

THE CHALLENGE OF FOUR

PRESENTED

BY

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INTRODUCTION

Nigeria is considered a fast-growing country which have almost every type of resources necessary for its success; but for some reasons, we still are facing some huge economic problems in the country. Some of them seems like they can be solved easily while others appear to be tough. But there are no problems that cannot be fixed at all. In this article, we will try to focus our attention on four major challenges as well as proffer practical solutions to these challenges, which are ingredients lacking in our institutions today, including the health, legal, educational and economic institutions as well as government. These ingredients are Leadership, Innovativeness, Teamwork and the Pursuit of Significance beyond mere success.

LEADERSHIP

Leadership is both a research area and a practical skill encompassing the ability of an individual or organization to "lead" or guide other individuals, teams, or entire organizations. U.S. academic environments define leadership as "a process of social influence in which a person can enlist the aid and support of others in the accomplishment of a common task" (Wikipedia, 2019).

Leadership is the ability to lead or the office of a leader and a leader is any individual who can conduct, motivate, who has authority to direct, a chief commander, inspire a group of individuals to bring out the best in them (Emmanuel, 2018).

With that said, let's consider the problems of leadership in Nigeria, some of these problems include:

Incompetent leaders: Most of Nigeria's leaders are incompetent. In other words, most of Nigeria's leaders are incapable of motivating or inspiring Nigerians to get the best out of them. This may be because we have more of rulers and dictators than leaders. More light will be shed on this in the next point.

Rulers and dictators not leaders: most of the so-called leaders in Nigeria aren't leaders but rulers and dictators. Why will someone who calls himself a leader summon a body under the executive

arm of government (DSS) to go and harass people just because they aired their view on his style of leadership or probably because they aren't on the same political party as he is?

Quest for power: One shouldn't be surprised seeing dictator leaders considering the fact that they only see the "commander in chief and authority to direct" definitions of leadership rather than the "ability to inspire and motivate others to bring out the best in them" definitions of leadership. In such a case, they will do anything to acquire such power either by hook or crook.

Dirty politics: In a bid to acquire the perceived power that comes with holding leadership positions, Nigerian leaders will do anything to get this leadership positions and these anything are usually controversial, scandalous and unlawful in nature. Examples are bribing of electoral officials and voters, use of force or threats on electoral officials and voters or even killing their opponents. They don't consider the effects of their action on the people.

Nigerians' view of leadership: Considering the way Nigerian leaders follow in a bid to acquire leadership positions, it shouldn't be surprising that most Nigerians believe that one's hands must be stained in blood if one is to acquire leadership positions.

Learned helplessness: With the view that one's hands must be covered in blood if one is to acquire leadership positions, Nigerians now see themselves as being unable to change the situation of the country rather they try to adjust to such situations. An average Nigerian would tell you that "*they don already know who go win so no stress yourself go vote.*"

Non-participation in leadership: also with such view or idea about leadership and politics, most Nigerians tend to shy or run away from leadership positions.

Poor grass root leadership: nobody is born a leader neither is anyone born a politician rather it is all about exposure. In a country where leadership at the higher levels is being shuffled between individuals who would've retired if they were civil servants then it shouldn't be surprising that no one wants to be a leader at the local government, wards and even the secondary and university levels.

Absence of leadership appointment: One way one can become a leader is by learning how leaders lead and one way to learn how leaders lead is by mingling with leaders, learning firsthand from them and taking leadership positions. When last was a youth (below the age of 30) appointed with an ambassadorial or leadership position? We wonder how they expect youths to become the leaders of tomorrow when they can't practice how to lead today.

Lack of information: This is the ultimate problem of leadership in Nigeria. The saying goes "my people perish because they lack knowledge". The lack of knowledge of not just leadership but also the true meaning of politics in Nigeria has been truly detrimental.

Despite the numerous problems mentioned above, there is still hope for Nigerian leadership. It only needs to take the following remedial measures;

Organizing youth summits: summits, conferences and conventions should be organized for youths to equip them with useful information not just about politics but also about leadership just as the PASSWORD EAGLE is doing by organizing Breakfast summits and other programs to transform the minds of Nigerian youths, who are the practical future of this nation, and help them position themselves for significance and leadership in the future.

Voters' seminars: Nigerians should be informed about the true and proper electoral processes. They should be made to understand that the power to choose a leader is in their hands. This is the duty of the electoral body.

More youthful appointment: more youths should be appointed as special advisers, ambassadors and so on. If they are to gain leadership knowledge that will work then they need to gain such knowledge from experience.

Youth friendly leadership policies: just like the "no third term policy," policies that support the youths should be passed and upheld. Policies like those used in civil service to restrict individuals of certain ages from taking leadership positions should be enforced to avoid recycling of old and aged leaders.

Youthful participation: youths shouldn't just sit out and watch things unfold, rather they should get involved in politics. Youths should make efforts to become leaders and this they can do by taking up leadership positions at various levels. Youths should start by trying to effect changes from the various organizations they belong to as this will prepare them for greater positions.

Leadership opportunities: Beside the government, schools and other non-governmental organizations should also provide youths with the opportunities to lead. Churches should involve youths in almost every committee that are formed in church so that leadership information doesn't pass away with those currently in power.

Leaders not dictators: It would be of no use if the youths coming to power learn from dictators other than leaders. Hence, those currently in power should portray leadership qualities other than dictatorship qualities because if they don't then the youths themselves will end up becoming dictators other than leaders.

Leadership, a means to motivate not dominate: The current leaders should also see leadership not as a means to obtain power rather it should be a means to bring out the best in those they are leading. Leaders should learn to use the resources at their disposal for the 'common good' rather than their own benefits.

Avoid 'do or die' politics: Leaders shouldn't engage in 'do or die' politics, as this will cause them to use the resources attached to leadership positions when they acquire such positions for their own selfish interest. It is very hard to imagine someone who spent all his money, time and energy trying to become a governor not embezzling money when he actually becomes one.

Followership power: Nigerians in general also need to understand, believe and realize that they have not just the right to put someone into power but to also seize power from such a person if he misuses such power. Nigerians need to overcome the spirit of learned helplessness and start making use of their followership power.

INNOVATIVENESS

Innovativeness is defined in so many ways, it can be seen as the production and use of new and economically useful knowledge. It is a personality trait possessed, to a greater or lesser degree, by all members of a society as one's ability to create inventions and change them to innovations as beneficial novelties for users.

A firm's propensity and capability to rapidly incorporate change in business practices through creation and/or adoption of new ideas that add value in the form of increased competitiveness and sustainability. A characteristic relating to how early someone adopts an innovation in comparison to other community members.

Innovativeness which is one of the vital ingredients lacking in our country is a very important issue. People come up with new ideas most times in this country but most of this ideas are not been appreciated but rather discouraged. The Government doesn't encourage people's work and this in many ways have discouraged a lot of people.

Actually, innovation has been one of the major buzzwords in the corporate world in recent years, spreading not only at the corridors of technology hubs and labs, but also corporate institutions in emerging economies like Nigeria.

Global Innovation Index

Unfortunately, in the latest Global Innovation Index which ranks the innovation performance of 128 countries and economies around the world, based on 82 indicators, Nigeria appeared on that index as a country far away from innovation because Nigeria does not invest in Innovation.

In the report, countries like Mauritius, South Africa, Kenya, Rwanda, Mozambique, Botswana, Namibia, and Malawi made the list of top innovative countries in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Mauritius takes the top spot among all economies in the region (53rd), followed by South Africa (54th), Kenya (80th), Rwanda (83rd), Mozambique (84th), Botswana (90th), Namibia (93rd), and Malawi (98th).

Since 2012, Sub-Saharan Africa has counted more countries than any other region among the group of “innovation achievers” – countries that perform better than their level of development would predict. This year, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Rwanda, and Uganda stood out. Better rankings on the indicators for institutions, business sophistication, and knowledge and technology output have allowed the region to catch up to Central and Southern Asia, and to overtake Northern Africa and Western Asia.

Average regional performance shows strengths in the ease of starting a business, ICTs, business-model creation, and relative expenditure on education, with weaknesses in firms conducting global R&D, high-tech exports, the quality of local universities and number of scientific publications. In general, further efforts are required in Human capital, Research and Infrastructure.

So, it is not surprising to see that a country like Nigeria, despite her great potentials, is yet to make investments in innovation; that really shows how the country leads with no future.

Innovation for Economic Growth

Innovation for any country or people does not come by mere wishing it, Innovation is driven by huge investments in research and development, promoting greater entrepreneurship spirit. These are the bedrocks on which prosperous economies are built. It is easy to know where a country or continent is heading to by what they are investing their time and money in today. Nations who are looking at the future invest in research and development, so it becomes easy to understand and see where the future is going with technology.

No wonder countries like the Switzerland, Sweden, United States, the UK, Israel, Finland, Japan, Korea, China, and Germany are among the leading economies around the world. They are also the most innovative countries. They invest in Technology, Innovation and Entrepreneurship through Research and Development. They are investing in Artificial intelligence, Robotics, Aerospace explorations, Nanotechnology, Internet of Things, 3D printing, Human-centered designs, you name it.

TEAMWORK

In any group setting, such as a budget meeting at the office or a potluck dinner with your neighbors, focusing on teamwork helps to ensure that group goals are achieved. Teamwork is an elusive – yet critical – component of a successful government agency. With that in mind, let's discuss teamwork and the positive effect it has on agencies both big and small.

Teamwork typically is built around individuals who work together to achieve a common goal or purpose and who hold themselves accountable for team output.

Building a culture of teamwork should be a priority for government organizations as they strategize mission success. A successful teamwork blueprint:

- Creates synergy, where the sum becomes greater than its parts
- Removes barriers that prevent employee success
- Promotes flatter and leaner structures with less hierarchy
- Encourages cross-departmental interactions
- Fosters flexibility and responsiveness, especially the ability to respond to change
- Promotes the sense of achievement, equity, and camaraderie

Agencies that build a team-oriented culture will more than likely find success in their employees' attitudes, productivity, engagement, and organizational views. One study on organizational quality found that teamwork led to high numbers of employees:

- Believing they could drive operational efficiency
- Possessing a greater awareness of their work environment
- Stating a stronger knowledge of their agency
- Perceiving a better relationship with stakeholders and decision-makers
- Thinking management is more willing to listen to their ideas for improvement
- Enjoying more influence over the decision-making process

Developing a team-oriented office might take a little effort, especially if doing so means changing the culture, but you won't have to implement any expensive initiatives or invest in pricey software to make it happen. According to the *Houston Chronicle*, government agencies at all levels can develop a team-focused approach by:

- *Implementing recognition programs:* Did someone score a big win for the team? Give them a shout-out at the next meeting. This not only makes the employee happy that their work is noticed, but his/her colleagues will be inspired to be more team-centric to get a shout-out!
- *Encourage social activities:* Fun events break down communication barriers and help employees get to know each other at a deeper level. These activities serve to drive engagement, productivity, and even succession, as workers who are connected to each other might think twice about leaving.
- *Outlining clear roles:* Before working in groups, staff members should outline each other's roles and create work schedules and deadlines. This helps to drive accountability and reduce stress, which leads to a healthier team experience.

This is just the start of the journey into teamwork. Organizations should take this information to heart, as well as conduct their own research, in order to design successful initiatives that work for their own staff. That, by itself, is the very definition of teamwork!

STOP CHASING SUCCESS. SEEK SIGNIFICANCE!

"I cannot believe that the purpose of life is to be happy. I think the purpose of life is to be useful, to be responsible, and to be compassionate. It is, above all to matter, to count, to stand for something, to have made some difference that you lived at all." —Leo Rosten

Financial success is a powerful motivator. And it controls the lives of many. It chooses occupations. It dictates how time, energy, and resources are spent. It influences relationships, schedules, and families. To some, it even becomes an all-consuming passion that leaves broken people and morality in its wake.

Unfortunately, it is not the greatest call we have on our lives. In fact, compared to significance, it fades quickly.

Consider the limitations of success:

- Success ebbs and flows with the economy. As recent years have proven, financial success is always at the mercy of a national economy and increasingly, a world economy. When the economy takes a downturn (as it always does), so does net worth.
- Success ends on the day you die. On the day you die, all wealth and possessions will be immediately transferred to someone else. And even if you get to pick where they go, the reality is that person is always someone other than you.
- Success is never enough. Financial success will never satisfy the inmost desires of our soul. No matter the amount of financial success earned, it always leaves us wanting more.

On the other hand, compare the advantages of significance:

- Significance always lasts. Significance will always outlast you. Even when you are no longer present, your significance will still be yours. And nothing can ever take that away from you.
- Significance carries on. Significance keeps on giving. When you positively change the life of another human being... and that person changes the life of another... who impacts the life of another... who influences another...and so on.
- Significance satisfies our soul. While the thirst for success is never quenched, significance satisfies our deepest heart and soul. It allows us to lay our head on our pillow each night confident that we lived a valuable and fulfilling day.

Unfortunately, many people spend most of their lives chasing financial success. And while some achieve it more than others, almost all find it unfulfilling in the end. When they begin to shift their life focus to significance instead of success, they wonder why they wasted most of their life chasing something different.

Don't waste any of your life. Seek significance today.

Here are just a few practical steps to get you started:

1. Realize life won't last forever. Everyone knows that life will come to an end – but no one likes to think about it. That's unfortunate. As soon as you start thinking about the end of your life, you begin to live differently in the present. You are never too young to start thinking about your legacy. How do you want people to remember you? And what do you really want to accomplish before you die?
2. Live a life worth copying. Live with character, integrity, and morality. Your life should look the same in private as it does in public. And while no one is perfect, just begin striving for a life of integrity. It will be noticed.
3. Focus on people, not dollars. Begin to transfer your life's focus from your banking account to the people around you. Rather than worrying about the next get-rich-quick scheme, spend that energy focusing on your child, your neighbor, or the disadvantaged in your community.
4. Start with one solitary person. Find one person who needs you today. Start there. Significance may be as inexpensive as one cup of coffee or as simple as one heartfelt question. If you are unsure where to start, try this, "No, how are you really doing?"
5. Find a career outside your job. Sometimes, our day job leads to significance. But if yours does not, find a "career of significance" outside of your job by volunteering in a local organization. Most likely, your gifts, talents, or expertise are desperately needed. Use your job to pay the bills, but use your "new career" to pay your soul.
6. Realize significance is not dependent upon success. Too many people fall into the trap of thinking, "Once I make it rich, I'll become significant." This is rarely the case. Choose significance today. Begin striving for it now. If, then, financial success comes your way in the future, your mind will be in a better place to truly use your new success for broader significance.
7. Reduce your expenses. Learn to live with less. Living with less frees up your life to invest into others. And living with reduced expenses allows you the freedom to not spend so much time at the office and more resources on others.
8. Read biographies of people who sought significance rather than success. If you prefer recent history, read about Mother Teresa or Nelson Mandela. If you prefer older stories, give

Mahatma Gandhi or Harriet Tubman a shot. Either way, their lives will inspire you to make more of yours.

Rarely do people look back on their lives and savor their professional achievements. Instead, they celebrate the impact they have had in the lives of others. Give yourself much to look back and celebrate. Stop chasing success. Start seeking significance.

When we put all this ingredients in place, Nigeria would become a better place.

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