

The NEWTIMES NEWSLETTER

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Since September, 2006

This is our Social Responsibility of Inspiring Change through Story Telling and Critical Analysis of Topical Issues

Welcome to our yet again incisive newsletter that touches on personal, business and national development issues and strategies. We analyze the situation as it is and give you our own perspective. Let us together study and understand our national and business trends so that we can make important decisions from informed positions. This is our contribution towards inspiring change in search of progress.

THE LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE

The Constitutional Review: Danger in Not Taking up Our National Leadership Roles

Almost 50 years since independence, we are faced with a great opportunity of re-inventing the future of this great nation, through the envisaged constitutional review. *Wananchi* have given their views to the Committee of Experts – COEs. The same committee had scanned through volumes of data collated from previous efforts of reviewing the now contentious constitution.

When all the contentious issues are agreed on through parliament and eventually the envisaged national referendum, the task of ensuring responsible leadership will still rest on the voters of this great nation. It is *Wananchi* who will eventually decide who implements whatever will be the outcome of the review. So, whether the constitutional review efforts will bring the desired results or not will fully depend on the voters. Why do I have this great feeling?

Some months ago, I had this opportunity of listening to Michael Waweru, the KRA Commissioner General. During his talk at a British Council Leadership Forum, this Chief National Taxman was at pains explaining that his role is only one way - to collect and remit taxes to the government and no more. "The application of the taxes is beyond KRA. In fact, you tax payers are better placed to control the usage of taxes," said the seemingly unexcited taxman, in answer to a question from an inquisitive 'tax payer.' Whaaat?

That must have been the question that was uppermost in the minds of most of the listeners who are without doubt part of the tax paying clientele. But surely, how do we control monies which are already out of our hands in form of taxes? Notably, this is the revenue that funds government expenditure, Infrastructural development, Constituency Development Fund, Free Primary Education and many other national financial commitments. Incidentally, the strength of any institution including the state itself depends on the financial might as well as effectiveness and efficiency of management of the financial resources.

Apparently, we may not escape responsibility on mismanagement of our national resources as implied by Michael Waweru. Middle class Kenyans may even be more culpable. During electioneering, these Kenyans are too busy attending to their jobs or other personal interests. Many do not even have time to vote or even influence policy direction, yet they contribute much of the national tax revenue especially through direct taxation. In fact, many do not treat the exercise as their duty to stamp authority in management of national affairs. The voting process is largely left at the mercy of politicians and most of the times the highly manipulable ordinary *Wananchi*. The results are obviously in the public domain.

Ironically, these ordinary Kenyans are more often than not only marginal tax payers, perhaps only through value added tax - VAT. Effectively, highly tax paying middle class Kenyans leave their fate, largely at the mercy of ordinary Kenyans. For not participating fully in the electoral process, could the middle class be blamed for misallocation of the taxes that they have themselves painfully contributed? Your guess is as good as mine. One may however tend to agree with Michael Waweru. We are ourselves to blame for not participating fully in putting in place the leaders that we would like to see managing our national resources and institutions. More than ever before all of us should now actively participate in putting in place morally upright and credible leaders who can be trusted to take care of our national institutions as well as inspire us into the future.

Meanwhile, the management of our national tax revenue is one of the most important functions bestowed on our national leaders. Effectiveness of the management depends on the people that we put in office to act on our behalf. So, no matter how well worded or effective the new constitution will be, we will all without exception be required to actively play our leadership roles either as voters or leaders. The alternative is dangerous since the envisaged new constitutional order will only help in redefining the national laws and responsibilities of both the leaders and the voters.

Comments @ info@newtimesconsultants.com Read more @ <http://www.newtimesconsultants.com/newsletters.html>

PERSPECTIVE – Sharing recent change inspiring experiences**To remain relevant, we need to constantly embrace change in whatever we do**

Many of you have recently noticed stories on how hyenas have turned towards hunting human beings for food. In a section of Machakos as well as Naivasha, the residents are living in awe after having lost some of their loved ones courtesy of hyena attacks. Yet, this animal has been more famous for its cowardice and bone crushing flair. It is perhaps in response to human wildlife conflicts, where human beings continue encroaching on the animals' habitat that the hyena has transformed into a ferocious beast. It is now getting known for not only teaching lessons but also killing and eating any human beings that they find along their path, as they struggle for survival.

This transformation of the hyena leads me to an ongoing experience. In the last few months of year 2009, I was involved in a technical committee of the Government through the DIT- Directorate of Industrial Training. The committee had been and is still charged with the responsibility of developing a training curriculum for the plantation sector with particular reference to the Floricultural Industry.

This sector of our economy has apparently got high potential especially with regard to fetching foreign currency from the international market. Flower production has also become widespread. It was previously only associated with greenhouse farms in Naivasha, Nakuru and Kericho amongst others. Today, small scale farmers are widespread in various parts of the country including Nyeri, Nakuru and Thika alongside others. Unfortunately developments in the industry are highly dynamic especially in line with global trends.

The sector meanwhile provides most of its products to the export markets especially in Europe. The production standards in this market are high. Even the expectations from the labour force are likewise high. A flower exporter could for example be blacklisted for enlisting child labour. Safety standards, as well as contribution to environmental degradation are also a major concern to the international market. In realization of the flower industry potential and the continually changing international standards, the government has noted that this sector which has been continually creating employment could be threatened in the absence of providing 'quality' employment.

In that regard, the DIT has initiated a training curriculum aimed at improving the technical skills of the workers in the Flower industry and especially the flower pickers themselves. They will initially undertake a 5 unit certificate course on the basic knowledge that is required in flower production. Specifically, they will be trained in such areas as Flower nursery, pests and disease control, harvesting and post-harvest treatment as well as record keeping and basic accounting requirements in a flower firm. Essentially, the sector employees will be empowered with not only the requisite practical skills but also the theory behind the same. This transformation may put our flower industry at par with international requirements and also create life changing careers for some in the industry.

Apparently, the struggle for continuity into the future has transformed the hyena into a more ferocious beast. The successful continuity of the flower industry is being upgraded through empowerment of the workforce. What we are doing in our personal situations, business organizations and industries in addressing the inevitable changes that are continually coming our way, is what will determine our continued relevance and sustenance into the future.

Welcome for more @ <http://www.newtimesconsultants.com> Comments @ info@newtimesconsultants.com

PTAK News: PTAK – Professional Trainers Association of Kenya, the body registered by the Government with the main objective of taking workplace learning to new levels is continually growing in size and stride. ALL registered members will without exemption require certification through attending an initial PTAK TOT – Trainer of Trainer's Course. The next such course is slated for 21st – 22nd Jan 2009 at YMCA, Central Nairobi. Book your place early to avoid disappointment.

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Thought for the Month – January 2010**Re- packaging our Kenyan-ness**

I was recently invited to attend a live FM radio interview (as has been the case since April 2006), this time on the process of regional integration, in light of the newly re-launched East African Common Market. This market comprising of the 5 East African countries of Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda has a potential of serving a combined population of 130 Million East Africans, therefore a vast market for all. Having considered and elaborated on the benefits to business and how to venture into this wider market, I have now found myself grappling with another challenge.

As Kenyans, we have been known to be fragmented on the basis of our ethnic origins. It is common knowledge that we think of ourselves first as members of our ethnic communities before appreciating our membership of this great nation. We have forgotten the values explicitly explained in our national anthem. Top of them all is brotherhood (and of-course sisterhood) which was meant to reinforce our unity as a Nation. We have also neglected the very explicit value of hard work and instead adopted a culture of getting rich quick whatever it takes. We have even abandoned the value of justice amongst ourselves, the results of which are now obvious.

Under these circumstances, the people brand from Kenya is likely to have relationship challenges with other East Africans. Perhaps there is new need to re-access our Kenyan-ness. We need to re-evaluate the values which were intended to identify us first as Kenyans, as is explicit in our National anthem. As individuals we need to re-evaluate ourselves in light of these values and embrace them as appropriate. It is only then that we will effectively interact and be respected by others for the Kenyans we will become rather than the Kenyans that we are currently.

Mwangi Wanjumbi (Newtimes Newsletter Author)

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Our Key Solutions

We provide Holistic Corporate Capacity Building Training Solutions

Our Flagship program is the innovative *bottom up Corporate Employee (Re-) Branding Solution through*

- **Staff Motivation and Capacity Building Training for - General/Junior staff**
- **Staff Motivation and Capacity Building Training – Supervisory/Middle Management Staff**
- **Staff Motivation and Capacity Building Training – Senior Managers**
- **Applied Business Leadership Skills for CEOs and Business Executives**

This highly researched program addresses most organizational challenges and performance skills that relate to our local and regional social cultural situation as may be confirmed by all those who have gone through the same.

All other courses (see www.newtimesconsultants.com) and programs such as application of the balance score card will easily fall into place and at the same time continually reinforce the now solid employee brands.

All Our Courses are DIT approved. They are intended to arm participants with soft skills and/or emotional intelligence irrespective of professional background. The key benefit is achievement of sound foundation for continually improving performance.

WHAT OUR CLIENTS SAY ABOUT OUR PROGRAMS

Please Check @ <http://www.newtimesconsultants.com/testimonials.html>

OUR PAST AND CONTINUING CLIENTS – Check www.newtimesconsultants.com

Images never lie. They instead communicate even more effectively. You can now view some which are continually uploaded @ <http://www.newtimesconsultants.com/pictorials.html>

You can also view video clips depicting us live in action @ <http://newtimesconsultants.com/videogallery.html>

INSPIRATION FOR THE MONTH**Are you Bringing Value To the Market Place?**

“No matter how hard you work, what matters most is what you become and not what you get. In fact, what you become determines what you are likely to get,” Jim Rohn, an American International Writer and personal development trainer. So, it appears that if you work hard just to make money, the same may not always be sustainable. But, if you work hard to become an effective manager, supervisor, accountant, engineer, consultant, entrepreneur and CEO amongst others, that is the beginning of success and probably reaps to riches. Therefore, the more you improve your own personal status and effectiveness, the more you are likely to bring increased value to the marketplace. Naturally, the more value you bring to the marketplace, the more attractive you will become to the market players. Consequently, the more rewards you will attract from the marketplace.

By **Mwangi Wanjumbi Newtimes E-Newsletter Author More @ <http://www.newtimesconsultants.com>**

Did you know?

- You should never allow yourself to be everybody. Strive to join the 10% who bring change only through developing themselves.
- You can get whatever you want in life if you help enough people to get what they want in life – Zig Zigler, International Writer, Management and Personal Development Trainer
 - That you can now watch the editor live in action @ <http://newtimesconsultants.com/videogallery.html> ?

THE CEO'S DILEMMA**Which is the preferred Organizational Orientation and why?**

It is yet another new year expected to present opportunities and threats to business. Some business organizations are naturally expected to grow and exceed expectations. Others may constrict into smaller entities whereas some more may simply constrict into oblivion. As a way of addressing the future, many organizations have just or are just about to strategize on how to approach the organizational direction. Some have just completed or are about to undertake performance appraisals especially aimed at determining the human resource achievements and needs.

Others are in the process of undertaking market surveys as well as staff satisfaction surveys so that they can get a clear picture of the operational environment. More still are in the process of strategizing through future planning – bringing the future today and working on the dynamics of achieving that future.

The truth is that performance appraisals bring out historical facts. Surveys on the other hand portray a picture of current occurrences in not only individual organizations and industry but also national and even global situations of-course depending on desired parameters. How successful are the two (appraisals and surveys) in giving organizational direction? With regard to staff issues, perhaps it is necessary to first understand when the de-linking took place and why as well as how. With regard to the market surveys, it is probably important to consider what could have happened for the organization to loose track of the industry dynamics.

Future planning on the other hand involves crafting the expectations and therefore the organizational direction. The orientation or combination of orientations preferred in your organization in readiness for the New Year entirely depends on your organizational preferences. The preferences could actually pose dilemmas, but will nevertheless determine the extent of future success.

NOTE: Perhaps, it would be of help if you can make steps of unraveling your dilemmas through customized CEO/Business Executive coaching sessions or fully fledged consulting solutions, tailor – made training solutions not withstanding.

Contact us for more @ info@newtimesconsultants.com

Further Reading:

The following articles are just a sample of those written by the Author and published in the print press so far. Those listed below are recommended reading for everyone interested in personal, organizational, national or even global development issues. Apparently, 90 % of the population is stuck in group think (Jim Rohn). For Continued Personal development join the 10 % who continually seek and apply more and more knowledge and information. The articles cover such areas as:-

- Ethics: Changing our values on work and money – Management Journal KIM – Sept 2009 (You can review your values at will if you care)
- Personal Strategy; many skills half a brain – Sokoni of MSK -) This is a great piece on self realization
- Degrees are not an end in themselves and must add value – Standard Newspapers 25th Aug 2009
- Culture and behavior in the workplace - Sokoni of MSK (Dec 2007) – About real cause of workplace challenges
- Employers “failing” the training test – Industrial Training Magazine (Sept 2009) - Do you ever think of the value of training?
- Money? It is the last thing in my mind – Business Post (March 2008) (A probable cure for our Chronic Money Mania)
- ONE KENYA: The tribe is not to blame - dedicated to reinforcement of our Kenyan-ness as no tribe is more superior to the other

These are just examples. Each of the articles adds value in different ways and situations for all those interested in becoming GLOBAL Citizens. These citizens are an informed lot who continually seek to become the best in whatever they do – They acquire **EXPERTISE ORIENTED LEADERSHIP**. Strong Moral values become their guiding light- YES, WE MUST ALL RE-THINK THE KENYA OF TODAY AND TOMORROW TOO. Check also <http://mwangiwanjumbi.wordpress.com> – this is a personal blog

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Our Motto: Inspiring Change **Our Guiding Principle: Continually Taking Business to the Next level.** This is a bi-monthly Communication to Corporate CEOs/Business Executives from Mwangi Wanjumbi, the Managing Consultant and Chief Trainer of

Newtimes Business Solutions. He is himself a Business Strategy Consultant and Management/leadership Skills as well as Motivational Trainer