

The NEWTIMES E-MAGAZINE

ISSUE: October—November 2010

Since September 2006

A COMMUNICATION TO CEO'S / BUSINESS EXECUTIVES

Welcome to our yet again incisive magazine that touches on personal, business and national development strategies. We analyze the situation as it is and share with you our own perspective. Let us together study and understand our national and business trends, so that we can make important decisions especially at work based on informed positions. This has been our consistent contribution towards inspiring change, in search of progress, since September 2006.

Note: Free Subscription Continues Until Further Notice

THE LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE - How to Fortify The Inevitable Changes

a. One of the foremost philosophers in this world goes by the name Socrates and lived in ancient Greece. This famous Greek is the man behind the Socratic wisdom of inspiring change. During his time, Socrates, kept on questioning about whatever was happening to the society. In the process of sharing his thoughts and feelings, Socrates was constantly getting huge followings especially from the youth. Regrettably, his popularity and ideas pricked the then political elites the wrong way. Eventually, this man of immense wisdom was sentenced to death through drinking a heavy dose of poison. Despite his physical death, the spirit of Socrates refused to die. Many years since, we still widely apply the Socratic wisdom.

It is this wisdom that brings change. We keep on asking ourselves why we do things this way or that way. Why not improve for example? What would happen if we change this or that way of doing things? How would we do things differently? The same questioning has led Kenya to get where it is today. Some courageous Kenyans continued challenging the situation as the rest of us watched in consternation. Eventually, it became a national movement of seeking change, whose benefits we are now enjoying.

So, those people who keep questioning with a view to bringing change in our homes, organizations, and national situation become agents of change and therefore leaders in their own rights. As expected of leaders, they take risks, challenge the situation, share their vision, influence others, innovate and finally bring progress. Unfortunately, change of direction sometimes creates discomfort for some. Evidently, there is confusion all around us. Some veteran politicians want to become County Governors, during the 2012 elections. Others want to become senators whereas others are bent on clinging onto the continuity of the earlier maligned provincial administra-

tion. They are seemingly trying to retain the cake, even after it has been long eaten. Seemingly, the continued angling is presenting situations of change resistance, one way or the other. Is this change resistance sustainable in the new Kenya?

Whereas it is everybody's wish to hang onto known comfort zones, it is worthwhile realizing that our situations have changed, probably for good. Ethical leadership and governance as prescribed by chapter 6 of the new constitutional order may soon take shape, if the spirit and intent is realized. Did you read like me that, leadership in this country's public sector will now be about service to the people?

Indeed, it better be even if change normally comes with a



price in all situations. "Mjinga ameanza kuerevuka" (the ignorant have started getting wiser), if lessons from the referendum and recent by-elections are anything to go by. Apparently, the new constitutional order gives little room for veteran politicians operating as county governors. Nevertheless, should they embrace change and return to class for new studies on ethics and governance, they may probably secure some chances. More importantly, they may acquire fresh traits necessary for new leadership direction, now expected by a rejuvenated citizenry.

b. Meanwhile, the electoral conquest of Hon Bishop Dr.

Margaret Wanjiru, my city MP, is admirable. Allow me therefore to share some thoughts with her as my representative in the August House. Hon Bishop, much as you have done a great job, your profile can invaluablely escalate if, you can reason with me. Notably, new ideas and principles on ethics and leadership have been outlined in Chapter 6 of the new constitution. You can actually play a leading role in entrenching these ideas.

But, as a guide, I will refer you to the three stanzas of the National Anthem, which were sung during the promulgation of our new constitution, on 27th August 2010. Personally, I have on many occasions guided my trainees in singing this anthem during various sessions. The consensus arrived after analysis of the experience is that, our nation has great hidden values. Did you know that our national values actually exist in the national anthem? Incidentally, I have in the past severally written about the values, both in the daily press and professional journals, as I try to market the same.

Hon Bishop, these values in the national anthem are not only very prayerful, but also borrow heavily from the "ten commandments, "which you are fully conversant with. As you consider the values therefore, I hope and pray that the Holy Spirit will guide and use you in pursuing the necessary legislation of entrenching the same, in the context of chapter 6 of our constitution. More importantly, I urge you to carefully consider each detail of our national anthem in this endeavor. Indeed, I am convinced that this approach could easily eliminate most of the ethics and governance challenges, which have consistently threatened our continuity as a united nation.

Hon bishop, as your constituent, you are assured of my support in 2012, if you can successfully execute this project, that is very close to my heart. Ideally, it may benefit all of us, if you can be an agent of transforming ethics and leadership through fortification of national values, for permanent positive change.

Mwangi Wanjumbi, Magazine Author

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Many Kenyans are full of hope especially now that we have acquired a new constitution. The benefits of devolution could be invaluable as we think and act as smaller units, a departure from the past where, only a selected few were deciding and acting for the whole country. We now have limitless opportunities and power of personally contributing to business and economic development in our counties. Additionally, our votes will now count more than ever before. In fact, it will be the height of ignorance not to participate in leadership affairs of our country and counties even if just to cast our votes.

Notably, effective leadership which will naturally be expected to be more innovative will without doubt uplift our standards of living in many ways. More importantly, focused leadership will no longer be about amassing benefits from the various positions of power, but rather about contributing to economic development of the devolved units. Further, leadership will not any more be about electoral or appointed positions. It will involve concerted efforts of becoming the best in our various vocations.

Devolvement therefore will involve striving to become top farmers, teachers, accountants, entrepreneurs, doctors, marketers, engineers, lawyers, consultants, writers, preachers and so on, in the various counties. Inevitably, the contribution to the welfare of humanity by each one of us is likely to be more visible especially for those who make it to the top. Further, competition in sports, agricultural production, education, engineering and many more will now be more worthwhile than ever before. Even Business Forums such as those wit-

nessed in Muranga County, in recent years and Agricultural Shows prevalent in many counties will now assume high status in this great nation.

Naturally, competition for performance in organizations, in counties and national perspective will now be heightened. This will certainly bring increased growth opportunities at personal, organizational and the national situation as well.

Unfortunately, all these efforts could be worthless if we retain the same attitudes as those prevalent during the 1st republic. Consequently, we may all need to undergo complete transformation of our mindsets. We particularly need to re-brand our guiding philosophies on money and work ethics. This is so because; the 2nd republic will most likely be rewarding hard work guided by skills, innovation and professionalism.

There will be little room for shortcuts and nepotism. We will no longer be talking about "mali ya uma" because this will no longer hold. The 15 % national revenues allocated by the national government will trickle down to counties, districts, villages and finally homes. Under those circumstances, is it not wise then to re-brand our mindsets on work and money?

Coincidentally, I have in the recent years written several published articles on ethics, values and attitudes about money and work, including a tool purposely developed for transforming mindsets on these important aspects of our lives. Initially, I had been testing the tool in almost all our **staff motivation and capacity building training programs**, run for different categories of staff in diverse organizations, in the last 4 years or so.

Surprisingly, the tool

which was previously unrefined, has constantly achieved invaluable results. Both junior and senior employees have successively transformed their attitudes/culture and work ethic probably for good, based on already documented feedback from different organizations. Further, most organizations have benefited invaluable especially after implementing ensuing recommendations on staff retention and organizational development interventions. These recommendations follow administration of the tool, which combines with improvement of performance skills.

Meanwhile, buoyed by the achievements so far, we have in the recent past refined and documented the attitude/culture change and management tool for continued use in ALL our training programs. While seeking perfection, we have tested the tool on other trainers as well, especially through a regular trainer of trainers program (TOT), under the auspices of a Professional Trainers Association. The last results were amazing. Five answers provided to a simple question on work, self and money achieved a worrying success rate of 0 - 40%.

Needless to emphasize, future training participants will invaluablely benefit from the now tested and highly effective attitude/culture change and management tool. Indeed, we hope to continually perfect the pass rate based on the tool, therefore helping people in transforming their attitudes towards themselves, work and money.

It is only after transformation of these guiding philosophies that we shall all achieve full benefits of devolution in our organizations, especially in an expanded regional market. Sadly, employers may not always succeed in changing employee attitudes on their own. The two are constantly in competition as one pursues profit maximization whereas the other aims at maximizing remuneration.

Whatever the circumstances, we inevitably need to embrace irreversible paradigm shifts not only from individual and organizational but also national perspectives, for us to realize full benefits of the new changes.

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PTAK News: PTAK – Professional Trainers Association of Kenya, which is a Government registered body aiming to take workplace learning to new levels is continually growing in size and stride. The membership has now reached close to 1000 members. Meanwhile, ALL registered members will require certification through attending an initial PTAK TOT – Trainer of Trainer's course. It is through this course that members are introduced to desired professional training standards. The courses take place every 3rd week of every month. Book your place early to avoid disappointment. SEE YOU during the various training sessions. CONTACTS: Vision Plaza, 2nd Floor, Suit 35, Mombasa Road, Phone 254 20 2519102 or 0717648648 Web: www.ptakoffice.org web: www.ptakoffice.org. Meanwhile, registered members meet on 19th October 2010, Wednesday 9.00 am—12.00 pm at Charter Hall for a Scheduled Special General meeting, which follows the one of 18th September 2010, that did not secure the mandatory quorum.



Strategically Thinking – Thought for October 2010

No Knowledge is Inferior if Properly Applied

Until re-entering school for rejuvenation of knowledge, I had thought that I had enough of what it takes to succeed in my endeavors backed by then expertise in accounting and finance management. In particular, I had thought that success in life is just about ability of making as much money as one can. So, as I embarked on acquiring the new knowledge, I was taken aback by some voluminous “but seemingly odd” course work. Though looking irrelevant, I had to cover the same alongside my international business studies, specializing in management science.

My attitude therefore was not much different from that of Hon Bill Ruto, Minister for Higher Education, Republic of Kenya. As an international business student, I could not initially come to terms with the need for studying such areas as Philosophy, Human Civilization, Environmental Science, Human Physiology, Cultural studies and many more. In fact, I had thought that they were time wasters and a drain to my hard earned funds, which I had to part with as school fees. But, I can now confess that I was dead wrong and would consider Hon Ruto to be off guard as well. The principle idea about philosophy is; the search and dissemination of knowledge, for the improvement of the welfare of humanity—period. Inevitably then, every degree that qualifies for the award of the ‘power to read what appertains to the degree conferred,’ is invaluable to the improvement of the welfare of humanity, as long as the knowledge is applicable in real life. Therefore, there should be no discrimination of whatever degrees. Instead, the various graduates should be encouraged to apply whatever knowledge acquired, in their real life situations.

Meanwhile, you have elsewhere in this magazine, noticed the detailed discussion of a tool which we have developed for re-aligning people’s perceptions about themselves, work and money. We wish to take this early opportunity of putting the value of money in its right perspective. This is especially very important, as far as Kenyans are concerned. Without doubt, money is an important commodity in our lives. Money helps us to buy all the things that we continually need, for us to consider ourselves successful or happy in life. But, amongst the 12 guides listed by Napoleon Hill in “Think and Grow Rich,” money comes last. In fact, it is a result of applying the 11 others.

At the same time, we need to realize that we are all born with nothing. At birth, a child is born naked and with nothing whatsoever. It is the world that we are born into which makes us what we become. Besides, people are born into different environments. Some are born into poor families and environments or so called primitivity. Others are born into very wealthy environments. But, chances are that some of those who are born into poverty end up becoming rich, whereas others born into wealth end up becoming poor, in the course of time. Therefore, there are no constants on matters of wealth. Look around and you will see many examples of people who have either succeeded or failed irrespective of the starting point.

In the meantime, values on money and work are not much different as perceived by diverse cultures. In the western cultures for example the value of work is highly emphasized. Americans for instance, who are a reflection of all of Europe, are known for what one does as an occupation. It is commonly understood that one can only become wealthy out of being gainfully employed (salaried or self). Therefore, money is supposed to be the gain from focused work efforts. The better the focus, the higher the chances of continually getting the money we would want to have. That is the basis of our report on the researched attitude/culture change and management tools.

Mwangi Wanjumbi (Newtimes Newsletter Author) **Comments at info@newtimesconsultants.com**

JUST FOR THE RECORD: This writer is also the Author of a 2005 published international research titled “The impact of training and education on entrepreneurship development in Nairobi, a case study of Barclays Bank Business Club.” (The research has since been turned into a guide for targeting the SME sector, by the Banking Industry in Kenya. Ref: Business in Africa Journal–July 2007). Meanwhile, the same research had first been presented by the Author in an International Entrepreneurship Conference whose theme was, “Fostering SMES in Africa,” which occurred in USIU, Nairobi, May 2006.

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PERSONAL STRATEGY: INSPIRATION FOR THE MONTH

YOUTH & TALENT: This month, I am inspired by a special request from a youth working in one of the institutions of higher learning. In this regard, I have specifically dedicated this section to the Youth of this great country. As a parent of 3 youngsters, I love and relate well with the youth. Secondly, I have studied with the youth at some stage, when I felt like seeking new knowledge. I also work with them. I therefore understand their challenges quite well.

This current interaction with the youth is based on the experience of a youth and his parents. Just a few weeks ago, I met Fiona a mother of 3 youngsters, who I could not quite recall. But, having been a participant in one of our 3 day training programs, she could recall me quite well. This is more so because, I occasionally use my published articles during training sessions. In the specific training, I noticed Fiona underlining some of the sentences of the article, which was soon to be a subject of discussion in class. So, I took interest in what Fiona was doing and sought to understand exactly what she was up-to.

"Thanks Mwalimu for this great article (Conquering regional and global markets....). I am a lawyer by Profession. My spouse is an architect. Our first born son Jorum has just received his 4th form examination results. We are at war in our family. My spouse is distressed because Jorum qualified to pursue engineering or even medicine, but this was his father's career choice. However, Jorum is not interested in any discussions on the matter. Instead, he is constantly pre-occupied with his "very annoying" pass-time of drawing cartoons and the likes. This upsets the dad to the extreme. Personally, I have been seriously confused on the matter. But just now, I have started seeing the light," said an elated Fiona.

During, this recent coincidental meeting, I had no choice but to give hearty congratulations to Fiona and family. They had finally guided their son towards pursuing talent oriented studies. Jorum is a fine arts student in a local public university. Apparently, the youth of this country need to realize that they were not meant to struggle in this world. That is why each of them (like everybody else) is blessed with one unique talent or the other. Talent is the best source of passion in whatever you choose to do in life. You can be passionate for a lifetime.

Once focused, you can effortlessly become the best in your talent oriented career. You can use the talent for either salaried or self employment. Incidentally, the developed world is today pursuing talent based economies. Inevitably, our country will head there too, in line with global trends. Try therefore to discover your talent and develop the same. If necessary, get help from your close friends and relatives. You deserve a rewarding future, which you SHOULD start creating today. Realize that you were born to effortlessly succeed, only through using your inborn abilities. Like Jorum, be yourself and do not give in. Its about your future after all. All the best from Mwangi Wanjumbi, a passionate Management Trainer, Consultant & Writer

Also Newtimes E- Magazine Author



Did you know?

- That you can get whatever you want in life if you can help as many people as you can to get what they want in life? (Zig Zigler)
- That your attitude determines your altitude?
- That we have now refined our highly effective attitudes change and management tools for easy application in all our training programs?
- That the Author of this newsletter has written a book titled " Personal Empowerment Strategy which is undergoing publication?"

Our Motto: *Inspiring Change*

Our Guiding Principle: *Continually Taking Business to the Next level.*

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ORGANIZATIONAL STRATEGY/THE CEO'S DILEMMA



Welcome to the continually growing list of past and ongoing beneficiaries of our diverse solutions. Some of them include:-

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- Pacific Ins. Brokers Ltd &
- First Reins. Brokers Ltd
- Dunlop Industries Ltd
- Kenya Tourist Dev. Corp
- Kenya Reinsurance Corp.
- CIC Ltd (Co- opt. Ins Co. Ltd.
- AMREF(Africa Med Res. Fdn.
- SME Solutions Centre (Back Off: Intl)
- Basco Products Kenya Ltd
- Medlink Labs & Surgicals Ltd
- Centro Food Industries – Thika
- Wida Motel Ltd
- Alfa Paints Kenya Ltd
- Catrina Camp Ltd etc.

Redressing Challenges Borne Out of The School System

It was interesting listening to Gladys Boss Sholei, the deputy CEO of IIEC – Independent Electoral Commission of Kenya, being interviewed on a Local FM Radio Station. In particular, She explained about her recent experience as an elections observer, in far off Australia. Out of all the praises about this country, it was notable that one concept cut across all. The value of trust is so much entrenched in the Australian society. There would be no reason for instance for one to vote twice, use advantaged position of elections officer to favor a candidate and so on. As a result of this trust, the election system is very simple and therefore cheap. Surprisingly, there is no usage of ineligible ink, whereas candidates are listed on ordinary photocopy paper.

On the other hand, you have certainly noticed the very concerted efforts, of protecting our national examination system, from the very serious and persistent threat of exam cheating. Primary and secondary school candidates are now expected to be identified using not only photos in the exam rooms, but also fixation of the same photos and other security details in the final certificates. Is this not a sad reflection of the deterioration of our values such as trust, as is experienced in our organizations as well as the larger society?

Indeed, organizational executives need to be very worried about these developments. This is so because the same deterioration of values escalates into our university system, which is the main source of organizational human resource. Apparently, many students are no longer interested in working hard for their examinations. It is not a secret that such students still end up getting the desired certificates from the various universities. Why worry or care when they can without a sweat easily acquire the certificates and grades required by the employment sector?

The eventuality is that, the same graduates are challenged in driving organizational and economic development. Further, efforts of controlling and safeguarding organizational resources, particularly from internal stakeholders continue taking more and more of executive time. That is besides the financial resources involved. Inevitably, we need to take action aimed at encouraging development of positive values in the workplace, wherever not entrenched. This may invaluablely contribute to attempts of redressing the challenges borne out of the education system.

In addition, there is probably a need to revisit the issue of certificates as the benchmark of employment suitability. In fact, their weight can be reduced drastically and replaced by concerted efforts of identifying talent and innovation. This could be followed by efforts of nurturing the same talent. Realistically, innovation is about application of talent, which the developed world has been entrenching. Meanwhile, it may be necessary to consider the economics principle which holds that once demand outstrips supply, the suppliers engage mass production as one of the responses. Unfortunately, mass production could result to compromised qualities, as we may have experienced in the recent years.

In the meantime, we need to remember that, when Tom Peters, a renowned Management/Leadership Guru, came by in 2007, he emphasized to the more than 200 CEOs gathered at Safari Park Hotel, the need for developing and aligning talent instead of over-emphasis on MBAs. Inevitably, change of this emphasis could reduce the over reliance on the now highly prized certificates. Further, their demand which has led to development of “business” of producing the same could also diminish. To what extent then, is your organization emphasizing or entrenching talent based performance? Further, to what degree has your organization embraced values as guides to organizational behavior and culture change? Finally, has your organization embraced the practical interviewing process whenever engaging new staff? Indeed, we MUST all stop glorifying or recognizing certificates, which are not backed by credible and practically applicable knowledge.

Author – Newtimes E-Magazine

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Newtimes Pictorial Profile

As part of our brand building process, we started recording some of our training activities in 2007. Herebelow are some samples

The Production Manager of a Manufacturing Company looks on as a company employee receives his training certificate	The CEO of an Insurance company witnesses as his HRM receives her Training certificate	The CEO of an insurance Broking firm receives her Training participation Certificate as her General Manager looks on	The CEO of a Real Property Consultancy firm receives his training participation Certificate after a 3 day session as his General Manager looks on	The Chief Consultant and Trainer of Newtimes B. S. stresses a point, as he conducts a regular Trainer of Trainers – (TOT) session for the Professional Trainers Association of Kenya –PTAK.

Note: You can click this link for more pictorials @ <http://www.newtimesconsultants.com/pictorials.html>

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Youth Mentoring & Career Development Strategies

Many CEOs face challenges of nurturing the future leaders under their care, therefore the need for this section.

THE YOUTH CHALLENGE

I am an ardent swimmer and jogging enthusiast of many years. More than ten years ago, I developed an evening program, which takes me to my club like 3 times a week unless incapable of doing so. I always enjoy starting with a swim and then finishing with a 10 laps jog in the field. I never have any competition in the swimming pool as such. Probably, it is because not many people of my age have interests in swimming in the club pool, especially in the evening hours. However, there are many regular joggers of both gender in the field. I happen to have a moderate jogging speed, which I believe I maintain from the beginning to the end.

But, before establishing this speed, I used to constantly join the rest of the crowd. Particularly, I could not stand being beaten by fast running members of the opposite sex. But in reality, a few of them were and still are just too fast for some of us. Nevertheless, I just couldn't accept being beaten as I helplessly watched.

So, I could increase speed to the best of my ability aiming to be as competitive. Sadly, I was always having some challenges, whenever I upped my pace. I was tiring fast and therefore doing fewer than my desired minimum of 10 laps. Eventually, I realized that I was running other peoples' races and therefore losing steam, almost to the extent of being discouraged. Finally, I settled to doing my own race, without caring about whoever else is in the field. Now, are you running your race or that of somebody else in whatever you are doing? Or are you doing the best thing in life, of competing against yourself, based on your own strengths?

Careers/Vocations

In the rural county where I was born and bred, there is a very fast river which separates two divisions near my home. My paternal and maternal relatives live on opposite sides of the river. It was therefore natural to learn how to cross the river at an early age. It became even better when like other lads, I learnt how to swim in this very fast flowing river. The swimming became extremely fascinating during those early years. As such, I had to look for any excuse of visiting my maternal relatives, so that I could spend some few swimming moments, especially during the week-end.

Initially, it was very thrilling swimming downstream for long distances, especially in the company of other youngsters. But, the downstream experience soon became very monotonous. This gave rise to the need for more challenges. We eventually invented an exercise of swimming against the current, which became more interesting. With fellow youngsters we could compete furiously on who could do the longest distance upstream, in this fast flowing river. The experience was energy sapping but fun all the same. There were no medals though. It was just about who was best in this race against the current. Many years after, I became accustomed to swimming in still pool waters. And when I could not get enough challenges swimming in this water, I started combining swimming and jogging for maximum satisfaction, in my keep fit activities.

Our chosen vocations present similar situations. Initially, they are very interesting especially if they give us some semblance of job satisfaction. Unfortunately, they end up becoming monotonous once they stop presenting challenges, that will make us spend a little more energy than routine. It is good to understand our personalities well. Every personality is linked to certain specific careers as would be confirmed by psychologists. Careers in medicine as doctors and nurses for example call for high degree of care from the practitioners. We at the same time need careers that will challenge us in moderation. Certainly, they will be ideal, if they do not excessively drain our energy, as is the case with swimming upstream, and therefore against the current. We need careers through which we will derive passion and enthusiasm. We certainly need careers which will enable us to be economically active throughout our lifetimes. The next issue will cover the concept of success.

Editor - Newtimes E- Magazine

In this section, readers are free to submit short articles which could inspire change in our youth. Kindly note that this is a free contribution to the improvement of the welfare of humanity. info@newtimesconsultants.com

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