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Leadership: Think Of How You Can Add Value & Other Lessons

Exactly 5 years ago, it was my last day at work at my former organization and I sent out a valedictory mail to my team. It was a truly emotional experience.

I hereby share that mail I sent 5 years ago. How time flies.

My dear South West 1 Team,

This is a very emotional moment for me as I know goodbyes are not easy. I want to take this time out to sincerely appreciate each and every one for your support during my brief sojourn leading the team.

I call it a sojourn because life is a journey and not a destination. We will all never 'arrive' in the real sense of it and people must move on at certain periods in their lives. That is exactly what I'm doing. You've all been part of my life just like I have been part of yours.

I'm particularly delighted and it is my sincere joy to note that together, we have made some progress. We are not exactly where we want to be but then we are no longer where we were when I assumed leadership of this Region a short while ago.

So, let me leave you with a few 'take-aways' as I take my bow:

1. MYTHS ARE MEANT TO BE SHATTERED

When I resumed in the South West, the fashionable reason for the poor performance was the excuse that the State Governments were owing salaries.

It had become so endemic and had assumed the proportion of a myth that people had grown to believe it to be true. It took a carefully contrived business plan showing that we were sitting on a gold mine of opportunities for the myth to be shattered.

What are the myths that are still affecting your performance? Your location? Your staffing? Your vehicles? Shatter the myths. Break the jinx. Think outside the box- no, throw away the box. Be creative. Have a paradigm shift.

Your performance is a product of your ability to think and be creative. Limitations and barriers have to be broken in your mind before you can conquer them physically. Stop making up excuses for poor performance.

There may be forty million reasons for failure but there's not a single excuse (Rudyard Kipling). Excuses are the nails used to build a house of failure.

2. NO ONE HAS BAD STAFF-JUST POOR LEADERSHIP

Up till now, I have not recruited a single staff since I assumed leadership here. I have worked with all the people I met on ground. I didn't change or remove any Branch Manager except for those who are on recovery suspension.

Yes, there are times when it is necessary to move people around especially when they have been on that role for some time as this prevents the law of diminishing returns from setting in and also offers the staff a new challenge. I also need to balance this out.

Some staff by their attitude and laziness condemn themselves to a situation where they become irrelevant and useless to the ideals of the organization. Such must of a necessity be shown the door.

However, I'm of the opinion that when people usually complain about their staff, often times, you actually need to check the quality of their leadership. A bad workman complains of his tools. A staff is a reflection of the leader- either for good or for bad.

A leader's job is to work on their staff in order to improve the quality and also affect the quantum of output. A great leader will invest time and efforts in developing his team. The better your team are, the easier for the leader.

That's the reason I started the Thursday trainings. I hope this can be continued and sustained.

3. YOU CAN'T GIVE WHAT YOU DON'T HAVE

A ball bounces and rises not only because of the kick to the ball but due to the air pressure within the ball. That is why a deflated ball is useless. Personal development is key. Don't wait for the bank to train you- train yourself.

You owe it to yourself to continue to develop your capacity and capabilities. I usually tell people that my life is a summary of two things: the people I've met and the books I've read. So I make it a duty to work on my mind.

I absorb so much information and knowledge so I can exhale the right contribution. That's what you must do consistently. Read. There are so many good books around. Invest on your mind. Reading affects the quality of your thoughts and impact on the way you communicate.

The phone you carry is a veritable source of great information. Use it wisely- not just on browsing entertainment but for improving the quality of your output.

4. THINK OF HOW YOU CAN ADD VALUE

A few days ago, during my visit to Osogbo, one of the team members complained about how difficult the banking terrain has now become-

especially with the recent developments such as the Treasury Single Account (TSA), inability to lodge cash deposits into domiciliary accounts, irregularity of salary payments to public sector workers among others.

My response to her was that for anyone to survive and be outstanding during this period, we must begin to think of how to add value to our customers. The days are gone when you will just go cap in hand begging for deposits! What value can you add to a customer?

How can you make a customer's business better? How can you make your client more profitable? What's your value proposition? Can you help them become more efficient thereby saving them some money?

Can you introduce a new line of business to them so as to diversify their portfolio and spread their risks? Can you give them timely financial advice so they can prepare ahead?

Recently, I was introduced to a customer that has almost completed a 60-room boutique hotel in a very upscale location. She had built the hotel absolutely debt-free. So many banks were on her for the new business.

The good news is that she has given our bank 100% of the business and signed up for our POS. Do you want to know how? I discovered she knew next to nothing about social media marketing and I suggested advertising her hotel on https://t.co/489ZXHAwFM and Jovago.

I also registered a website domain name for the hotel at a personal cost of 5k. Two things will separate the boys from the men now- and that is excellent service and the value you can add.

5. THE MAJOR CURRENCY FOR TRANSACTIONS IS NOT MONEY- IT'S INTEGRITY

That's an area we must focus on in the South West. There's the need to change the perception of the Region. Attention must be given to honesty in all we do.

With integrity, you have nothing to fear since you have nothing to hide. Don't take a short cut as you will end up cutting short your destiny. Good things will eventually come to those who wait. Don't have excess of everything and be deficit in integrity.

Honesty still remains the very best policy. A life of integrity opens doors- even long after you're gone. Don't cut deals. Life has a way of rewarding everything that has been done-whether good or life of integrity opens doors- even long after you're gone.

Don't cut deals. Life has a way of rewarding everything that has been done-whether good or bad. Live above board and try your best to make your life and dealings transparent.

To everyone I've worked with- Victoria Island Region, Ikeja Region and now South West 1 Region, I remain grateful for the time we spent together.

May God be with you till we meet again.

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Pictures taken during the send forth party
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