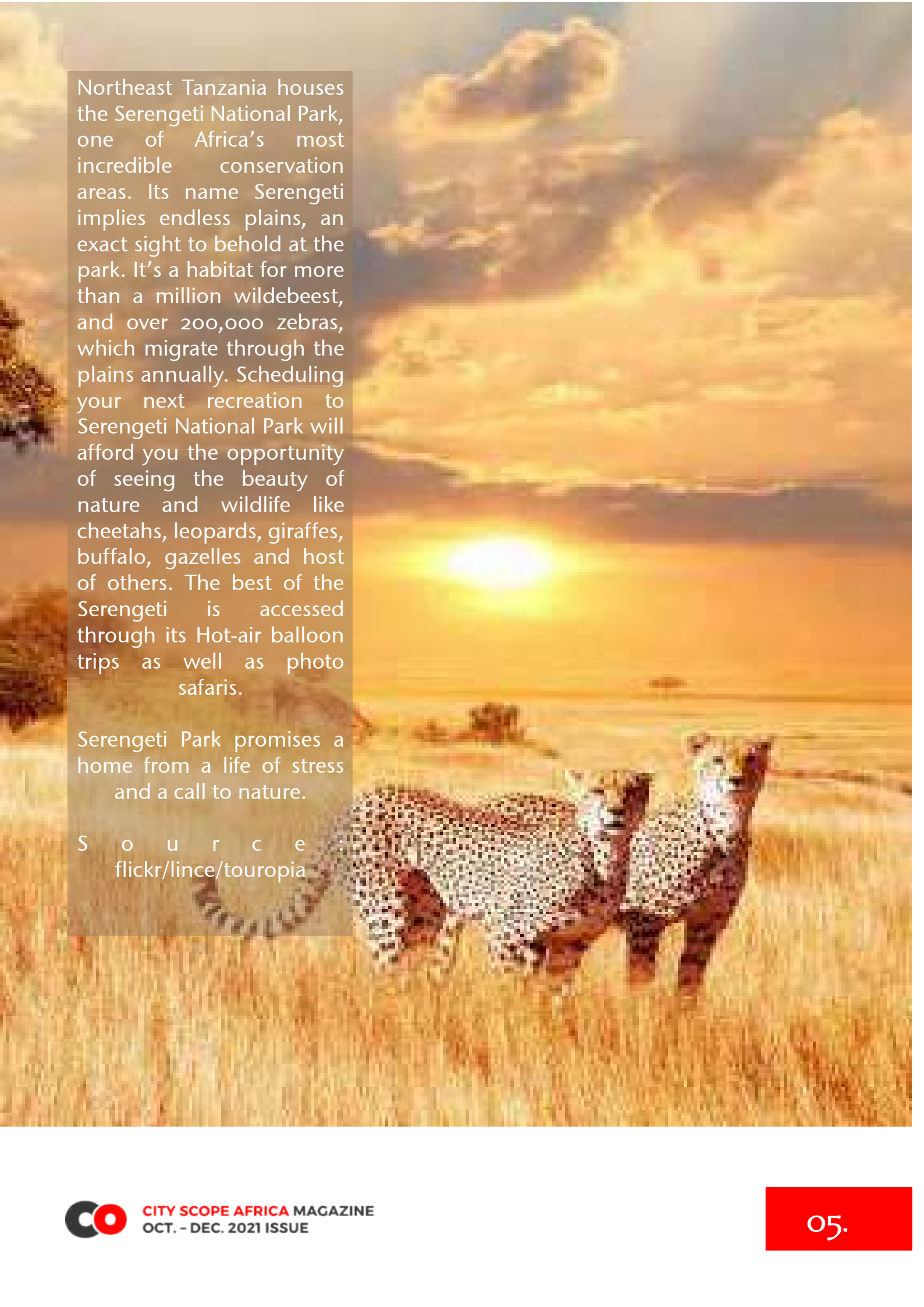
*One of Africa's most beautiful and
corporate adventure destinations*

Africa remains a continent rich in natural resources, ethnical difference and wildlife immensely fueling its economy. It offers countless destinations worth exploring for both educative and recreational purposes.

From Ait Benhaddou (Morocco), Isalo National Park (Madagascar), Etosha National Park (Namibia), Virunga National Park (DR Congo), Kruger National Park (South Africa), Giza Necropolis (Egypt), Olumo Rock (Nigeria) to Serengeti National Park Northeast Tanzania the list is endless.







Northeast Tanzania houses the Serengeti National Park, one of Africa's most incredible conservation areas. Its name Serengeti implies endless plains, an exact sight to behold at the park. It's a habitat for more than a million wildebeest, and over 200,000 zebras, which migrate through the plains annually. Scheduling your next recreation to Serengeti National Park will afford you the opportunity of seeing the beauty of nature and wildlife like cheetahs, leopards, giraffes, buffalo, gazelles and host of others. The best of the Serengeti is accessed through its Hot-air balloon trips as well as photo safaris.

Serengeti Park promises a home from a life of stress and a call to nature.

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CANDIDATE EXPERIENCE:

Job Seeker's Perspective



The unemployment rate in Nigeria rose to 33.3% in the the last 3 months, according to a report published by National Bureau of Statistics on its website. That's up from 27.1% in the second quarter of 2020, the last period for which the agency released labour-force statistics. ©[bloomberg.com](https://www.bloomberg.com) March 2021.

The unemployment rate in Nigeria being at 33.3% implies that one in every three average Nigerian of active employment age is either unemployed or grossly underemployed. This makes joblessness one of the critical challenges faced by Nigerians and, by extension, Africans after basic feeding and shelter needs. This also implies that one out of every three Nigerians who go out daily, goes out in search for gainful employment or better job offer.

If making ends meet is already tough as it currently is in most places in the country, getting a job



is certainly tougher. As recounted in the experiences of many frustrated Nigerian job seekers, there are countless ordeals of bad candidate, experienced during the recruitment process.

Candidate Experience has been defined as the opinion of a job seeker either expressed or otherwise about an employer, based on the interface during the entire recruitment course. It has often been said that candidate experience begins long ahead of when a candidate applies for a job.

Despite the spate of these happening in Nigeria and Africa, some of these experiences are global in some dimensions. To highlight a few of such, we would look at the following but not limited to these only:

1. Short Notice of Interview Invite.

A younger friend once called me to request a mock interview session and when I asked the date of the interview she said tomorrow. And she got the interview invite just the same day, she had less than 24 hours to prepare and attend the interview. And it was in-person interview hence more demanding per travels within town.

Whilst we understand that due to the fast pace of the “Now of Work”,

most recruiters work with short timelines and are under pressure to close workforce gaps, it is important to put the candidate into consideration when such job interview notice is being sent. A minimum of 48hrs notice will be fair enough.

2. Long Waiting Time

You’ve finally gotten the interview invite. You get ready, leave on time and get to the interview venue an hour to the interview time. 30 minutes goes by and you are tensed, not knowing what to expect. Its another 30 minutes and its finally time for the interview but you aren’t called in. You wait another 30 minutes and you start getting tensed, probably sweating and unsure of the entire process. One hour goes past the interview time and you are hungry, a bit angry, and have other engagements to attend to. 2 hours after the scheduled interview time, you are called in and the interview doesn’t go as expected. You lost your composure and may have forgotten everything you rehearsed for the interview. This is the story of thousands of job seekers.

Some Recruiters and HR professionals on the other hand don’t mind because they feel they are doing the candidate a favour by interviewing them, due to the need to get a job..

This practice has become so common that some would even say delaying candidates may be a good way to test their patience and desire to get the job. Meanwhile it could reflect poor planning and time slot spacing. If you have 5 candidate, do not give them same time of appointment. Rather space them by minimum of 30 minutes, hoping that is how long it takes to interview one candidate.

Delaying candidates is completely wrong and should not be tolerated. Candidates are individuals with other important activities to get to. Their time is also precious and should not be wasted. Recruiters are not doing the clients a favour by giving them a job, and so should not waste people's time. Let your 1pm be 1pm and your 10am be 10am.

3.Unprofessional/Biased questions

Too many times, we hear of people complain that the questions asked by interviewers during the recruitment process were highly unprofessional. These are mainly questions centred around the issue of race, religion, gender or marital status, which has no impact on the candidate's ability to deliver on a given job. Recruiters need to understand that these questions are not only unprofessional but that they make the candidates feel terrible and are considered discriminatory. In some countries,





such questions are 100% illegal and can cause the recruiter to lose their jobs.

A question as simple as “We have a lot of candidates to interview. What makes you a stronger candidate than those people?” can easily put a candidate down or intimidate them and shouldn’t be encouraged. Or “What did you earn last year?” if you have a salary bracket, make your offer within the bracket and if you don’t, ask the candidate what s/he expects to earn and negotiate from there. Some candidates have worked with extremely low salaries while trying to gain experience, so benchmarking their expected salary against the figure they are trying to break from would be really unfair. Stories abound of such unprofessional questions from job seekers. A recent one I heard from a job seeker was that an interviewer asked “What’s your personal five-year plan?”. That candidate is just trying to get a good job and provide for himself and family, and you are not guaranteeing a five-year contract. Any answer you get at that juncture cannot be true or reflective of reality because a desperate person would say what needs to be said to get the job.

Recruiters should be strictly professional and unbiased in the interview process. If you have already made up your mind about a candidate, spare them the rest of the time.



4. Questions unrelated to job in consideration

One of my mentees once shared this: “I was once asked by the manager of a firm, some years ago during the last stage of interview, what job my parents did and after I said they were retired, I was then asked if I knew anyone high in government, particularly the Oil & Gas sector. While I confidently answered that I did not, I felt sad that my network was considered for a non-managerial position when I had loads of relevant experience for the job. As a recruiter, you are doing your job and must be highly professional while at it. You have no reason to be rude, unprofessional and pry into the personal lives of

applicant because they are searching for a job. Details about a candidate’s background can mostly be discovered during a background search and candidates should not be made to feel less of a human being for presenting themselves to be interviewed. As a recruiter, you should not ask a question like “What would your last line manager say about you?”. As a recruiter, have you considered the possibility that the candidate is trying to leave a toxic manager for a better work environment? Or the possibility that the candidate didn’t have the best work relationship with a previous manager due to no fault of the candidate. If you must know the opinion of the previous manager, pick up the phone and call.

Candidates are often advised to be bold enough to ask the relevancy of such questions to the vacancy, but not all candidate would be strong enough to do this. Hence the importance of pleading with recruiters to desist from asking candidates questions that are totally unrelated to the job being interviewed for.

4. Missing Post-Interview feedbacks

Almost every job seeker has complained of this issue of long waiting time for feedback, with some never getting any feedback from the recruiters. Candidates even go the extra length to send follow-up emails or call the organization, in some instance, but are not lucky enough to either a confirmatory or rejection mail. While there are, in certain cases, legitimate reasons for the delay like company process or management approval, recruiters owe it to candidates to inform them of the outcome of the recruitment process.

There is also a probability for the recruiter & organization who is keeping the candidates in the dark for an extended period to risk losing the good candidates to other organization. I know a great consultant who was interviewed by one of the big four consulting firm. The young man wanted to work with



the firm but got no response after two weeks, while another smaller firm was literally excited to have him join their team and pay well for his services. He took the offer and I bet that the recruiter lost a great hire.



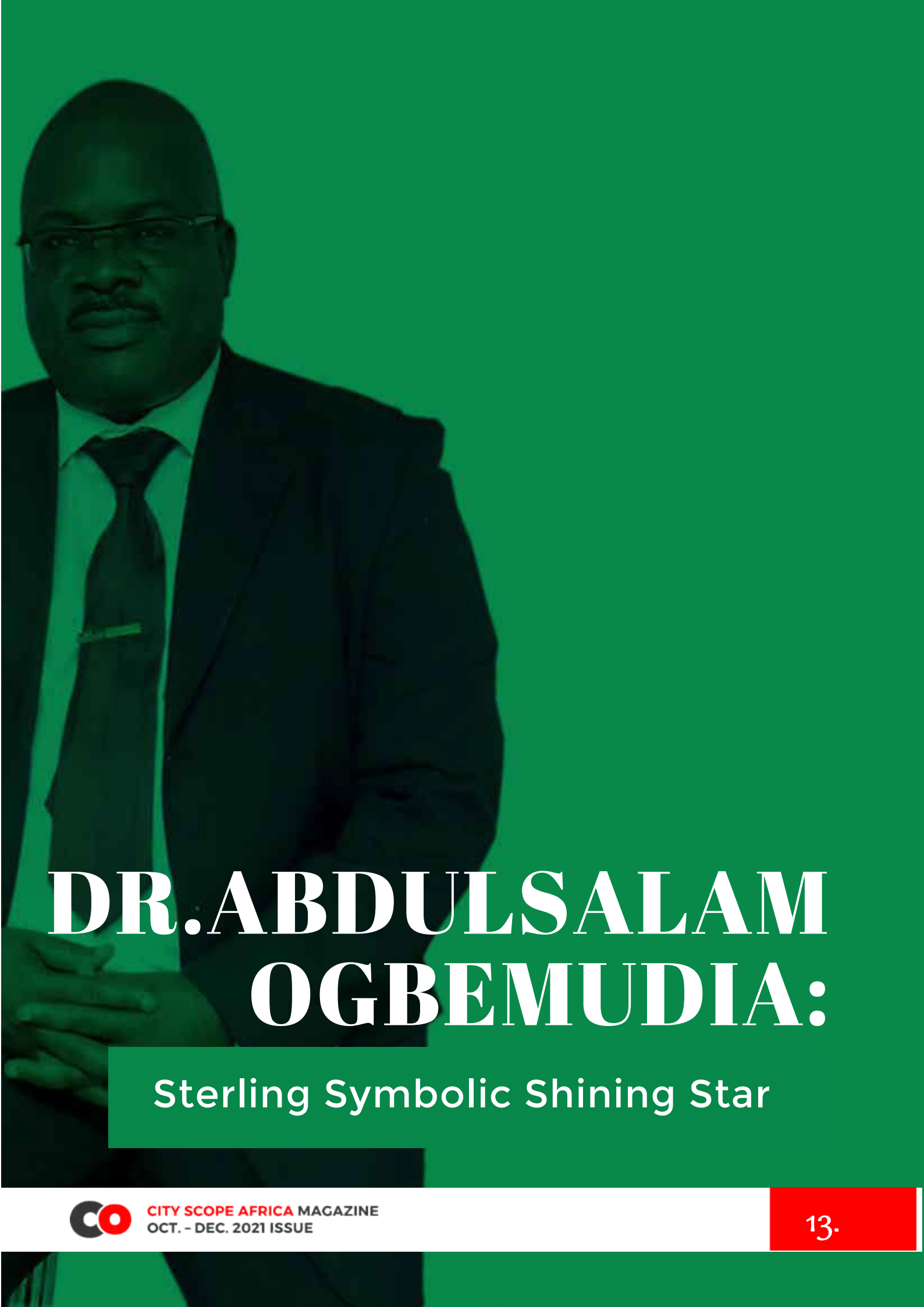
Recruiters are encouraged to provide timely feedback to candidates, at most two weeks, after they are certain of the fate of the candidate. In case the process is prolonged beyond recruiter's control, keeping the candidate in the loop of things may help sustain their interest. It does not matter if the candidate got the job or not, notifying the candidate gives them closure and makes them feel honoured at least.

For the narrative to change, the recruiters and HR Professionals must support in championing the desired the change which is to make the process seamless and pleasant. While recruiters are trying to get their job done, the candidates are just trying to get a job.

A practical advice is to place oneself in the shoes of the job seeker and check if one would love to be treated how one is about to treat that job seeker. Good interview practices should be encouraged and rewarded.

This is a call to recruiters to make the job seeking process less traumatic for job seekers.

By Faith Akintunde GPHR

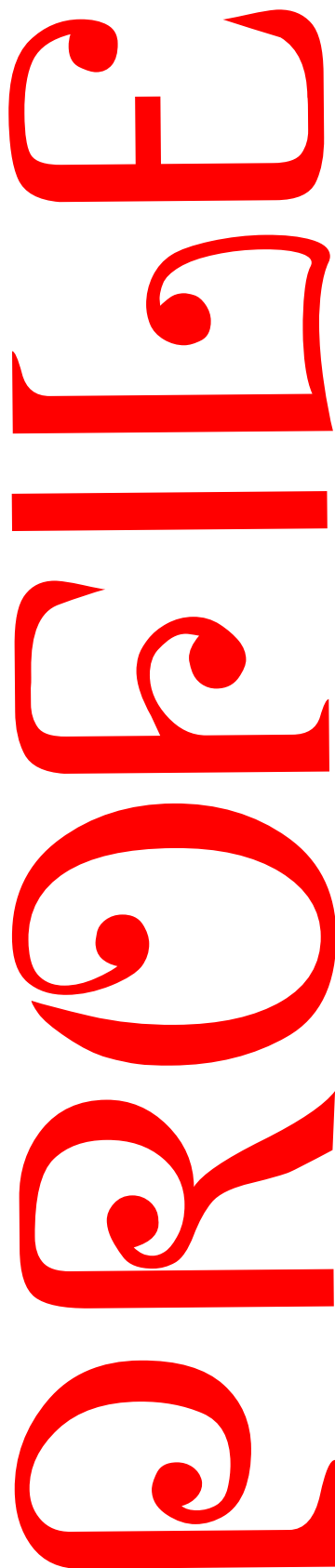


DR. ABDULSALAM OGBEMUDIA:

Sterling Symbolic Shining Star



CITY SCOPE AFRICA MAGAZINE
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Dr. Abdulsalam E. Ogbemudia, BSc., MSc, MBA, DBA, DF, FCBA, a great business leader on all sides. He has at various times been Operations Manager, General Manager, Chief Operating Officer, Executive Director, Group Chief Operating Officer, and Chief Executive Officer, in several multinational companies. He is also a Senior Management Professional with specialization in Manufacturing Operations and Corporate Governance. He is currently the CEO of Niyya Food and Drinks Company Limited, a subsidiary of the parent company, Niyya Farm Group Limited (NFGL).

Niyya Food & Drinks Company Limited (NFDCL) was incorporated with a mission to alleviate malnutrition, hunger and thirst through science and innovation particularly in Nigeria and other African countries. This dream reinforced by a strong belief that Nigeria's organic products have untapped potentials in the food and drinks packaging market gave birth to the incorporation of NFDCL on June 29, 2001. Niyya Food & Drinks Company Limited (NFDCL) is an indigenous agro-process business that manufactures and distributes natural premium juices and yoghurts under the Farm Pride brand. NFDCL is Nigeria's largest producer of non-concentrate natural juices and yoghurts directly from farm to bottle. NFDCL is a member



of the Niyya Farm Group Limited (NFGL), which is one of Nigeria's leading agro-industrial enterprise and owns a processing facility, dairy farm, orchards and about 3,000 hectares of agricultural lands.

NFDCL's Farm Pride Juice is produced from 100% Nigerian natural fresh fruits sourced from local farms, with some portions supplied from the Niyya Farm Group's extensive orchard farm located within the Niyya Farm Group Complex. As a result, the products are differentiated from other competitive products in the markets that are produced using imported concentrates for juice production. This makes Niyya products prime target for everybody, especially health-conscious consumers.

Dr. Abdulsalam Erenwan Ogbemudia is a professional who is driven by the desire to serve and has continuously shown strong commitment to career advancement and the growth and development of the society at large. He has exhibited these qualities in several topflight multinational organizations where he has worked employing many Nigerians; thereby reducing unemployment and poverty in the country. A renowned expert in general management, with critical experience in the coordination of business operations. Abdulsalam Ogbemudia is currently the CEO of Niyya Foods and Drinks



Company Limited.

As a graduate of Industrial Technical Education, with Second Class Upper Division from the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, he began his career as an Industrial Officer at Bendel Wood Industry Limited in 1985 and thereafter proceeded to A & S Nigeria Limited, Benin City, where he worked as Operations Manager. Within the first three months of his formal engagement, he brought life to the long docile operations of the company. Prior to joining Niyya Foods and Drinks Company Limited, he had broadened his professional and business experience when he served as Group Chief Operating

Officer (GCOO) with Trends Africa Group, and restructured the organisation, which was a single company, into a diversified business group, with several strategic business units and subsidiary companies

As Chief Operating Officer (COO) with Sonia Foods Industries Limited, he increased the Earnings Before Interest, Taxes, Depreciation, and Amortization (EBITDA) that was as low as N1.27 billion in 2015 to N4.38 billion in 2018, all within a space of three years. As Chief Operating Officer (COO) with Gormley Foods Limited, he was able to successfully

restructure the company's organogram, thus enabling an overwhelming effective performance. He was the first African COO of the company in Nigeria, taking over from a British expatriate. He earlier worked at various senior Management levels with other multinational companies including but not limited to Promasidor Nigeria, Globacom, and GBFoods Group where he was the first African Senior Manager for Manufacturing Operations.

The depth and relevance of Ogbemudia's experience in manufacturing operations management is evident in the varied nature of the assignments that he has had to undertake. Abdul (as he is fondly called) is indeed an enigma who works beyond standard norms. He has served in the Board of Directors of several Companies including Ariaro & Sons Nigeria Limited and Netoidia Nigeria Limited, just to mention a few.

He is an insatiable reader and prolific writer with several publications, which include: 'The Impact of Relationship Marketing Strategies on Consumers' Buying Behaviours - A Case Study of a Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) Company'; 'Effective Supervisory and Time Management Skills'; 'A Comparative Evaluation of the Practical and Theoretical Principles', among others. His enthusiastic, honest, intelligent

and industrious traits won him various awards, including Overall Best Middle Management Staff in the Directorate of Production, Engineering, and Quality Assurance at Promasidor; Production Director's Award for Achieving 100% Attendance at Work at Promasidor - a rare feat in a highly challenging and pressure-soaked manufacturing work environment; Best Graduating Student Award for Academic Excellence and Worthy Character (FCET); Dean's Award for Academic Achievement (FCET); Faculty Award for Academic Excellence (UNN); Philosophical Fellow (PF) Award for Worthy Students' Union Leadership (FCET); and Principal's Prize for Academic Achievement in





**GO
NATURAL**



GCE/WASC (Edo Boys High School).

Abdulsalam Ogbemudia holds a Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) in Business Management from the Swiss School of Business and Management, Geneva, Switzerland; MSc in Business Operations Research/Management from the University of Lagos; MBA in Marketing/Corporate Governance from the National Open University Nigeria; PGD in Purchasing and Supply Management from CIPSMN, Lagos; B.Sc in Industrial Technical Education from University of Nigeria, Nsukka; Certified Management Specialist (CMS) with Distinction from London Graduate School, London; and NCE (Technical) in Electrical/Electronic Technology with Distinction from FCE(T), Asaba, Delta State.



Aside his robust academic qualifications, he has passed through several professional training programmes in his area of expertise, thus attaining best delivery standards in his service. He is a Doctoral Fellow, Chartered Institute of Management Specialists, Delaware, USA; Fellow, Chartered Institute of Leadership & Governance, New Mexico, USA; Member, Institute of Corporate Directors, Toronto, Canada; Certified Management Consultant (CMC) of International Council of Management Consulting Institutes (ICMCI), Zurich, Switzerland; Certified



Management Specialist (CMS) with Distinction from the London Graduate School; Fellow, Institute of Management Consultants; Fellow, Nigerian Institute of Production Management; Fellow, Certified Board of Administrators of Nigeria; Fellow, Institute of Treasury and Financial Administration; Member, Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply Management of Nigeria; Professional Member, Nigerian Institute of Food Science and Technology; and an Associate Member of the Nigerian Institute of Management.

Dr. Abdulsalam Ogbemudia is a humble exemplary leader with strong belief in and commitment to excellent customer service. He is a transparent team player and corporate transformational management expert. He is a management consultant and trainer and has attended many national and international professional training courses. Dr. Ogbemudia was throughout his education elected students' leader winning several awards in academics and character including overall Best Graduating Student Award. He has also received the Annual Overall Best Employee Awards in some of the organizations he has worked so far.

He is a 2017 recipient of the Business Leader Award of International Summit of Leaders, the 2018 International Ambassador Award of the Unicaribbean Business School (UBS) and the 2020 International Outstanding Leadership Award of the UBS. Dr. Ogbemudia also received the 2021 Swiss Golden International Leadership Award and the 2021 Swiss International Business Achiever Award at the International Summit of Leaders. His vision is solidly hinged on his philosophy to wisely invest in living bodies and souls rather than estates or mansions. He is a happy and successful family man married with children..



Read about his trailblazing life of stellar achievements and strategies in this exclusive interview.

How would you describe yourself?

I come from a humble family background where many were overwhelmed by arduous challenges, yet I surmounted all dark obstacles of life to be where I am today. Hence, I am the sterling symbolic shining star in the darkest darkness. I am a highly educated, trained, and experienced senior management expert with vast experience in all facets of management including manufacturing operations, marketing, sales distribution, supply chain, finance and human resources management encompassing technology-based applications. I hold the Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) degree in Business Management from the Swiss School of Business and Management, Geneva, Switzerland. I am a man of many parts.....business executive, consultant, trainer, industrialist, financial administrator, marketer, writer, philanthropist, religious leader, loving family man, and multiple award winner.

How come you are called and addressed as King?

With all sense of humility, ***I have always been an exceptional human being from youth!*** One of my secondary school teachers one day got annoyed and decided to flog the entire class. When she got to my seat, I offered my hand for her cane, and she raised up the cane to flog. The entire students immediately shouted hey! hey!! hey!!! While the teacher's hand and cane remained suspended in the air, she asked "what?". One of the students responded, "excuse me ma, they don't flog him!" Confused, the teacher asked "why? Is he a king?" The student said, "yes ma". The teacher, a Cameroonian newly selected to teach my class, sounding more confused with annoyance replied, "king of what?" and the entire class in chorus responded, "king of first!!!!" implying that I was the only student taking the first position in the class. The teacher was impressed. I was the only student that escaped her cane that day and was subsequently nicknamed

"The King"!!!!



You are a great business leader with proven track records of success in manufacturing operations and corporate governance, with high understanding of your team's objectives and great skills in tapping into their strengths and abilities. How do you do this?

I am a team leader and a leading light among my team members by being an exemplary leader building trust and confidence. I also train my team and motivate them. In every organization I work, I ensure succession plan ensuring that I train and empower at least 2 of my subordinates to effectively do my job. ***I delegate jobs to any of these depending on their competencies and areas of strengths.*** I normally delegate those jobs that they can efficiently do without unnecessary cost implications in case of failures. I monitor and follow up those assignments prioritizing according to importance and effects. I use what I refer to as the cane and carrot management model where cane refers to punishment and carrot refers to motivation. The situation really determines which to apply. For instance, I once got employed in a company that several staff were grossly non-compliant, and I was forced to apply a fine method where a defaulting staff is fined certain amount of money deductible from



salary and the method was very efficient in that company as employees avoid parting with their money. My work style is hinged on my career objective which is to serve as the inextinguishable leading light in the selfless commitment to work for my career advancement and for the growth and development of my employer and society at large.

Niyya Farm Group Limited is committed to talent acquisition, development and retention, conservation and preservation of the environment which is of vital importance to our Ecosystem. You are committed to safety of the people and building leadership pipeline from within. What informed these laudable corporate organizational cores, peculiar to your organization, in the very first place?

The underlining reason for our corporate organizational cores at Niyya is embedded in our determination and commitment to consistently achieve our company's mission statement which is to blend the best of modern technology with local knowledge to produce top quality products with strict compliance to the best health, safety and environmental standards To achieve .

this, we reinforce our corporate culture by our following core values with the acronym "VACIC": value our people, attitude, customer is king, integrity, and cost leadership.

Your Premium brand, Farm Pride has successfully re-branded the Natural Juice and Yoghurt line, to strategically position premium drink products within mainstream Nigeria, as Natural Juice and Yoghurt lifestyle products. How has this been able to sell a robust Nigeria and Africa positively to the rest of the world?

Niyya as an agro-allied food manufacturer benefits from the health, and wellness trend as well as the associated growing concerns over the health risks associated with the high consumption of inorganic/non-agricultural products especially foods and drinks produced from chemicals and concentrates. Our products, specifically our Farm Pride Juices are produced from 100% Nigerian natural fresh fruits sourced from



local Nigerian farms under the most hygienic conditions and best manufacturing practices. As a result, our products are differentiated from other competitive products in the markets that are produced using imported concentrates. ***This makes Niyya products prime target for everybody, especially health-conscious consumers within Nigeria and rest of the world. When we are travelling out of Nigeria, the major request we get from our foreign friends and relations abroad is that we should bring some Farm Pride products to them abroad due to the premium quality and natural taste. The implication of this is that our Farm Pride products are rated far above other competitive juice and yoghurts products manufactured in Nigeria and overseas.***

How have you been able to internally utilize Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) to ensure quality and food safety at Niyya Farm Group?

At Niyya Food & Drinks Company Limited, we recognize the significance of food safety throughout the food supply chain. We continually maintain the highest standards of hygiene and safety in respect of the purchase, delivery, storage, preparation, supply, and handling of our finished food products including the packaging materials and other inputs. Everyone within the organization has the collective responsibility of food safety and has a moral obligation to safeguard each other, our customers, and the consumers. The Management of Niyya Food & Drinks Company Limited relying on the well-articulated Food Safety and Quality Objectives, takes all responsible steps and precautions and exercises due diligence to protect and preserve the human food chain in our custody facilitating the application of sound food technology, science, industry best practice in our operations.

NFGL owns one of the largest fruit farms in Kaduna-Nigeria, occupying approximately 3,000+ hectares and has erected a state-of-the-art Greenhouse to produce exotic organic vegetable crops for both local and export markets. What are your intervention programmes to your local farm communities and CSR to your immediate host community?

Niyya Farm Group Limited (NFGL) is the parent company of Niyya Food & Drinks Company Limited (NFDCL). Both NFGL and NFDCL have greatly empowered farmers in our host communities as well as farmers in neighbouring states

Some of the local farmers as a matter of fact utilize our land for farming while some other individuals serve as fresh fruit vendors supplying fresh fruits to our manufacturing plant after sourcing directly from local farmers. We employ indigenes of the local communities and provide amenities like water, electricity, and roads to the communities under our Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programs.

What are the harsh realities one is likely to face doing business in Kaduna-Nigeria?

Kaduna is an interesting place except for the insecurity which is over-exaggerated. The sincere truth is that the insecurity in Kaduna is mainly in the interior villages and outskirts of the city. For us at NFDCL, we have our factory at Doka Village, 60Km outside Kaduna City while our Corporate Head Office is in Kaduna City. We are therefore confronted with the harsh insecurity challenge at the factory end spending a lot of our scarce financial resources on security and logistics. Another major challenge is electric power. Depending on our own standby and hired industrial generators, we internally generate over 85% of our electricity at huge costs to power our production machines and offices without depending on the national



electricity grid. Of course, in Kaduna like every other State in Nigeria, business entities operate in a dynamic environment characterized by intense competition, non-availability of basic amenities like electricity, good roads, portable water, and other infrastructures

What would you define as your greatest moment of pride and fulfilment so far, as a corporate organization and as an individual?.

The greatest moment of pride for us at Niyya Food & Drinks Company Limited was the day that Verod Capital Management (one of the leading investment companies in West African sub-region), formally invested in Niyya Farm Group having identified through due diligence the enormous potentials in the Group. For me as an individual, my greatest moment of pride cannot be separated from the vision of my late father for me when I was a young secondary student. My father had then told me that I will be educated to the highest level and be a shining star that will take his name far and near, it was just like the normal encouragement by a loving father. But I later discovered that his words were not just encouraging but great prophecies that Almighty Allah favourably granted to come to reality. This was the day that I obtained the Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) degree in

Business Management from the Swiss School of Business and Management, Geneva, Switzerland. It was the day that my father's vision was fulfilled, and I dedicate the degree to my late father, who was my best friend and helper in the sea of men.

What's your strongest drive for the future? Has there been times strong oppositions to such drive makes you feel like throwing in the towel?

My drive is anchored on and defined by two cardinal principles: my philosophy and my life vision. My philosophy is to wisely invest in living bodies and souls rather than estates or mansions while my life vision is to be a worthy achiever through devotion to and fear of God; service to and respect for humanity; Selfless commitment to work; and undiluted love to my family. There have been several occasions that societal values oppose my vision, and my defense has always been to remember one of the sayings of the Holy Prophet of Islam (Muhammad) that "the contented heart is the richest of all people" and my popular quote that "the piece of life we possess today is our greatest weapon for hoping and fighting for a greater tomorrow". I have always been a dogged fighter and pursue whatever I believe in with the highest commitment and

determination without losing focus due to retrogressive value systems and wrong perception of others.

What do you advocate as an encouragement to achieving business success in Africa, especially for Nigeria?

To achieve business success in Nigeria and other African countries, sincere investors like Niyya Food & Drinks Company Limited that source for their raw materials 100% locally from Nigeria should be encouraged with technical/research supports, investment grants and tax relief by Nigerian Government.

What in your own opinion are the barriers to the ease of doing Business in Nigeria and what are your concerns too?

Poor public electric power supply, high energy cost including ever-increasing diesel cost, soaring cost of production raw/packaging materials and other inputs frustrate investment in Nigeria. Unfortunately, these are compounded by unfavorable government macroeconomic policies, unfriendly foreign exchange policies with high exchange rate, multiple taxations, excruciating difficulties in getting bank loans, high interest rates, and a host of other policies that do not provide adequate incentive for investment. My concern is that

Government is not doing much to resolve these issues to pave pragmatic avenues to facilitate satisfactory ease of doing business in Nigeria

As we mark Nigeria's Independence this month of October 2021, (as being celebrated every October), do you, (like a select-few Nigerians) also hold a strong and convincing belief that the Africa, and in particular Nigeria of our dream is possible and achievable and why?

Let me begin by saying that Africa as a whole is a blessed continent destined for greatness. Nigeria specifically is a country that God has abundantly endowed with unequalled human and natural resources even though we have not been able to transform these resources for greater advantage. Yes, we have failed to move at the desired fast pace in terms of socio-economic growth and industrial development indices but as an optimist and looking at where we are coming from and where we are today, I hold very strong and convincing belief that that we have come a long way and that the future will be bright. We must realize that most of the developed and industrialized nations we admire today went through more difficult

situations in the past. We only need to that selfless and courageous leader that will turn things around for better tomorrow.

How do you combine your very demanding work at Niyya Farm Group Limited, with smashing family goals, considering the commitment involved at the home front too?

Honestly, many see me as a workaholic. The truth is that I am a highly organized gentleman with great skills in multitasking. Due to my deep and industrious work ethics at work, observers will think that I do not have time for leisure, social and family responsibilities. The truth is that I spend useful time with my family who sees me as the best husband and father in the world. As a matter of fact, my children feels that the house is boring whenever I am not at home. I also find some few moments to unwind and socialize. I am a member of Kaduna Club and I make best use of my time anytime I am there for leisure. In terms of voluntary services, I am Vice President/CEO of Ogbemudia Irabor Memorial Foundation, Member of Amnesty International, London, United Kingdom, and Senior Member of the International Summit of Leaders. I am also a former Executive Council member of the Progressive Friends of Benin, National Vice President of Al-Fattah





Islamic Mission, Executive Council Member of Edo State Chapter of Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs (NSCIA), and Executive Director of NSCIA Comprehensive School, Benin City.

What are your future projections?

The vision of Niyya Food & Drinks Company Limited is to enhance the quality of life of Nigerians by providing them with top quality products at affordable prices. Currently, we are unable to meet the huge demand for our products due to the overwhelming customers' acceptance and orders. As a company, our projections are to continue providing top quality products to our customers and to double our production output in the next 3 years through factory expansion projects and more efficient operational practices using the best of technological processes and procedures. For me as an individual, projection is to transform Niyya and make it fundamentally better than how I met it for the benefit of the investors, employees, customers and other stakeholders. After leaving Niyya, I wish to pick up any endeavour that will give me the opportunity to continue my contributions to the industrial development of Nigeria and betterment of my people. My desire is to serve humanity till I have my last breath.





Where can your Enthusiasts find you?

For me, they can easily find me on LinkedIn and Facebook. For enthusiasts of our company and products, they can find us as follows:

Twitter: [@farm_pride](#)

Facebook: [Facebook.com/GoNatural](#)

Instagram:

[Instagram.com/FarmPrideNatural](#)

They can also simply send email to us through info@niyyagroup.com or call us on [+2347018185009](tel:+2347018185009).

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CITY SCOPE AFRICA MAGAZINE
OCT. - DEC. 2021 ISSUE

Let's talk *About*

“

To be in business today, our most important job is to be head marketer for the brand called You.

-Tom Peters

Amidst corporate branding and identity marketing, being the best staff of the year three times in a row, being the first one to come to mind when issues on strategic planning and winning wilful clients over show up, the one who can sell you best is you. Yes, you have teammates, much time dedicated to peer reviews and sharing. However, the one who actually makes everything work out is you.

Employees should know that as much as there's "WE" there's "I". I'm not saying take the glory for team jobs done or be a one-man team. I'm saying the much effort, commitment, sacrifice and hard work you've put into you will reflect on your job and the collective success achieved. Let's backtrack to when you were job hunting, and you attended that interview that made you bow your head in disappointment, asking "God when?" or the interview



that landed you your present job, one phrase was constant “can we meet you?” Simply put, who are you? What do you do? What can you offer? What are your achievements and what value can you add to the system with all you’ve claimed to be?

A bit too much? Well, that’s what personal branding is all about. You are first of all seen for who you are and what you can offer as an individual before you’re seen as a representative of the company brand. You can never make a first impression twice. So make the first count and stick forever.

Interestingly, personal branding is one of the most talked about subjects in the corporate world. This is because you have to have something to offer and you must have been perceived in that light before anyone offers you something. Maya Angelou said “At the end of the day people won’t remember what you said or did, they will remember how you made them feel”. Being aware of the impression your personal brand makes on your company and by extension people out there who watch you, plus the emotional and professional responses you get determines the quantum leap of your brand in the world of workforce.

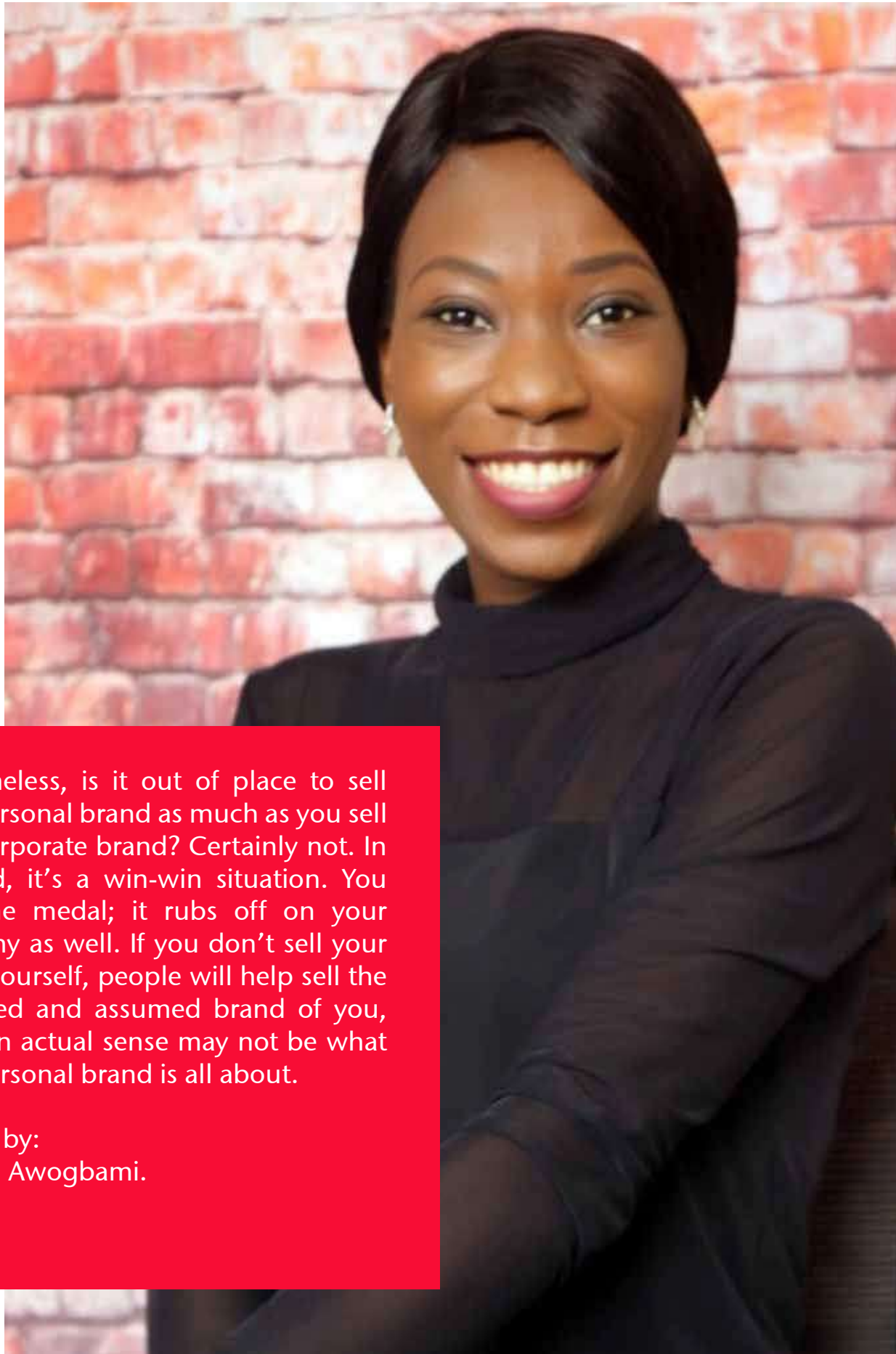
With all this in mind, here are 4 ways you can optimize your personal brand amidst corporate brand.

1. Take on relevant opportunities presented to you and give it your best shot. If you don't define your brand yourself, people will help you to. Saying yes to relevant opportunities in your workplace will give people around you an insight into your abilities, skills and commitment to excellence.

2. Prepare your elevation pitch and go around with it. You never know when the opportunity to sell your idea will show up.

3. In every meeting, ensure you ask a question, make suggestions and comments. That way, people will notice you and keep an eye on you.

4. Network with others outside your team. You never know who needs your service outside your team or how much help you could render to people outside your team. Your claim of being a versatile employee will be seen here.



Nevertheless, is it out of place to sell your personal brand as much as you sell your corporate brand? Certainly not. In the end, it's a win-win situation. You earn the medal; it rubs off on your company as well. If you don't sell your brand yourself, people will help sell the perceived and assumed brand of you, which in actual sense may not be what your personal brand is all about.

Written by:
Tomisin Awogbami.



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