

# Globethics Repository

The logo for Globethics, featuring the word "Globethics" in white, sans-serif font centered within a solid blue rectangular background.

## Audacity in growing conscientious leaders : role of frontline teams in institutional transformation as vision bearers lead from the back

This page was generated automatically upon download from the Globethics Repository.  
More information on Globethics see <https://www.globethics.net>. Data and content policy  
of Globethics Repository see <https://repository.globethics.net/pages/policy>.

Item Type	Book
Authors	Mulwa, Francis Wambua
Rights	Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International
Download date	2026-07-03 05:03:21
Item License	<a href="http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/">http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/</a>
Link to Item	<a href="http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12424/4093902">http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12424/4093902</a>

# AUDACITY IN GROWING Conscientious LEADERS

*Role of Frontline Teams In Institutional Transformation  
As Vision Bearers Lead From The Back*



**Francis Wambua Mulwa**

**AUDACITY  
IN GROWING  
Conscientious  
LEADERS**

*Role of Frontline Teams In Institutional Transformation  
As Vision Bearers Lead From The Back*



**2<sup>nd</sup> REVISED EDITION**

**FRANCIS WAMBUA MULWA**

## **Other Books and Journals by Francis W. Mulwa**

Mulwa, F. W. 2020 – *Seven Windows to a Blissful Marriage Despite the Spikes. Co-Published/Edited by Reach Publisher. P.O. Box 1384, Wandsbeck, South Africa.*

Mulwa, F. W. 2015 – *Dare Chase That Dream: If You Can Dream It, You Can Make It. (Motivational) Kijabe Printing Press, Nairobi, Kenya.*

Mulwa, F. W. 2010 - *Demystifying Participatory Community Development: Beginning from the People, Ending at the People.* Paulines Publications Africa. Daughters of St. Paul. Nairobi.

Mulwa, F. W. 2009 - *Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation of Community Projects: Community Based Project Monitoring; Qualitative Impact Assessment; and People Friendly Evaluation Methods.* Paulines Publications Africa. Daughters of St. Paul. Nairobi.

Mulwa, F. 1987 (Reprinted 2000) - *Changing the Poor People's Vision of Reality and the Role of the Church. 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition: AMECEA-Gaba Publications, Eldoret.*

### **Journals**

Mulwa F. (2012). *The Practice of Community Development in Kenya: A Contribution to a Debate on the Challenges and Issues for Professionalization of Community Development in South Africa.* Africanus Journal of Development Studies; University of South Africa (UNISA). Vol. 42/2. 2012

Mulwa, F. (1998) - *Paulo Freire's Development Education Methodology* (a 20 year experience), WAJIBU: A Journal of Social and Religious Concern. Vol. 13 No. 2

Mulwa, F. (1988) - *Grassroots Participation In Development.* (Vol.3 No.2 1988). Journal of Social Development In Africa –School of Social Work – University of Zimbabwe.

Mulwa, F. (1988) - *Participation of the Grassroots in Rural Development* (Vol. 8, No. 1; 1988). Coady International Institute Newsletter, St. F.X. University, Canada

*Mulwa, F. (1987) - Participation of the Grassroots in Rural Development* (Vol. 2/3, 1987). Development: Seeds of Change, Journal of the Society for International Development. Global Village 1987:2/3. Geneva (Switzerland)

# **Wisdom Associated With Mother Teresa of Calcutta**

**People may be unreasonable, and self-centred**

**BUT, LOVE THEM ANYWAY**

**If you do good, people will accuse you of selfish motives**

**BUT, DO GOOD ANYWAY**

**If you are successful, you will have few genuine friends,  
And win many false friends and true enemies**

**BUT, SUCCEED ANYWAY**

**The good you do today may be forgotten tomorrow**

**BUT, DO GOOD ANYWAY**

**People with big ideas may be pulled down**

**By others with no ideas**

**BUT, THINK BIG ANYWAY**

**What you spent years building, may be destroyed  
overnight**

**BUT, KEEP BUILDING ANYWAY**

**Some people who need help, may attack you when you  
help**

**BUT, HELP THEM ANYWAY**

**Give the world the best you have; and you'll be kicked  
in the teeth**

**BUT, GIVE THE WORLD THE BEST YOU'VE GOT  
ANYWAY**

**After all, you are not doing it for them**

**IT IS BETWEEN YOU AND YOUR GOD ANYWAY**

**Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi  
(1182 – 1226)**

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.

Where there is hatred, let me bring love.

Where there is offence, let me bring pardon.

Where there is discord, let me bring union.

Where there is error, let me bring truth.

Where there is doubt, let me bring faith.

Where there is despair, let me bring hope.

Where there is darkness, let me bring your light.

Where there is sadness, let me bring joy.

O Master, let me not seek as much  
to be consoled as to console,  
to be understood as to understand,  
to be loved as to love,  
for it is in giving that one receives,  
it is in self-forgetting that one finds,  
it is in pardoning that one is pardoned,  
it is in dying that one is raised to eternal life.

## **DEDICATION**

This book is dedicated to my departed Mother, Mwaitu Josephine Mbenia Mulwa, who passed-on in July 2020 at the age of 92. She will be remembered by the family for her resilience, wittiness and spontaneous sense of humour. Above all, she loved God and sacrificed everything for us. May her soul rest in eternal peace. Amen.

*“A mother is the only person who carries you nine months in her belly, three years in her arms, and forever in her heart”*

*(Source: Yaduwanishi Girl (Sheetal))*

*“A mother is the only person who cannot be your competitor neither can she be jealous of you”*

**Edited and Foreword by  
Professor Peter Mutuku Lewa (PhD)**

Emeritus Professor: United States International  
University (USIU), Nairobi

***Premese Motto: 'Character & Self-Discipline Wins'***

*(Francis Mulwa; Founder Director, Premese Schools &  
Colleges)*

**'If You Can Dream It; You Can Make It' (Francis Mulwa)**

Website: [www.premeseschools.com](http://www.premeseschools.com);  
[www.premeseacademies.co.ke](http://www.premeseacademies.co.ke);  
[www.premesecolleges.ac.ke](http://www.premesecolleges.ac.ke)

**0722 292042**

Copyright © F. W. Mulwa, 2021

**First Reprint 2022**

Printed by: Kijabe Printing Press  
P.O. Box 40 – 00220, Kijabe-Kenya

ISBN: 978-9914-40-068-7

## **PEER REVIEW ON THE BOOK**

The Evaluation Committee of which I am a member read your book and I am glad to tell you that we would love including you amongst our authors. We are impressed by the clarity, accuracy and good editing. It's very important to share the work of new authors who could shine a light on distinct topics like you did.

This is a good material for student-experts public for consideration in different studies and research activities. I would like also to compliment you for the precision in the editing process, your work is very clear and organized, something that is pivotal for every sector-specific book. It is clear that behind your work there is a real knowledge and educational path which led you to writing such great work.

**Francesca Vidali – Editor - Europe Books, UK**

10 Jun 2021; Proposal to publish this book

Congratulations Professor Mulwa for this well-organized hard-earned legacy. Truly, your work speaks for itself across the globe. This book is likely to attract many readers. Am almost concluding but what I have learnt so far it is eye-opening. I will keep it well among many other books you have authored so that my young ones will live to read and get admonished by the work of a person who has inspired my life most. In the coming years, your work will be quoted most in many academic podia across the world. Despite the competition around us, the educational platform and foundation you built in Kenya through your schools and books will remain to be cherished. I sometimes look at what you are doing approaching seventy years of age then it challenges me as a young person. Keep it up Sir, we are strengthened to know we have a shepherd backing us **(J. Chikombe; Educationist)**

“As the country marks golden milestones to celebrate our great leaders, Heroes and Heroines, we in Premese GreenHill School celebrate your efforts, dedication, struggle, selfless passions, hardwork and sacrifices. We know you went through a lot

to establish Premese. May Almighty God bless you and your family with abundance in life and success in your endeavors. You are indeed our Shujaa” **(Premese GreenHill School)**

“Through your writings and testimonies, us young generation, have learnt that we should not let obstacles prevent us from pursuing our dreams and values we have chosen and that we believe in. You are our Hero. Happy Mashujaa Day” **(Premese Makueni Academy Team).**

“Before, if I was asked who a hero was, I would have defined a hero as someone who commits a courageous action without considering the consequences.

But today, after understanding that my dreams are valid through your mentorship, now my definition of a hero is totally different.

A hero is an ordinary individual who finds the strength to persevere and endure the pursuit of a dream inspite of overwhelming obstacles.

Sir, you’re a great person. Happy heroes day our mentor, happy heroes day our director.”

**(From PREMESE Villa Franca Campus, Nairobi)**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**Preface** (By Prof. Lewa Peter Mutuku; PhD) ..... xiii  
**Introduction** (By Prof. Francis Wambua Mulwa; PhD) .. xvi

## **CHAPTER 1: Coaching Front-Line Leadership**

**Teams on Critical Reasoning** ..... 1  
The genesis of leadership from the back ..... 1  
Countering the vulnerability of the masses ..... 4  
Education and intelligence are different ..... 4  
While on critical reasoning ..... 7  
Most difficult question in life is WHY? ..... 8  
Aims of the participatory nature of learning ..... 10  
Psychology of adult learning in training of trainers..... 11  
Centrality of critical reasoning in leadership ..... 15  
Signs manifested by critical thinkers..... 20

## **CHAPTER 2: The Cost of Success..... 29**

About institutional dream killers..... 29  
The cost of innovative servant leadership ..... 31  
Challenges that lie behind the glamour called success .. 34  
True success lies in raising adorable generation..... 37  
Our children will be mighty in the land ..... 41  
Borrowing a leaf from the agility of eagles ..... 44

## **CHAPTER 3: Creation of Leadership Teams..... 47**

Qualities of vibrant frontline teams ..... 52  
Innovation takes courage ..... 53  
What constitutes a team or group ..... 54  
Balancing team power and authority..... 59  
Verifiable trust as the bonding glue for teams ..... 61  
Why work in teams – The need for synergy ..... 64  
Shared leadership happens in teams ..... 65  
Departure from ‘Great Man’ theory of leadership ..... 68  
Obligation of leadership teams in mitigating  
climate change..... 73  
Promotion of Green Economy, trees support human life 74

## **CHAPTER 4: Sharing Leadership Authority With Front-Line Teams ..... 81**

Why lead from the back ..... 81  
Two levels of stakeholder interaction..... 87

Leaders navigate seasons of change with courage .....	90
The niche of Premese educational institutions.....	92
Commonsense habits to be observed by parents at home.....	96
'Enabling Leadership' attained by leading from the back	101
The Principle of Self-Manifestation .....	104
Paths of least resistance make rivers and people crooked	110
Dare to be different by shunning evil.....	113
About Competency Based Curriculum (CBC).....	116
<b>CHAPTER 5: Astute Leaders Radiate Values .....</b>	<b>121</b>
Value systems that galvanize politics and economic power .	121
The etiquettes espoused by astute leaders.....	124
What servant leadership is about.....	126
Bringing 'Hygiene' in the African Politics .....	131
The cynicism of a rich beggar called Africa .....	137
'Prosperity' will seek you out, but only if you do this....	142
Three cardinal virtues of a strong institution.....	145
The relevance of universal education for all.....	154
Practicing civility towards public officers.....	160
<b>CHAPTER 6: Pertinent Observations on Leadership Function.....</b>	<b>165</b>
Keys to becoming a true leader .....	165
What are the leadership and management functions? ...	173
Leadership styles and strategies.....	176
Growing leaders by delegating.....	183
Determining whom to delegate to .....	184
Why and how to delegate effectively .....	187
Why leaders find it difficult to delegate.....	188
How NOT to delegate.....	191
Dealing with fear to delegate .....	192
<b>CHAPTER 7: Managing Non-Threatening Change .....</b>	<b>195</b>
Ushering in positive change in institutions .....	197
Institutional change and leadership .....	202
Levels at which change may take place .....	204

Facilitating a non-threatening social change .....	205
Dealing with fear for change and the resistance .....	207
Planning, initiating and managing change.....	209

**CHAPTER 8: Group Dynamics in Working Through**

<b>Teams.....</b>	<b>215</b>
Taming our ego as team leaders.....	215
Teams and groups are power houses .....	217
What will turn a crowd into a ‘team-group’?.....	218
Five stages of ‘team-group’ life .....	220
Hallmarks of a vibrant group or team.....	223

**CHAPTER 9: Negotiation Skills That Break Barriers . 229**

Scope of the art of negotiation.....	229
Common flaws among negotiators.....	231
Eight imperative qualities of a good negotiator .....	233

**CHAPTER 10: Managing Our Retirement Age ..... 237**

The mistaken notion of ‘retirement’ .....	237
Will colleagues miss you when you retire?.....	241
Preparing for the season of old age.....	243
The hard reality of empty-nest .....	246
Death is still a taboo to talk about, yet a reality .....	249
Major cause of memory lapses after sixty .....	250
Approach your eternity with no regrets .....	252

<b>Conclusion .....</b>	<b>254</b>
-------------------------	------------

<b>Bibliography .....</b>	<b>259</b>
---------------------------	------------

# Preface

**By Prof. Peter Mutuku Lewa (PhD)**

(Emeritus Professor, United States International University)

The main objective of this book is to shed light on the paradigm of Vision Bearers leading from the back, a rather new concept in the discourse on leadership. Using personal life examples and experiences, encounters with people and situations, Francis Mulwa, brings out the key issues in this concept in a 'story telling way'. This certainly makes the book worthy and interesting to read, and is certainly a contribution to the leadership discourse. Each chapter of the book can be treated as a 'standalone'.

The book features a substantive review of various concepts in the paradigm of leadership. This is not done from any one discipline. The author makes reference to perspectives from different disciplines, key speakers, his own life experiences and encounters with key authorities. For example, he quotes from major contributors to modern day ideas on leadership and management and from the Bible. He agrees with other ideas on leadership that leadership itself is a process of influence but builds on the idea that leadership is not always where leaders are found in front of their followers leading them.

At this point you may be thinking that you do not really want to read another book on leadership as there are so many in the market, both Christian and Secular. However, the author wishes to share mostly from the School of Life (School of Hard Knocks) and bring out his own experiences. He does this through a kind of unique story-telling style that helps to drive home some key lessons that apply in life to human beings and especially those in leadership positions.

Many theories of leadership exist. This shows that the leadership concept is vague and complex. There appears to be wide consensus that there is no single theory that describes the "elephant" called leadership. Like the blind men who went to

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

see the elephant, leadership can be described in many ways and from different directions and dimensions. The earliest theory of leadership focused on differing categories of traits or characteristics that explained leadership ability. Dissatisfaction with this trait based theory led to the development of other leadership propositions such as behavioural theories, contingency theories, contemporary theories, strategic leadership theories, new leadership theories which are: charismatic, transformational and visionary leadership, and today we have what are commonly known as emergent theories of leadership which explore behavioural and cognitive complexity as well as social intelligence and how they influence leadership efficacy and effectiveness.

It is not a weakness in leadership to retreat and change tact when it becomes necessary. When General George Stedman of USA Army realised that they were outnumbered by their enemy during the American Civil War, he changed his leadership strategy for survival by appealing to his soldiers: *“Men, I want you to fight vigorously and then run. And as I am a little bit lame, I’m going to start running now”*. (George Stedman, US Army General, During American Civil War (Bryson, 1995).

Engaged leadership, inclusive leadership and servant leadership are some of the emergent leadership theories. These three have much in common. It is within this latter category that the author has attempted to situate the theory of leading from the back. The basic idea in leading from the back is that of allowing followers to exercise their freedom to create and innovate but with the leader keeping an eye on things they have ultimate responsibility over. It challenges followers to move on to a predetermined goal through creation of new and novel ideas and experiments. Encouraging followers from the front may sometimes stifle innovation and creativity. Doing so from the back while keeping a tap on things is the essence of “Leading from The Back”, an important idea in servant leadership.

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

Servant leadership is a relatively new paradigm in leadership theory and practice. Academic discourse is yet to provide an overall conceptual design of servant leadership. Servant leadership is a term that was first proposed by Greenleaf (1904-1990) in one of his record breaking and influential academic works: *Servant is a Leader*. Greenleaf asserted that a *Servant-Leader* must first be a “servant” before any other consideration (Greenleaf, 1977; 2002). Servant leadership starts with the natural sensation that one wants to lead. In the same context, Jesus directed: “The greatest among you will be your servant” (Matthew 23:11).

The Author of this book puts his thoughts down in carefully chosen topics of modern-day interest starting with the need to create teams and making them work; and then handing over the baton to younger leaders; radiating the norms and accepted values of society; key attributes of servant leadership; working teams and group dynamics and finally negotiation dynamics in leadership.

This book lays bare the fundamentals of productive leadership beyond rhetoric through examining the concept of leading from the back, real life experiences connected to this, and emphasises all throughout the content that authentic leadership of people seeks to empower people to enable them assume responsibility as the architects of their own lives.

I found the ideas in the book useful to apply in real life situations and hope when you read it you will gain ‘nuggets’ of wisdom from the author’s own experiences and encounters with other people, situations, and his practices in leading from the back.

**Prof. Peter Mutuku Lewa PhD (UK); MSC (UK); MBA;  
B. Com (Hons) UoN; LLB (London).**

# Introduction

## **No intension to patronise, nor to domestic leaders here**

I am embarking on this bold venture to share my experience on leadership, being fully aware it will be read both by people who are gurus of the art of leadership but also by others who may be amateurs in leadership trajectory. I attained my academic credentials over the odds. That included jumping over many hurdles some of which were not of my own making. The aim of sharing my lived experiences here is to inspire, enlighten and to forewarn on the basis of some of the pitfalls and drawbacks I had to put up with and lessons drawn.

My aim in this book as a writer is not to 'domesticate' or 'patronise' the reader. It is not meant to prescribe to readers who happen to be leaders on how they should conduct themselves in the field or within the institutions they serve. No, not at all. I made many mistakes myself in life, but I believe I was humble enough to accept to draw my lessons with commitment to do better next time. My major aim here is first and foremost to provoke what I may call 'holy anger' after identifying our loopholes in our leadership experience.

This will be achieved by stirring up our conscience, possibly by realising where we could have been doing it wrong as leaders, whether knowingly or unknowingly. After such realization, it is assumed there would be sufficient goodwill to re-engineer our type of leadership towards better and more fulfilling outcomes by acting to adjust any inadequacies towards better practices. This is therefore meant to benefit both the young and the old, both the highly experienced and beginners in the leadership journey. In fact, for those who argue they are too young to lead, I have a word of edification for you.

## **Don't look down upon yourself as a young leader**

I was appointed Deputy Chief Executive Officer (CEO) in a Faith Based Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) at the age of twenty four years. I was promoted to the CEO position

## **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

of the same institution when I was barely thirty years to lead about forty members of staff, almost half of whom were senior to me in age. I tried to resist the appointment at first but it took our most senior boss in the institution to talk to me and reassure me of support of my seniors in institutional hierarchy of leadership.

There was already simmering politics of power jostling especially from the older guards in the team. I desperately needed the assurance from above that I had the full support of my seniors. I was not the kind of a person who would enjoy the game of power rivalry. At this juncture, I got a lot of inspiration from reading the story of King David. At the age of fifteen years David was anointed by Samuel in the midst of his elder brothers to become the King of Judah. Ultimately, he was installed the King of Israel at the age of thirty years after which he ruled Israel for forty years as God was with him (1 Samuel 16).

This also reminds me of St. Paul who chose to mentor the young Timothy as a church deacon. He told him: “Don’t let anyone look down upon you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity” (1 Timothy 4:12). Young man, young woman, if your seniors have identified that gift and talent God has deposited in you for the good of the society, don’t disgrace them by failing to stand up to the honour of their trust in you. Please perform to their expectation. I believe they are sent by God to appoint you regardless of any inadequacies you might see in yourself. Take heart and resolve to do the best that is within your power and ability. Your best will be sufficient.

## **Never contemptuously dismiss humble beginnings**

Initially, I was not serious with education when I was a primary school kid. Not only was I pretty playful as would be expected of any child but was also self-deceiving in the sense that I saw myself as the sole heir of my father’s two ‘Grocery Kiosks’ in the village. This was in spite of the fact that my father had four wives and that I was among the many of his children. I cannot understand how I came to imagine those

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

were to be my shops despite not even being the first born of the family. My eyes began to open wide when at one point, my father rebuked me on the basis of my poor academic performance.

He harshly laid the bare and painful truth to me that by the time I would be clearing with secondary education, he would have nothing left. By then he would have depleted all his savings through fees for the education of his children. The wisest of us are those who would have taken the advantage of the gift of education. That was to be the only inheritance we would gain from him which could not be taken from us by anybody. True to my father's prophecy, not even his 'kiosks' were left standing by the time we cleared from our secondary education. Our school fees consumed all the savings he had. As a result of this awareness, I scored among the top best in Kenya Certificate Secondary Education with A- grade.

After my teacher training college, I had a short stint of service as a school teacher before I was sponsored by a Faith-Based Non-Governmental Development Organisation (NGDO) for further studies in the University of Nairobi. Over the time, the NGDO accorded me many more opportunities for 'on-job' scholarships to study overseas. That's how I ended up acquiring two university Diplomas (from University of Nairobi in Kenya and St. Francis Xavier University in Canada). At that juncture, I approached University of Nairobi for admission into Master's Degree after the equation of my two years of teacher training, the two university diplomas and ten years of working experience. Sadly, they declined.

I ended up getting admissions to pursue my Masters' degrees overseas: MA at the Institute of Social Studies in the Netherlands and MPhil from the University of Reading in United Kingdom. Later I got sponsored by Premese Africa Development Institute, a family business, to pursue my Doctorate (PhD) degree at the University of South Africa (UNISA) in Pretoria. What I was able to achieve at work with those skills and qualifications later earned me the accolade of professorship. The lesson here is that one should never be disappointed nor discouraged even when the fate denies

## **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

you your rightful opportunity to pursue what you deserve to attain in life. Look for other open doors and opportunities and take chance. Don't give up.

I was later hired to serve as CEO for a Pan-African development agency by name Development Education Network (ADEN) based in Harare, Zimbabwe. Here I served for three years, serving fifteen Anglophone countries of Eastern, Western, Central and Southern Africa. After attaining my PhD in 2004, I was hired to lecture in three different Faith-Based Universities in Kenya as different times for a total period of ten years. Finally, at the time of writing this book, I was working as the Founder Executive Director of Premese Educational Institutions since 1992. I was awarded accolades both at County and Regional Levels among the best performing school managers.

### **An exciting idea whose time has come**

Leading from the back is certainly an exciting idea whose time has come. As I continue to read widely and expand my insights on innovative leadership, I have taken to writing to share the excitement with readers who may have time and interest, and particularly with the younger generation of leaders. Leadership is a noble calling that should be respected and handled with the highest honour in deserves. My prayer and declaration is: "Now that I am old and my hair is grey, don't leave me, God. I must tell the next generation about your power and greatness. Lord, your goodness reaches far above the skies. You have done wonderful things. God, there is no one like you" Psalm 71:18-19.

### **The writer's style of presentation**

In this book, I choose to draw heavily from the word of God in my reflections about critical matters of life. Another significant feature yet again in my style of writing is story telling. The stories I narrate here are relevant as they are meant to drive home a fact or vital lesson that I intend to communicate in that particular instance. It is also part of African tradition to pass on vital informal education to young generations by narrating to them meaningful stories backed up with idioms

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

and proverbs. Stories are also told in counselling sessions for generations to correct people who may be wrong without appearing to attack or condemn them. Look at the story told by Prophet Nathan to King David that was meant to correct the King by bringing him to repentance from his abominable act. He had orchestrated the death of Uriah, his faithful soldier, in order to possess his wife Bathsheba.

Thus, oral traditions are messages that are transmitted orally from one generation to another. The messages may be passed down through speech, song, drama, folktales, riddles, proverbs or sayings. Oral traditions make it possible for a society to pass knowledge across generations without writing. They help people make sense of the world and are used to teach children and adults about important aspects of their culture and life as a whole (Source: World Affairs Council of Houston).

Let's conclude with the following brilliant quotations:

*"It is only those with clear sense of direction in life who will propel with amazing momentum to achieve amazing results. But you cannot attain your goals unless you love your work" (Gathirwa Ndaigiri).*

*"To succeed, you must do whatever you do so well that neither the living nor the dead and the unborn could do it better" (Martin Luther King Jr.).*

*"The greatest tragedy in life is not death, but what dies in you while you are alive" (Norman Cousins).*

*"When a man has done what he considers to be his duty to his people and his country, he can rest in peace. I believe I have made that effort and that is therefore, why I will sleep for the eternity" (Nelson Mandela). He died ten years later after this statement.*

*"The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams" (Eleanor Roosevelt).*

**Professor Francis Wambua Mulwa (PhD-UNISA)**  
**Founder Director, Premese Educational Institutions**

# CHAPTER 1



## **Coaching Front-Line Leadership Teams on Critical Reasoning**

*“True education is what remains when you have long forgotten what you learnt in school” (Albert Einstein).*

*“Imagination is more superior to knowledge” (Albert Einstein).*

### **The genesis of leadership from the back**

To contextualize the genesis of leadership through frontline teams as vision bearers lead from the back, we have extensively used the case study of Moses of the Bible and the counsel from Jethro, his father in law (Exodus 18:15-22). Jethro admonished Moses to form leadership teams at various levels of the twelve tribes of Israel. To these, he was to devolve leadership responsibilities. They were assigned to arbitrate cases but bring to Moses only the challenging ones which they could not handle. To enable efficacy of this management arrangement, he had two major functions to accomplish:

- He had to facilitate the election or and appointment of credible frontline leaders of integrity and
- He had to train them on the decrees and commandments of God. These are the people who were to assist him govern the tribes of Israel.

That marks the genesis of the concept and practice of leading from the back. Another generation that became

## **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

fierce proponents of this style of leadership included Nelson Mandela and Mahatma Gandhi. At one point during the struggle for India's independence from British rule, Mahatma Gandhi was quoted to have told the British rulers off saying: "There my people go, and I must follow them, because I am their leader!" This was when they accused him of leading a rebellion. He told them, on the contrary, he was 'following' his people because he had an obligation to do so as their leader.

In a past edition of Time Magazine (2021), it is reported that Nelson Mandela was asked as he turned 90 years of age to share his leadership lessons that he could draw from his life. Among the things Nelson Mandela said was that a great leader is a shepherd who stays behind the flock, letting the most agile and alert managers to go ahead to manage from the front as innovative leader leads from the back. Mandela concludes that, soon the people come to realise that all along, they were being directed from the back by a courageous 'shepherd'.

Mandela continues to observe that courage is not the absence of fear. It is inspiring others to move beyond their fears, because the unknown can be scary. Many times a leader may be scared beyond imagination, but according to Mandela, you don't show that to the people you lead. When danger comes knocking, that's when the vision bearer temporarily takes over to lead from the front as it becomes necessary to represent confidence and optimism to the people. You cannot betray yourself to the people you lead even when you know you are trembling from within. You must fight courageously against the enemy as you keep your base supporters close to you.

*"Remember, while you are busy doubting yourself, someone else is admiring and marveling at your strength" (Kristen Butter)*

According to Mandela, we need to lead from the back and let others believe they are in front. Traditionally, an African chief's job was not to tell people what to do but to form a consensus. He wouldn't enter the debate too early until

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

people have exhausted their views then add his views as he summarises people's views. He goes ahead to reconstruct what may need to be reconsidered and puts it into its proper perspective.

Mandela advises leaders to unify their supporters as they identify and understand their opponents. It is only when leaders understand their opponents that they can speak their opponent's language as they formulate strategies to win them over. However, Mandela cautions that, no matter how much loyal people may appear to be, they will most likely act at their own interests. Don't ever blame them as it is only human to do so. With time and training, that egocentric attitude is managed to tolerable levels sufficient to cooperate and support teamwork.

In life, things are never as straightforward as they may appear. Sometimes quitting is a way of leading too. The key to authentic leadership is knowing when it is time to step down and let others lead. Knowing when and how to abandon a failed idea, task, relationship, or when to retire honourably is a sign of wisdom and greatness. In the history of Africa there has been but few statesmen that are known to have jolted out of power peacefully when it was time to step down. These were the likes of Julius Nyerere, Kenneth Kaunda and Nelson Mandela among others.

In leading from the back however, roles have to be collectively discussed and clarified. Train frontline teams enough to enable them develop the agility, ability and courage to assume some of the roles previously played by vision bearers. The roles of the conscientious generation of leaders should of necessity embrace becoming agents of people's empowerment.

Meanwhile, loyal frontline teams constantly keep close contact with the institutional vision bearers. Any members of frontline teams who do not meet these expectations should be purged out of the formation and replaced immediately before they retard an institution. That includes those who wait to be supervised and directed from above as opposed to being dynamic self-led and self-motivated team actors.

## **Countering the vulnerability of the masses**

When it comes to universal suffrage, the electorates largely go for the corrupt leaders who are not only willing to bribe them to get their votes but also aspirants who vainly promise to penetrate their way through the government systems to attract benefits to the electorate in future. We cannot entirely blame the gullible electorates for this state of affairs. Their life of abject poverty cries out for survival through the shortest means possible. That translates to accepting trivial handouts from politicians hunting for their votes.

Their state of economic vulnerability is usually so dire it cries for socio-economic security through paternalistic relationships with leaders they elect. This, coupled with high levels of gullibility and naivety, the electorates are misled to elect men and women who lack sufficient credibility. That caliber of leadership of integrity is mainly identified and engaged by institutional authorities who cherish leadership of accountability. That's why from time to time, government authorities form interview panels to hire for strategic leadership positions instead of putting the same to public voting.

## **Education and intelligence are different**

Albert Einstein is one of the most radical philosophers and perhaps also the most controversial scientist who ever lived in this planet. Many of his views defied established assumptions of his time. For instance, he triggered a radical debate after he emphatically advanced the conviction that intelligence and education are different. He argued that intelligence is more superior to education. But he also believed, when education meets with intelligence, then geniuses begin to emerge (Albert Einstein, German Physicist, 1879-1955). This truth can be illustrated by the two examples below:

An elderly, semiliterate mentor of 96 years once gave an intelligible analogy that helped to simplify the reality of the Holy Trinity (God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit). In layman's language, he likened the Trinity to the

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

three vital inputs that keep cellphones operational. For a cellphone to be useful to the owner, it must possess three vital inputs: Air Credit, Electric Charge and presence of Network. If any of these goes missing, then the handset is grounded. The three are inseparable. I found this analogy intelligent in spite of being advanced by a person who didn't have that much formal education.

Yet another illustration to justify Einstein's theory that intelligence is not necessarily equal to education is told of an automobile engineer who could not drive out his new most expensive product of a car out of the garage where it had been manufactured. The final product defied the specifications of the exit door. The car rooftop turned out to be higher than the exit door. The Engineer had only two options according to him: Either to slash down the car's rooftop and reconstruct it all over again or to cut out and open up the top of the exit door to enable him drive out the car.

However, before he could execute any of his two options, a watchman in the plant compound came around and after studying the situation, he came up with another idea. He told the Plant Engineer, "Sir, this car rooftop is only few inches higher than the garage door. Just deflate the four tyres and that will reduce the height of the car sufficiently to drive it out". That's exactly what the Engineer did, and to protect the flat tyres, he mobilized a few workers to manually push the car out of the garage. Intelligence and education are two different qualities but we need both in life, or better still, we need to be complemented by other human beings in order to be complete, regardless of social status. Humanity is always greater than any status.

Intelligence is the ability to solve a new problem. It is the mental capacity to think, create, visualise and pursue new possibilities with determination and unprecedented conviction. That is what enables one to invent and attain new scientific breakthroughs even without what we call formal education. According to Einstein, intellect is what remains when what you learnt in school is long forgotten. He cites

## **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

scientists in the likes of Isaac Newton, Galileo Galilei and Archimedes as examples of scientists who never had academic diplomas or degrees but invented scientific truths which govern and shape academic and industrial world today.

In this regard, Einstein is reported to have asked a very fundamental question: ‘Who educated the first person to be conferred a degree?’ It cannot have been a graduate teacher in any field since the candidate was the first person to earn such a qualification, perhaps by recognition of his or her achievements from his natural intelligence and not on the basis of what he or she had read in school.

There were no doctors and professors then besides the new graduate other than himself. He later conferred those who took after him or her. Many educated people may brag of their high levels of education, but may lack intellect. Others may have intellect but lack education. Woe unto those who only have education but lack intellect. It is such radical realization that jacks us out of our comfort seats with excitement to search for more hidden treasures of knowledge in life.

### **Train your intellect and attitude**

According to Steve Harvey, what we can achieve or can’t achieve in life depends on our self-perception and our perception of the world and circumstances around us. Harvey drives this fact home cleverly with an analogy comparing attitudes of a lion and that of an elephant. He argues that while an elephant is bigger, stronger, wiser, and even taller than a lion, it will always run away from such a small cat. Why?

The reason has to do with self-perception here. While a lion sees ‘lunch’ in an elephant, the elephant perceives itself as food for the lion and therefore must run for its life. That’s why lions are said to be the only predators powerful enough to kill an elephant. In some isolated cases though, where the elephant’s self-perception momentarily changes, it attacks a lion viciously. But in most cases, lions are the aggressors hunting for food. To succeed, a lion must cling on the perception of a ‘lunch’ as opposed to a danger. That’s an

## **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

attitude of critical thinkers who know what they want in life and how to get it regardless of their circumstance.

*“If your goal is for one year, plant maize... If your goal is for ten years, then plant a tree.... But if your goal is for a life time, invest in training people!” (a Chinese adage)”*

Similarly, leaders’ choice of action in response to challenging situations is dictated by their perception of self and the perception of the world around them. They will either choose to courageously confront challenging situations head-on (of course in solidarity with other people of good will) or ship-out altogether. The aim of this chapter is to instill positive self-perception among the emerging front-line teams towards taking control of their circumstances. They determine what happens around them as the architects of their own destiny. They are the catalysts of transformation of the lives of people around them.

### **While on critical reasoning**

*Ezra and Thomas joined a company together a few months after graduation from the university. After few years of work, their manager promoted Ezra to a position of Senior Sales Manager. But Thomas remained in his entry level of Junior Sales Officer position. Thomas developed a sense of jealousy. He was disgruntled but continued working anyway. One day Thomas felt that he could not work with Ezra anymore. He wrote his resignation letter, but before he submitted it to the Manager, he complained that Management did not value hard working staff, but only promoted the favoured. The Manager knew that Ezra worked very hard for the years he had spent at the company; much harder than Thomas and therefore he deserved the promotion. So, in order to help Thomas understand this, the Manager gave Thomas a task.*

*‘Go and find out if anyone is selling water melon in town’. Thomas returned and said, ‘Yes there is someone’. The Manager asked, ‘How much per Kilogram?’ Thomas drove back to town to ask and then returned to inform the Manager; ‘They are Ksh. 13.50 per Kg.’*

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

*The Manager told Thomas: 'I will give Ezra the same task that I gave you. Please pay close attention to his response!' So, the Manager said to Ezra, in the presence of Thomas; 'Go and find out if anyone is selling water melons in town'. Ezra went to find out and on return: 'Manager, there is only one person selling water melons in the whole town. The cost is Ksh.49 each water melon and Ksh.32.50 for a half melon. He sells them at Ksh.13.50 per Kg. when sliced. He has in his stock 93 melons, each one weighing 7Kg. He has a farm and can supply us with melons for the next four months at a rate of 102 melons per day at Ksh.27 per melon, and this includes delivery. The melons appear fresh and red with good quality, and they taste better than the ones we sold last year.*

*He has his own slicing machine and is willing to slice for us free of charge. We need to strike a deal with him before 10am tomorrow and we will be surer of beating last year's profits with this deal as we will be likely to shoot above our sales target this year. I have all this information in soft copy and I can send you an email within the next fifteen minutes.*

This shocked Thomas to the extent of becoming completely tongue tied. He realised the difference between himself and Ezra. He decided not to resign but to understudy and learn from Ezra. That's the essence of going extra mile. Normally in life, you are not rewarded for doing what you are supposed to do. You only get a salary for that! You are only rewarded for going extra mile, for performing extraordinarily well, beyond expectations, beyond the call of duty. This only happens by being more thoughtful, more creative and more innovative. That's not rocket science, it is within your ability to do so *(This story has been in circulation on social media for years and still makes sense today).*

### **Most difficult question in life is WHY?**

In my solemn moments of reflection about life, I see a new world in the horizon. This is a new world that mirrors what we expect to see at the end of time. We often find ourselves living a life that is near bankruptcy on the moral front. Yet, in spite of this reality, many in our populations have resolved to live a positive life that sees the good in every reality. They

## **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

also seek for solutions out of whatever in life is undesirable. The days we live in are evil, no, sorry, it is not the days that are evil, but it is us, some sections of the human community, that have increasingly chosen to be evil.

*“Your greatness is measured by your kindness (how you treat ordinary people); your education is measured by your humility; while your ignorance is betrayed by your arrogance, suspicions and prejudices; and your real caliber is measured by the tolerance, priorities and forgiveness you extend to others” (From Pearls of Wisdom).*

The best way to resolve challenging situations in our lives is to apply our critical faculty by asking ‘Why?’ This is famed to be the most disturbing question in social inquiry. In fact, some social research schools of thought recommend to avoid it at all cost. The reason is that it challenges assumptions thus inviting serious critical reflection. Many respondents don’t like such question. They see it as a direct attack.

However, this is the right question(s) to dig deep in to the bottom of any matter at hand. It challenges superficiality and myths. Once the facts about the root causes of a problem are established through such a question, the solution will be at hand. You will know you are dealing with a critical mind when you are in dialogue with somebody who doesn’t accept simple answers but keeps on raising crazy, intriguing and inquisitive questions instead.

Other critical minds would request to be granted time to think over a matter at hand or “sleep over” it. That’s usually a charming strategy that raises anxiety, provoking deeper analysis. Later the critical mind comes up with new insights over the matter at hand. They would have reflected deeper and consulted wider by the time you meet again.

That’s the essence of “sleeping over it”. The outcome will usually be a hybrid of ideas or even a more superior idea founded on wide dialogue going forward stimulated by critical reflections. That’s what wisdom is all about. Ability to build on experiences that stimulate fall back on hindsight, in order to draw insights, followed by foresight to come up with practical

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

solutions for any problem at hand. The need for wide dialogue and consultations is rooted in the conviction that wise people learn from experience, but the wisest of people learn from the experience of others.

All this should take place in an environment of participatory learning or one-on-one critical dialogue among equals. Such learning environment will only be created through certain provisions. Participants in such learning environment and dialogue must value and respect each other as people, in order for them to appreciate and value each other's views and ideas. That only exists where there is total trust which removes fear. People can't risk their ideas unless they are assured of total acceptability. If a participant senses mistrust or devaluation of their views, they will shut up or dropout all together.

Yet, trust cannot thrive where there is no love. It only thrives where there exists equanimity, a condition where no one considers oneself as lesser or greater than the other parties engaged. Stakeholders must see themselves as equals regardless of differences in social status. That is rare though. Many modern societies and communities are glaringly divided along social, tribal, educational, political, religious and family lines.

### **Aims of the participatory nature of learning**

These are threefold as follows:

- To equip the trainees with the necessary attitudes, skills and knowledge (ASK) that enable trainees perform their work dutifully.
- To enable trainers and facilitators develop appropriate capacity building attitudes, skills and knowledge (ASK) that will enable them transform the world of teaching and learning which is learner centered as opposed to trainer-teacher centered.
- The third extremely important aim of participatory learning is to stimulate critical thinking. Critical thinking

## **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

is key for any leader without which many things continue to go wrong out of assumptions. Critical thinking begins with creation of doubts or hypothesis.

### **Too busy idling with pass-time engagements**

Unfortunately, many institutional staff happen to be busy browsing their handsets or computer entertainment sites in their offices instead of working on their set institutional goals. The initial staff reaction when such doubts are raised by management will be “Don’t you trust us? Don’t you trust your staff?” When deadlines are not met, excuses start flowing: computer broke down, internet was down, or there was an emergency to attend to and such like excuses. If the trainer or supervisor falls short of critical thinking, he or she will not raise doubts on these excuses and therefore the whole organization continues to suffer. Raising doubts and appropriate questions gives supervisory officers an opportunity for further investigation. That’s when critical reasoning becomes the pillar of effective capacity building in institutional management.

### **Psychology of adult learning in training of trainers**

It is of utmost importance for a trainer to seek to understand the characteristics of adult learners and their learning challenges before mounting a training activity for them. The purpose of this section is to help trainers of adults identify the factors that motivate an adult to learn with ease and at his or her convenience. Trainers of adults should be familiar with these factors to enable them design appropriate training methods and appropriate learning activities for their participants. Remember, adult learners are voluntary participants that cannot be coerced to attend learning sessions.

### **Adults learn best when**

- The facilitator is not boring but interactive.
- There is group discussion.

### THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS

- The learning environment is conducive - without interruptions, good room ventilation and lighting, good room temperature; enough sitting space without overcrowding, etc.
- When the subject covered is challenging and relevant to their needs.
- There are both practical and theoretical inputs.
- The learning accommodates or provides new ideas.
- They feel recognised.

### **The key principles of adult learning**

- **Immediacy in application:** Adults have immediate decisions to make and problems to solve for which they are looking for answers when they are learning. When they do go to learn, adults are seeking opportunities to make informed decisions and solve particular problems. Make training activities focus on specific needs or problems confronting participants in real life. Hence, training needs assessment (TNA) is crucial in adult learning. Where prior TNA is not possible, at least learning expectations should be brainstormed at the start of a training activity. Unlike children, adults learn in order to implement the newly acquired knowledge immediately. Hence, adult learning should be change oriented with immediate perspective. As adults are motivated to learn by specific personal or collective need, adult learning curriculum should therefore be oriented to problem solving.
- **Experience oriented:** Adults carry with them a reservoir of knowledge from which learning can be based. Opportunity should therefore be created for experience sharing among adult learners, with occasional inputs from facilitator. For this reason, encourage dialogue and group discussions.
- **Adults have some amount of pride and a high sense of self respect:** Adults like to think of themselves as independent (even when sometimes they are not). This is healthy. Encourage self-direction, self-judgement, and responsibility. Any programmes planned for adults should

### THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS

seek to build on this sense of self-respect. Handling adult learners with disrespect is the surest way to make them drop out of a programme, no matter how beneficial it is meant to be to them.

- **Adults are voluntary learners:** They cannot be coerced into learning. Hence, they should only learn when they are ready to, and at their own chosen pace.
- **As adults grow old, some of their body limbs and organs begin to lose agility.** They lose their speed of learning and reaction. Some of their key body organs vital to learning begin to fail. Their memory sometimes begins to slow down; they lose a measure of their sight, and sometime become hard of hearing. That is why an adult educator is required to identify these impairments and begin to give appropriate support to those who need it. He or she may have to begin to speak to them more slowly and repeatedly. Some learners would need hearing devices and spectacles while those who cannot afford these may be assisted by sitting closer to the speaker and nearer to the chalk board.

### **Other attributes of adult learners**

*Adults hear to know, they see to understand, they experience to believe and they discover to remember! (Source: PREMESE Working Papers 2001)*

- **Adults have relatively large bodies subject to the stress of gravitational pull.**

Most adults experience discomfort when they sit for too long on hard chairs. Their limbs are ageing and bones wearing out. Avoid use of chairs that are too short, too high or too narrow. Provide regular breaks and energising exercises.

- ◆ **Adults are self-directed and can be assertive**

They have strong tastes some which might be in conflict with group interests. Their interests may also keep changing significantly. For this reason, group norms at the beginning of a training event may be necessary, specifying

### THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS

the DOs and DONTs. These should be collectively developed.

- **Adults have fixed attitudes towards authority**

Some hate it others bow to it, while some relate to it as a resource. Others just let it pass. Allow adults to become their own authority, but with both individual and collective responsibility.

- **Adults have a great many preoccupations outside of a particular learning situation**

Keeping focused is a really hard effort. Adults have other commitments, worries and anxieties. Their involvement will depend on how close the trainer comes to their expectations in content and approach. Keep them attracted and keep the learning process itself interesting.

- **Adults are temperamental**

Adults will choose whatever behaviour will suit the situation at the time without hesitation. They will choose whether hostility, helplessness, aggressiveness, passiveness, defensiveness or openness will suit the situation.

- **Adults need a vacation**

Effective training should accommodate this, with short breaks between sessions, a day off for shopping within the week, field trips (learning and 'holiday'), etc.

- **Adults are secretly afraid of failing and being replaced**

Allow them to keep and glow with confidence. Never ridicule, demean or in any way hold an adult with contempt. They will hate you 'forever'.

- **Adults have gone through tribulations**

Adults have children to worry about, families to feed, lost jobs, lost parents, dashed ideals and hopes, bodies that are less effective, retirement that is at close hand, lost mates and friends, etc. Effective training environments will go beyond helping adults to cope, they will help them to learn to live again.

**THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

• **Adults are people who have ideas to contribute**

Effective authors are those that leave room for those ideas to be added here.....

**Centrality of critical reasoning in leadership**

I believe it is only people who can stop and question situations who would quickly climb up the ladder of management positions. Without practicing active critical thinking, you fall back to the level of ordinary persons who cannot be trusted with promotions by their employers. They tend to live by myths and assumptions. This is not because they are unable to think innovatively, but because they choose not to practice their gift of imagination and creative thinking.

I have a friend who would repeatedly accuse particular hardworking people of making money through devil worship. These are people known to succeed in their business engagements out of daring investment decisions. They take huge risks but they succeed. That's why I strongly believe the best practitioners of the gift of faith are investors and farmers who spend colossal amounts of resources to prepare for new crops with expectation that all will be well. Yet, they are fully aware rains may fail, locusts may descend on their crops and all kinds of crop diseases may strike besides other kinds of calamities that may strike to bring down all their efforts and investments to naught. Yet he still goes ahead to plant the crops and invest in farm inputs and cost of labour and machinery by faith. Business investors take similar risks. These are all people who walk by faith and not necessarily by sight. And when they succeed, idlers and timid people of little faith begin to label them devil worshippers.

My friend argues that these immensely successful business people cannot be making such good amounts of money unless they were devil worshippers. Going by this kind of perspective, one may conclude that there are 'giant' devil worshippers in Nairobi where to there are extraordinarily big skyscrapers and mansions. The good news is that those who practice logical thinking and critical reasoning exonerate such hard-working persons from those accusations. Logical

## **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

thinking and critical reasoning is a skill that can be acquired, practiced and developed over time.

### **Differences in perception lead to conflicts**

Conflict can be defined as the incompatibility of goals between parties. Conflict occurs when the objectives, goals, values, or needs of individuals or groups clash, sometimes resulting in aggression and violence. There is difference between conflict and competition. Although competition is often confused with conflict, there are important differences between the two concepts. Even though many forms of competition contain the seed for potential conflict, it is not one and the same thing. However conflict and competition have a common root in the sense that in each case conflicting individuals or groups are usually striving over scarce resources or opportunities. They act against each other compelled by a strong desire to overdo each other.

In intragroup competition for instance, individual group members working towards the same goal, have 'rules' (formal and informal guidelines) that limit what they can do and they cannot do to each other in attempting to reach their goals. In athletic events for instance, there are clear rules of competition with clear boundaries of behavior.

There are different perspectives on conflict. Some will see conflicts as fights and disagreements while others may perceive conflict as embracing differences in opinion, perception or simply personality differences. For instance, a letter 'W' written on a piece of paper and placed at the middle of a group standing in a circle would attract different interpretations on what it represents depending on from what physical position one is looking at it. Some will see a 'W', others an 'M' while others will see a number '3' and an 'E'. No wonder they say, perception is a reality to the perceiver. But we need to understand other people's perceptions as well in order to make our perception more universal.

**THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

***What do you see in the image below? Some people will see an old woman's face at her 90's, while others will only see a young girl's face at her 20's. Which of the two do you see? Can you see both?***



**Source of image: Internet - 20<sup>th</sup> October, 2017**

**THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

***Do you see the two animals represented in this image below? Some people will immediately see the head of a horse while others can only see a frog. What do you see?***



*David's brothers saw a shepherd but God saw a brave King of Israel.  
Allow God to define you and not people*

**Critical reasoning abhors negative competition**

Negative competition, which appears to tear down the society at all levels of existence, seems to stem from the roots of our education system. Right from primary grade one (and even earlier than that in play groups), we are socialized to believe that all what education is about is to be better or to outshine other people. There seems to be an attitude inculcated in our little minds at such a young age that for my lantern to shine, the flame of my neighbour's lantern must switch-off. That kind of value system assumes that our lanterns cannot glow together. Needless to say, that is totally wrong teaching. We can shine and develop together to the glory of our Creator.

## **‘What number were you’?**

Have you ever stopped to ask yourself why every parent is anxious to know what number his or her child was in class exams at the close of each school’s term? Why do we have to subject our beloved children to such a stressful question: ‘What number were you in class?’ On the other hand, do we have to subject ourselves to the humiliating reality when we get a sincere answer to the effect that our son or daughter was second last in his or her class? It is not a guarantee he or she will rank amongst those highly coveted and competitive numbers one to three.

And yet, in a class of forty pupils, there will have to be the first and the last on the merit list. It is not likely for all the pupils to tie up in the first position. Come to think of it, have you ever wondered why nearly all grownups who have been to school brag to have dominated number one throughout all classes? They are lucky there is no way we can find out the truth about that. They are also lucky their trusting children do not put them to task about the claim.

Does it therefore realistically follow that the last pupil on the merit list is the dullest in the class or that the first is the most intelligent? Not necessarily. Take for instance the pass mark is 50% and it happens that the first pupil on the merit list in a class of 40 pupils scores 98% and the last 75%. In this case, it would be absolutely unfair and wrong to brand the last pupil on the merit list a dull chap. Clearly, he is an equally brilliant pupil despite having ‘tailed’ the class. It only happens the entire class is made up of ‘sharp-shooter’ geniuses. The best each of the students could do more realistically is to compete with self by setting personal targets of scores they wished to attain in each futures examination. This can be done with determination to post better scores than the previous, without bothering to compete for comparative ranking positions in the class.

The point I am trying to make from the foregoing analogy is that we should as much as possible avoid the unnecessary stress that comes from comparing ourselves with others. Remember

## **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

there will always be people better than you, smarter than you, more intelligent than you and more successful than you. Yet, in the same vein, there will always be people who are less smart, less intelligent, and less successful as compared to you. It doesn't make sense therefore to have sleepless nights competing with others who might naturally be better gifted and endowed than you in some ways while you are gifted too but in other deferent ways. Remember the saying: "If you judge fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its entire life believing it's a fool because it will never be able to climb a tree".

Little wonder therefore the culture of negative competition is planted and perpetuated in the society by our education system. That's one of the inadequacies the new Competency Based Curriculum (CBC) system of education recently introduced in Kenya is determined to address. One strategy they will employ is to reduce or abolish some of the summative national evaluation examinations and instead substitute them with continuous internal formative class assessments.

### **Signs manifested by critical thinkers**

According to Martha Stewart (*Martha Stewart, Strong Women Quotes*), people with the potential to perfect critical thinking tend to exhibit certain traits that are common to their category. For instance, critical thinkers are known to possess open mind. That is, they are open and receptive to all kinds of ideas and arguments even those they may disagree with. They will have the guts and patience to listen to everybody as long as they have time for that. They usually reserve judgment on a message until they have examined the claims, logic, reasoning, and evidence presented. They know, while the message may not necessarily be flawed or wrong, they themselves could err in their thinking and judgement and therefore they try to be open minded.

Talking about misconceptions, there was an interesting episode I came across recently that demonstrated this argument vividly. A Pastor in a Zambian church decided to play a supposedly 'worldly' song in the middle of his Sunday

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

service sermon. The song is entitled 'Muzina' composed and sang by the late soloist Tabu Ley Rochereau. The congregation was thrown into great confusion as this was a popular song in bars and entertainment joints.

What mesmerised the congregation even the more was the fact that their Pastor was not only playing a secular music in church but was also dancing to its tune. Obviously, the congregation started judging him as having backslidden. Many were preparing to leave the church service in protest. However, after translating the message of the song from Lingala to English, it turned out that the lyric was actually a hymn that glorified God. The whole congregation took to their feet and joined the Pastor in dancing to the tune.

Another case in point challenging assumptions is a true story told of a beautiful church-going woman whom Pastor suspected she was after him. She used to sit at the back bench of the church hall but suddenly, she changed her sitting location to the front bench donning a short skirt. She also began pouring a lot of perfume on her skin and especially on the face. This made the Pastor confirm his suspicion about her intention to get him by all means. He kept watching the lady's body language with keen interest. Suddenly the lady stopped attending Sunday services. That made the Pastor make his conclusions. Now that she didn't succeed in her intensions, she finally abandoned the church.

One evening as he drove home from the church past her residence, he saw a smartly dressed gentleman with a briefcase emerging out of the lady's house which was next to the road. That made the Pastor conclude this lady was surely immoral. No wonder rich men are frequenting her house day in day out. She needs God's mercy for repentance. But few weeks later, the Pastor learnt the lady had died. Why?

The lady had skin cancer which sickness Pastor didn't know. That's the reason she had suddenly dropped attending church services. The gentleman who frequented her house was her doctor. The heavy powder she applied on her skin was not

## **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

perfume as Pastor had assumed. This was her medication prescribed by her dermatologist! She could no longer put on long dresses either but only short skirts owing to her skin condition. The cancer had reduced her hearing capacity and that's why she had changed her sitting position from the back bench to the front. The Pastor felt very guilty and sorry for his misunderstanding when he heard all this during her burial. He confessed his sin in public as he broke down in tears begging for forgiveness.

Critical thinkers remain open to the possibility of changing their view when presented with evidence that supports an argument. In this context, they tend to consult widely with the understanding that other people may hold vital information which may be of great importance for consideration in their final decision making. However, in the process of consulting, they ensure confidential information is kept classified until it becomes necessary to share with a wider circle without the possibility of exposing self to premature betrayal or sabotage.

*'Don't allow the pain in your heart make you cry on every shoulder. Some shoulders are public address systems' (Rev. Lucy Natasha)*

Critical thinkers dissect messages and review each segment of information critically in the light of sound logic and sound reasoning. Critical thinkers avoid jumping into quick conclusions. They take time to systematically examine a message. Critical thinkers are curious by nature. They want to know what is going on around them or the hidden meaning in a message. They are ready to go to any length to learn more about an issue. They are prudent in making judgments and acting on their decisions. They keep reviewing their position regularly as new information emerges. Critical thinkers want to learn more and know more as they do more. The bottom line here is: critical thinkers don't jump on the bandwagon of popular thought or common action.

Critical thinkers are hungry for the truth about issues and situations that concern them. They stand on sound ethical foundations. They understand that truth may not be in black

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

and white but can also be found in the grey areas. They also believe no one person has the monopoly of that truth of knowledge. Each one has a responsibility to search for one's own truth which eventually becomes our collective truth if we can buy it. Critical minds know that even the wisest of people can at times be wrong. Truth is not cast in stone. Hence, critical thinkers have faith in the power of logic and sound reasoning. At the same time, they value letting others draw their own conclusions as long as they are willing to deal with the consequences of their decisions.

*The Truth is like a lion, you don't have to defend it, release it and it will defend itself (St. Augustine)*

Trainers are innovators and critical thinkers. They will always seek to provoke their trainees to think critically, to think out of the box, and break from the confines of routine. Some basic questions have been suggested, and actually effectively used, to guide teams to begin practicing critical reasoning. This kind of critical analysis is closely associated with the tradition of Young Christian Students (YCS), a Catholic youth wing in institutions of higher learning and tertiary colleges. They are trained to discuss issues and situations with a guide called: SEE, JUDGE AND ACT. This is associated with a scholar by name Paulo Freire, a Brazilian author of Education for Critical Consciousness. He has this streak of thought in which he trains leaders and educators to raise the following five questions for analysis of any situation they find themselves in.

The questions proposed to guide group discussions in critical thinking and analysis are as follows:

1. **What** is the problem? What dissatisfying situation(s) do we find ourselves living in (e.g. rampant alcoholism, substance abuse among youth, domestic violence/wife battering, sexual child abuse, homicide, etc.)?
2. **Where** does it happen? **How** extended is this problem in our community? Give examples (avoid personalised local examples)?

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

3. **Why** does it happen? What are the root causes of this problem?
4. **What** effects or consequences does this problem lead to if left unattended? What disadvantages are we likely to encounter in future if we don't act to transform the current situation?
5. **What** can we do to transform the situation? What opportunities are available for change, for the good of today and posterity?

## **Emphasis on critical thinking creates tremors**

As soon as you train your staff as well as other stake holders to start going down the lane of critical inquiry, you will begin to create tremors among the custodians of status quo. Community gate keepers will begin to be uncomfortable, especially those who draw benefits from the existing structures of leadership and power. The chain of reaction from this backlash will go both horizontally and vertically. Take for instance cartels involved in trade with illicit substance both at the grassroots (horizontal consumer) levels as well as from macro (vertical supply chain) levels. All these will be up in arms hunting for the 'dissidents' who are 'inciting' people to 'destabilise peace'. That's how trainers for critical thinking easily land into trouble. But if properly networked with like-minded individuals and institutions, they will not be stopped. Instead, they will remain empowered, rejuvenated and 'protected'. Let me repeat here that a trainer for critical consciousness should not work in isolation, but instead should seek to forge linkages and collaboration with other like-minded individuals and institutions to create powerbase for solidarity support.

## **Prototype of critical reasoning**

It has repeatedly been said that Africa is among the poorest continents of the world. Volumes of academic books have been written to popularise that narrative with little effort to turn the other side to reveal the true reality of the African continent. Eventually, we have been treated to the facts that

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

led to the proof that Africa could be the epicenter of global economic development as opposed to being the headquarters of poverty in the world. We are not just a begging bowl as has derogatively been adduced for years by the donor countries. How often have we stopped to wonder why Africa appears so attractive to the developed, industrialised countries of the world? It is not only because it has become a suitable dumping ground for the surplus agricultural produce from the developed world in the name of relief food, but more so for what they draw from Africa in exchange.

Africa could easily be the richest continent in the world if the available data on continent's natural resources is anything to go by. Africa has a total area space larger than all of Europe, United States of America and China combined. It is believed that Africa is three times the area of each of these regions, each of which can be transplanted in their entirety and several other countries and they will fit into Africa neatly (Desjardins, J. 2020).

Africa is projected as an overpopulated continent and yet Africa occupies 30.5 million square Kilometres with a youthful population of 1.3 billion inhabitants and has 60% of the world's arable land. China has an area of 9.6 million square Kilometres with 1.4 billion people. India has 3.3 million square Kilometres with 1.4 billion inhabitants. Now, who needs to depopulate their countries as a matter of urgency? Yet, pressure keeps mounting on Africa to depopulate their countries!

Why such a campaign therefore to depopulate Africa? I believe it's because foreign investors do not want to compete with African populations over the utilization of the rich Africa's natural resources. It is estimated that 90% of raw material reserves of the world is in Africa, including 40% of gold, 33% of diamond, 95% of platinum, not to mention crude oil, coal and timber. For four and a half centuries, developed world of the North is said to have looted African resources through slave trade, colonisation, and unfair trade policies that have always favoured the North (IPIS - Clusters R, & Matthysen -2009)

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

According to Global Justice Now, it is estimated that 161.6 billion US Dollars are received from the North into Africa annually, compared to 202 billion US Dollars that leaves Africa annually through imbalanced trade. That's how they literally bleed Africa of its wealth and resources, then turn around and declare Africa as good for nothing. According to Reconstructing Africa Through Mind Transformation, slavery destroyed us, their religions divided us and destroyed our cultures, while ignorance controls us as the truth of the matter scares us (Lumumba P.L.O -2017).

### **In the absence of critical reasoning**

A guru famed of wisdom, has paused to ask a fundamental question: If you got everything you wanted in life today, then what would you want next? What would you want to live for? If you had the best things you dreamt of in life: best land, best house, best car, best wife, best family, best wealth, and best health, best of everything you ever could think of in life! So what? What would you ask for next? What would you pray for? Actually, the guru asked this question to lead the listeners to the conclusion that the meaning of life is all in energy (to accomplish things) and time or space within which to accomplish those things that you dream to accomplish. According to that guru, that's simply what can be termed as living a life. At the end of the day, it all points out at dying and departing from this life to the next.

If you acquired or attained all your life desires today, if you attained all your life dreams today, what would there be to life for? Certainly, life would become extremely boring. What else would you wish to live for? Life only has meaning when we have set goals that we are determined to achieve within a given period of time. Life is defined by energy and time. It is after attaining those goals in life that we want to self-actualize more by living for other people, your children, your grandchildren, your relatives, and your people besides doing other extraordinary things. You may also choose to spend your time and resources on holidays to discover the world. This is also when you begin to do more at service to charitable

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

organizations to make a difference in the lives of the less fortunate human beings. You begin to give more of your time to religious institutions too. In other words, you begin to look for people to pour your love to and make a meaning out of the now 'empty' and 'miserable' life. You really have nothing else to live for when you have attained everything you needed and dreamt of in life.

In the absence of critical reasoning and critical thinking, one is reduced to a robot, an object of blind obedience. This could be out of fear of retribution or simply out of negligence, not willing to or not interested in finding the best response to challenges or challenging situations. Why the bother? It's sufficient for such people to earn their daily living for survival. No ambitions for greater future. In most cases, it's not because they are incapable of interrogating the reality, but simply not willing to stretch their imagination and raise interrogative critical questions. Perhaps they took the liberty to do so in the past and suffered consequences for doing so. This may have led to choosing to live a life of pious submission. This has nothing to do with one's levels of education, but perhaps more to do with unfounded self-justification and fear.

Without critical reflection people become gullible, swaying in the way of any doctrine or creed, whether from a stranger or an acquaintance. Gullible persons are swayed to any direction. That's living dangerously. Critical reasoning and raising appropriate doubts and questions is not necessarily being disrespectful or contemptuous to your seniors. As it has been said, the way you communicate your truth is as important as the truth itself. Naïve and timid people don't give suggestions in an institution and that's why they are rarely promoted.

Critical thinking or critical reasoning is not inherited. It can only be developed through practice by those keen to develop the skill. The only challenge is that, critical thinking and reasoning requires a lot of mental energy to construct and pose intelligible questions for interrogation of issues at hand to establish hidden truths. It requires self-retrospection in

**THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

solitary reflections as one seeks to challenge one's own truth and disposition.

# CHAPTER 2



## The Cost of Success

### About institutional dream killers

Talking of critical review of institutional practices, it is sometimes in futility that institutions invest colossal amounts of resources in marketing their products unless backup systems are vibrantly in place. You will find that in many cases, public relations at the front desks and telephone switchboards are wanting. These are staffed with wrong people who have no slightest interest in the growth of the said institutions. Such frontline staff are often zombies and robots who are easily noticeable by their indifference in the way they receive and respond to customer inquiries. A motivated staff who loves his or her job would voluntarily respond as follows to clients with excitement: 'Hallo. Good morning. Welcome to our school where we believe character and discipline wins. My name is Ruth. How can I be of help to you?'

It is at the reception desk where institutional image is either glorified or marred and lost forever. Depending on the nature of services rendered, majority of clients rarely visit the service rendering institutions physically. They only get impression about the institution from the reception desk and telephone switchboards. Most people will only source services electronically and digitally. For institutions, clients are their lifeline and that's why marketing is usually allocated the largest annual budget vote-head.

It is a pity that many managers do not seem to critically consider the crucial role of the people who man the front

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

desk including switchboard staff. These are crucial contacts which determine the progress, stagnation or demise of their institutions or their businesses. In this context, if you happen to put the wrong people in those positions, be sure they become the institutional dream killers. They are supposed to have positive attitude. They should be the kind of staff who will clearly radiate and communicate confidence and excitement in a welcoming manner whenever they see clients walk in or receive calls.

These critical staff positions should, of necessity, be performers who make institutions grow. There should be no room for lousy, worthless and unmotivated dream killers. Sharp managers do not tolerate the latter and in fact, they are shown the exit door immediately they fail to toe the line even before third warning.



### ***By All Means Avoid Institutional Dream Killers***

It is not uncommon to see a very elaborate and quite convincing product advertisement on electronic or print media, such as Dailies, Television, and Social Media or even on road show

## **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

displays. Often unknown to the organisational staff, the advertiser usually parts with colossal amounts of money to get their product and services known to the public. It is rather disheartening to find that, after all these marketing costs, clients don't find it as exciting and interesting as they would have expected when they reach out to the institutional front desk or when they talk to the organisational staff in general. Why?

The common explanation (or may we call it common excuse?) is poor staff motivation. That discreetly is a blame directed to the organisational seniors such as the employer or the managers. Our intention here is to dig deeper and find out the hidden truth behind all this.

### **The cost of innovative servant leadership**

We all grew up in communities and societies that had particular social and cultural belief systems which conditioned our way of thinking and reasoning. This is what has been termed as social conditioning. To break away from this is often termed as antisocial behaviour. But come to think of it. One cannot afford to think innovatively and creatively without attempts to break away from some of these laid down social traditions and norms within which confines one is expected to operate.

Important as that might be, innovators take the courage to think differently without necessarily demeaning and abusing those long held traditions. Scientist innovators such as Wright Brothers and Albert Einstein were not perceived kindly as they appeared to be wayward in their thinking, reasoning and action. But without their courage to be different and appear 'strange', we would not be flying air crafts today neither would we have understood the theory of relativity and its relevance to gravity, space, time and the universe at large.

*"To be a leader, you have to make people want to follow you, and nobody wants to follow someone who doesn't know where he is going." – Joe Namath, former New York Jets quarterback*

## **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

All progress and inventions are associated with people who appeared unreasonable after breaking the norms to operate in unfamiliar grounds, to operate outside of the box. These are people who dared to be different. In the process, some of them risked their lives. Yet, at the end of the day, their people knew that their sons and daughters lived worthwhile lives and, in the process, they left behind a legacy to inspire generations to come. All this is possible only with people who have had courage. If you have to fail making a history, then fail forwards and not backwards. You fail forwards by drawing lessons and going for it again, this time more wisely.

In my own opinion, effective leadership is born of deliberate choice to sacrifice and suffer at service to people, with or without appreciation or any form of compensation for it. That is what makes heroes and heroines. True leaders are those who are called to transform the society, to transform the lives of the people they lead by enabling them to better their lives.

Leadership sometimes involves self-sacrifice, even by use of one's resources such as your time and your material resources for a good cause. Sometimes leadership involves putting your life and comfort on line for the sake of the people you lead. That's what our freedom fighters did for our sake. They were in pursuit of their dreams to create a better and more just society while their contemporaries are busy doing everything possible to attain and maintain their comfort and longevity of life. This reminds me of the story below:

## **TEAM LEADERS' JOURNAL**

### **Dodging Hollywood-Type Warfare in Somalia**

*We knew it was a risky mission but to us, it was a noble thing to answer the call of duty to serve God's people wherever He chose to send us. This time round it was the war-torn Lower Shebelle Province of Somalia. We were deployed to work at a town by the name Merca. This was to train ex-militia men who had surrendered their arms and joined re-integration programme initiated by UNESCO through creation of alternative means of income after disarmament. This was by initiating irrigation schemes.*

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

*But the level of mistrust and anger between the local communities and the ex-militia men remained alarmingly high. The proposed training was meant to bridge the relationship gap by restoring trust and consolidating interpersonal relations between the communities and the militia as well as within each group. The workshop was meant to last for two weeks but by the end of the first week there were eruptions in Merca town. It happened that UNESCO had allocated daily 'per diem' to be given to the ex-militia trainees attending the workshop. When the communities in the town learnt that they didn't qualify for the per diem, war broke out.*

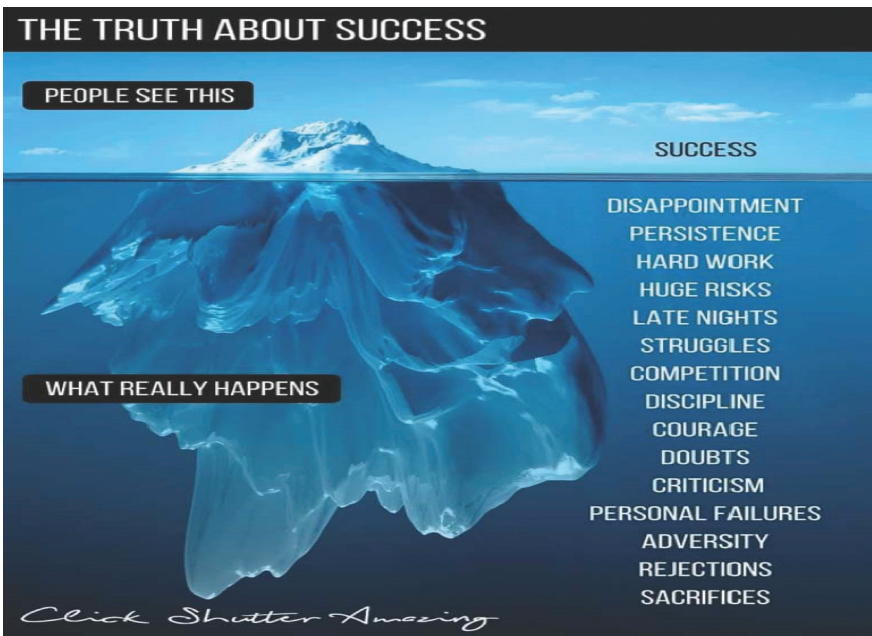
*A fierce conflict broke out one morning with gunshots renting the air. The visiting trainers ran up to the top floor of the UN building which was hosting us. Little did we know it was foolhardy to go upstairs to the open balcony of the top floor. That's where one can either easily become a target of the shootouts or face the danger of stray bullets. As a consequence of the prevailing insecurity, ECHO flights to Merca were suspended until further notice. One faction of the militia sympathetic to the cause for the local community had vowed to shoot the ECHO plane down if it dared to land at the local airstrip. We were rushed to the so-called K-50 airport, near Mogadishu to catchup with Khat (Miraa) planes back to Nairobi. This meant that we had to abandon the seminar half-way.*

*The airport was fifty kilometers away from Merca. We boarded a pickup and travelled to Mogadishu under heavy security escort provided by the friendly clan militia. We left with strict instructions not to talk to anybody on the road blocks mounted by militias along the way. And there were many roadblocks for that matter. We were fortunate to board a Khat plane immediately which was ready for takeoff to Nairobi, never mind the humidity from the Khat already dropped from Nairobi. Besides, the pilots put the plane on autopilot mode and got busy throughout the flight to Nairobi taking stock of the proceeds from the Khat sales, spreading the money all over the cockpit and the floor of the plane. Of course, we were terrified up to our bones, but remained in prayer!*

## **Challenges that lie behind the glamour called success**

*“Success isn’t about how much money you make; it’s about the difference you make in people’s lives.” – Michelle Obama, former First Lady of the United States*

If you are successful economically, don’t think those who are not are lazy. Some people work harder than you but they don’t gain much. Perhaps it is their time that has not come yet. But we need to be alert to this important fact: they may be extremely successful, perhaps more than you are, in many other aspects. Perhaps they are experiencing great success in their family wellbeing and stability with great health. Their children may be prospering better in their careers compared to yours. They may be enjoying better relationships in their communities. Perhaps they have many more genuine friends than you have. They may even be enjoying adorable titles in many other spheres in society. We have a just God who knows how to distribute His graces to us equitably as His sons and daughters.



### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

When we talk of a successful leader or successful institution, the majority of people tend to only see the great outcome. The iceberg theory of success below helps us to realise that every famous or extraordinary successful person or institution had to invest a lot of effort and take lots of risks until success is attained. See illustration below from Shutterstock Amazing. Success, whatever the word may mean to you, is characterised by lots of costs. Success comes after personal sacrifices and self-denial with the intention to achieve a dream or a goal in one's mind. Success begins with a mental picture on 'what could be' in relation to 'what is'. To bridge the gap between the present reality (what is), and what could be, involves hard thinking, hard planning, hard work and risks of failure and ridicule.

Success entails disappointments, persistence, huge risks, working late nights, struggles against hurdles, fierce cut-throat competition, self-discipline, sacrifices, courage, doubts, criticism, personal failures, adversity, and rejection from many quarters even some which are close to you. While some people develop 'arrival culture' after attaining the basic needs in life, others determine to stretch out for self-actualization by stretching their gifts and talents to the limit. Servant leadership has been touted as one leadership style that will galvanize peoples' efforts to avoid the arrival culture.

Most people don't like being uncomfortable. 'Success', whatever you define it to be, can be fairly uncomfortable as it will cost you heavily (Mulwa, 2015). Success will cost you desertion by close friends. Success will also cost you failures at one stage of your life or another which will embarrass you. You will also live a life of alertness every minute of your life because of the many detractors who will begin to antagonise you. The heavy responsibilities on your shoulders which come with your success will also begin to wear you out and weigh you down. You will live better if you learn to delegate some of those responsibilities as long as care is taken to delegate to the right people (see principles of delegation elsewhere in this book).

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

But if you persist long enough you will succeed. That's when they would want to come along with you as 'friends'. Pray for them and pray over your detractors as well. Pray for wisdom, resilience and refreshment. Make your God and your dream so big that nothing else matters more for you. Pray for your responsibility to expand and bear more fruits in God's kingdom.

Having said all the above, I should be quick to warn that not all of us possess the kind of talent that is wired to build and establish big organisations and empires. Be contented with the much God has or is enabling you to attain. We cannot all attain the levels of financial success as Bill Gates, Chris Kirubi or Steve Jobs. Let's do our best with the humble gift or talent we may possess, and that's good enough. We are not in competition with anyone but with ourselves and with time. Doing better today than yesterday. We are just we.

Some of us will end up using and perfecting their gifts as employees in private companies and in public sector. Not necessarily as private investors and that is fine too. There is nothing wrong with that as long as you serve with dedication applying your full creative faculties, your gifts and talents generously for the good of the society. The bottom line here is attaining fulfilment and satisfaction in what you do as you transform lives of others in the society. Enjoy your work.

Every time you aspire for a change to some higher calling, be prepared to take the risks involved. It is inevitable to fail and suffer from time to time in the process of learning and growing. But once you fail, fail forwards and not backwards. Gain lessons from failure and start again, this time more wisely. You will fail in auditions and in interviews, not once, but many times before they can take you on board. But hang around long enough. Keep trying.

I agree with Professor Peter Lewa who would argue that motivation (force of inner self) is what matters in defining success. Prof. Lewa's formula for success is captured in the acronym 'SOMA', whereby each letter represents a quality or element necessary for success. Success (S) is a function of

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

Opportunity (O), Motivation (M), and Ability (A). We all have opportunities which come our way at different times. Yet, for some people, opportunities appear like a burden that must be evaded at all cost. Why? Opportunities call for disruption of one's comfort. You must act on opportunities to attain for success. You can't just sit there and wish what you want. You must work for it.

We have to rise up, identify those opportunities and capture them by our positive **A**ttitude, sharpened **S**kills and wide range of **K**nowledge (ASK) to take up the challenges that come packaged with those opportunities. He concludes with the adage that: "If you want to go upstairs, it is more prudent to use the stair case instead of an escalator" (Lewa, P.M., Student Notes, MBA 2018, USIU-Africa). Why? Stair case is safer as it cannot malfunction. Besides, staircase gives you physical exercise that your body needs desperately for your health.

### **True success lies in raising adorable generation of young leaders**

Success means different things to different people. There can be no universally acceptable definition of the meaning of success to which everybody must subscribe. To some people, success means having a big family of many children. In my culture there is a saying that 'Mundu Nandu'. Literally translated means, it only the number of people around you who can validate or stamp you value or your importance as a person. That is, more friends and the people around you, including the size of your own family, the more important or the more alive you are regarded. No wonder some people judge your importance by the number of vehicles and the number of dignitaries who attend your functions such as weddings and burials.

For others, success is judged on the basis of how much you are worth in value of possessions or wealth in form money and property. That's why, perhaps in pursuit of that sense of success, people keep accumulating wealth, especially

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

money and property, to feel important and attain respect in society. That is when greed overtakes them and start stealing and corrupting their way through life to accumulate wealth beyond what they need in their lifetime. They do this in the name of toiling for their off-springs but in the real sense it's out of greed and in search of prestige and recognition.

Yet for other people, success is attained by acquiring power in institutional positions in society. These could be political power, professional power in positions of appointment, or even academic power to read and do all that appertains to their qualification(s). The greater the positions of power they acquire, the more they appear successful. With power comes the opportunity to accumulate even more wealth. But all this is vanity of vanities. One may ask, so what? This can be illustrated better by the following story:

*A story is told of a peasant farmer who used to rise up early in the morning to go to the swamps to dig out arrowroots for his family. He would uproot only enough for the day and replenish by planting a few more arrowroots. He would then relax on a rocking chair, watching birds of the air as the sun rose in the morning golden splendour. Meanwhile, he slowly licked his bottle of honey. He loved to do this every day in the wee hours of the morning. He spent the rest of the day visiting with his friends and fellow peasants, organising lobby groups to advocate for the protection and conservation of swamps and peasants' right of access to the swamps where the peasants grew arrowroots.*

*He and his friends would lobby against attempts by industrialists to grab their swamps or pollute them by dumping industrial waste emissions. The peasants had initiated a peasants' marketing association to bargain for fair prices for their surplus produce. They had also initiated a micro-savings and credit scheme to build a foundation for collective financial security. At the end of the day this particular peasant would retire home in the evening where each member of his family would tell their story about the excitements and challenges of the day.*

*However, one early morning a friend passed by and found the peasant relaxing on his rocking chair licking his bottle of honey as*

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

usual. He had already harvested enough arrowroots for his family for the day and a small bundle for the peasants' market in peasants' local cooperative. The friend engaged him in the following dialogue:

**Friend:** Why are you relaxing so early in the morning when you should be working?

**Peasant:** I have already finished working.

**Friend:** But you have only harvested a few roots!

**Peasant:** Yes, and these are sufficient for my family today and for the market.

**Friend:** Don't be foolish. You should uproot more and sell it in the village to make money.

**Peasant:** And then?

**Friend:** Uproot even more, sell more and make more money.

**Peasant:** And then?

**Friend:** Are you an idiot? You would employ people to plant more arrowroots, then uproot more for you, even from out-growers in the neighbourhood, then you would take it all to the market and make lots of money.

**Peasant:** And then?

**Friend:** Come on, don't be funny. Of course at this point you can even start a processing industry, buy vehicles for distribution, and even export canned products. Come to think of it! You would certainly receive money and become very rich!

**Peasant:** And then?

**Friend:** Then you would become rich and famous. You would be able to sit on a rocking chair and enjoy life, as you watch birds of the air fly past, licking a bottle of honey with a smile.

**Peasant:** And what did you find me doing when you came here? Do I need to go through all that before I can enjoy life with my bottle of honey? **(Story told by a Catholic Priest in charge of Justice and Peace Commission in Nairobi Archdiocese.)**

In my view, one of the valid claims of true success in life as adults is attained when our off-springs succeed to be self-supporting and in leading independent life on their own. That's not an overstatement although rather a tall order. The future depends on the quality of the children we raise. Whenever we declare our commitment to make the world a better place than we found it, let's also remember we have an obligation to

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

give the world better quality of global citizens than ourselves. Some parents have succeeded in that obligation better than others.

However, parents often find themselves on the receiving end when it comes to the multiple challenges in raising adorable generation from our off-springs. It doesn't always turn out to be what we desired or expected. Those who have succeeded in this respect should not brag or look down upon those who have not succeeded as yet. It is never too late for them.

When we talk about success, that concept should never be limited to wealth creation and material accumulation important as it may be. True success is found in the quality of families we raise. Harmony and tranquility in the family creates the kind of peace and stability at home that produces in children humane values of cooperation and care for others. That's what will build their confidence and make them grow to be dependable, productive and social beings. That's what will enable them interact with the world with their heads high, full of self-confidence, self-respect and high respect for others. That's why success begins from a conducive home environment.

Being wealthy, highly educated, having a great job and great income or a great business, doesn't necessarily translate to one's success. Suicides are prevalent among both the poor, the uneducated as well as the highly educated. The truth is that, success has little to do with those things universally perceived to be its indicators. Success has everything to do with your lifestyle, a healthy and happy living, nutritionally, socially, and with peace of mind.

It is true that having a reliable sources of income would support that healthy and happy living. You would struggle less to access what you need. That reduces chances of stress and anxiety. That's when wealth and good income can translate into success if they support and facilitate easy access to healthy and happy life. But if you lack those things in plenty but only have enough for your needs and you lead a stress-free life with a happy family, that's the best kind of success

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

in my view. Only try to make sure your source of income is sustainable. Save as much of your income as possible and invest in stress-free options such bank interests.

Ultimately, it is our God and the society at large who mold and help determine the success of our children in life more than us. We only have them around us at their tender early ages before we release them into the world. Our major role at home is to inculcate in them strong moral values that would carry them through life. This would become their point of reference in making major choices and decisions as they interact with the rest of the world out there.

That's what life is about, nurturing our off-springs in such a manner as to become a legacy worthy of emulation. In fact, we may appear to have succeeded in many aspects of our lives, but I personally believe we are not yet there until our off-springs begin to make an impact in society and are able to stand on their own. That's not only the desire of every parent but it's also the plan of God. That's what life is all about. The ultimate meaning of life is the ability to sustain it through our off-springs after we have fulfilled our purpose and obligation in this part of the universe.

In my view, it is divinely ordained to preserve life and ensure the welfare of posterity. That's not only true of human beings but animals too will instinctively fulfill similar 'obligation' by nurturing and protecting their young ones to a certain age when they can stand on their own. Will they possibly reciprocate such support when their parents have grown old and frail? I am not sure they have an obligation but you would be lucky if they do, especially if they depleted your income and property by supporting them!

### **Our children will be mighty in the land**

Your son, your daughter might be a toddler at which age they are little angels. Very obedient, always with desire to be near you as a parent, ready to jump into your car to enjoy the ride with you regardless of where you are driving to. All their world revolves around you, their school and the Sunday

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

school in the church. They give you life when you are dull or sad. They want to be around you as much as possible to tell them those sweet stories while on your laps.

A time is coming and coming soon when they will begin to feel like the 'Little Devils of Manchester'. They will begin to experiment with life a little more into their teenage life. They begin to experiment life in the company of their unfettered friends whom they wouldn't want introduced to their parents. They begin to experiment with some strange things a little, such as chewing some substances a little, puffing some 'smoke' a little and sipping something intoxicating a little bit. At this stage they begin to gain courage to bring home those unfettered friends mentioned, both male and female. All this time they are experimenting on how far they can go with their newly found freedom, especially freedom to make friends of their choice. Meanwhile, they would be closely watching your reactions as parents. If you overlook the need to intervene with some counselling for guidance and correction, your child will assume his new found lifestyle is normal after all. That would be a big mistake.

At this juncture, let us revisit God's promise about our children. The Bible tells us: "Blessed is the man that fears the Lord, who delights greatly in God's commandments. His children shall be mighty in the land: the generation of the upright shall be blessed" (Psalm 112:1-2). Do we really have a reason to doubt the promise of God that he will exalt our children to be great in the land? I believe we are among the said generation of the upright as justified by our Christian faith. Without the grace of faith, we would certainly be out of bounds to claim to be righteous. We have all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. But we are justified by faith in God.

Hence, our children are bound to be mighty in the land. That does to please the powers of darkness at all. They will do everything possible to stop our children from claiming their inheritance as promised by none other than God himself. We need to constantly pray for them without ceasing as we bless

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

them, mentor them, counsel them and guide them daily on matters of faith based on the word of God. All we need is to play that role diligently and faithfully then leave the rest to God to protect them. Without God's intervention, we can only do so much and not more. But with God's intervention, our children will not only be mighty in this land of our ancestors but will go forth and serve humanity beyond our borders to the ends of the earth.

Let me risk to surmise that some of the adults reading this section of the book may have been victims of abuse of one form or another during their early childhood. I pray that would not be the case. But if it happened, take heart and use that past hurt to talk about child abuse and enlighten young parents. Kindly share your experience to the extent you feel comfortable without violating your privacy and confidentiality. That would save many potential victims from falling under similar traps or circumstances. May God help you as you purpose to play your part in saving our young generation.

As discussed earlier, it is a fact that leaders don't last in their positions of leadership for eternity. Who would take over leadership from us in the society if we don't diligently take active personal and collective responsibility to tame and curb prevalent practice of child abuse that we witness today? We must take all possible measures to curtail child abuse including child labour as well as sexual, physical, psychological and emotional child abuse. In more recent times, there appears to be growing prevalence of child and human trafficking. This involves the abduction of children and teenagers. Young adults are also lured to voluntarily accept to be recruited to work in foreign countries in the name of lucrative jobs. Actually, on arrival in those countries, it all turns out to be a hoax. It is nothing less than modern day slavery.

Child abuse may take place anywhere, whether at home or in school or within the community. Children continue to be intimidated and abused daily in our midst. Are we ignorant

## **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

of it or is it a cultural taboo not to talk about such a sensitive issue?

### **Borrowing a leaf from the agility of eagles**

Many people resist change! Their comfort zone keeps them hooked on to the “chicken feeds.” They will never soar until they are disturbed enough to be ready and willing to take courage and risk change. An eagle trains its eaglets to be self-reliant from a tender age. At certain stage, the mother eagle throws the entire nest with the eaglets into the air. As the eaglets struggle to fly, the mother eagle spreads her wings below them to provide safety and assurance as they practice flying on their own. When they are tired, they rest on her wings. This way they are taught to fend for themselves. No wonder the Bible equates the care of the Lord for us to that of a mother eagle for her eaglets as they learn to fly on their own (Deut. 32:11).

It is known that eagles never eat rotten meat. Just like lions, they never go for “ill-gotten” or “corrupted” prey hunted and killed by other animals. They will always go for fresh prey. They are excellent in their focus from the air. When they aim at their prey, they dive swiftly and straight for it. Because of their ability to focus, they don’t miss their prey regardless of the height. That’s exactly what we are meant to do with our focus in life. In fact, eagles have the most amazing way of renewing their strength. An eagle can live up to 70 years. The first reason that makes an eagle live long is that when a storm strikes, as other birds crouch together in fear, the eagle takes the advantage of the tide to glide high into the skies above the danger. It flies against the storm itself, which gives it the leverage to soar high up.

The second reason an eagle can live longer is that it has to make tough decisions about its aging body. In its 40’s, an eagle has already started failing from old age. At this realisation it retreats into the rocks on high mountains for a period to renew its strength. The first to be renewed is its beak that was once sharp and piercing. Its beak would have

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

grown long and bend from old age. With renewal, the beak is once again sharpened by grinding it against the rocks.

The eagle uses the new beak to pluck out its now heavy and old feathers that have slowed it down in its hunting escapades. New feathers develop which make its wings as strong as ever. After this transformation and renewal, the eagle can live 30 more years! Hence, *'They that hope in the LORD will renew their strength, they will soar as with eagle's wings; they will run and not grow weary, walk and not grow faint'* (Isaiah, 40:31).

There can never be a good justification to stagnate in our comfort zones when we have the potential to soar! We can soar in our education, in our businesses, as well as in our professional careers. But we can be sure it won't be a smooth sail because many are those who will feel offended by your new found self-drive. They will find reasons to throw rocks and road blocks on your way, in your tracks for no apparent reason. However, there will always be a way out to enable you to soar high above those obstacles. Don't give up. Our God assures us he will never leave us, neither forsake us under whatever circumstances (Deuteronomy 31:6; Hebrews 13:5).

**THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

## CHAPTER 3



### Creation of Leadership Teams

*‘Leadership can be hard, lonely, and confusing. Learning to juggle new responsibilities is one thing, but nothing can prepare you for the anxiety you will feel, over how you are perceived, or the ever-present fear that you might disappoint your team or your leaders’ (Chris Meroff, 2020)*

#### **Benefits drawn by faithful frontline teams**

When I was a young professional, I used to narrate the inspiring and amazing story of King Solomon of the Bible to trainees in community leadership training workshops. When he was young, Solomon’s work with outstanding dedication seems to have pleased God so much that Solomon was offered to ask God for whatever reward he pleased and below was Solomon’s choice:

“At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon during the night in a dream, and God said, “Ask for whatever you want me to give you.” Solomon answered, “You have shown great kindness to your servant, my father David, because he was faithful to you and righteous and upright in heart. You have continued this great kindness to him and have given him a son to sit on his throne this very day.

Now, LORD my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David. But I am only a little child and do not know how to carry out my duties. Your servant is here among the people you have chosen, a great people, too numerous to count or number. So give your servant a discerning heart

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

to govern your people and to distinguish between right and wrong. For who is able to govern this great people of yours?”

The Lord was pleased that Solomon had asked for this. So God said to him, “Since you have asked for this and not for long life or wealth for yourself, nor have asked for the death of your enemies but for discernment in administering justice, I will do what you have asked. I will give you a wise and discerning heart, so that there will never have been anyone like you, nor will there ever be. Moreover, I will give you what you have not asked for—both wealth and honor—so that in your lifetime you will have no equal among kings. And if you walk in obedience to me and keep my decrees and commands as David your father did, I will give you a long life.” (1<sup>st</sup> King 3:5-14, NIV)

We cannot emphasise enough the need to have credible teams on the ground who can be entrusted with leadership responsibility. Without credible individuals to form frontline management teams your business or institution would be vulnerable to possibility of betrayal to your competitors and haters. There is a great risk of sabotage delegating responsibilities to wrong people. In such a case, it would be foolhardy even to imagine leading from the back. You will already have committed institutional ‘suicide’ if no quick action is taken to correct such a mistake.

But loyal frontline teams themselves may ask and perhaps rightly so: What is in there for me after the many years of dedicated and loyal service to the public? The truth is that there is bound to be numerous benefits. First and foremost, no one should underestimate the benefit of personal social satisfaction wrought from service to humanity. There is also the obvious material benefits in form of remuneration and other emoluments. There would likely be material and financial rewards and bonuses drawn from an employer.

It would be rare to find an employer who doesn’t appreciate productivity of a faithful employee whether or not that is provided or specified in the service agreement or contract. Compensation in kind is not uncommon. The truth is that

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

faithful employees are usually the most favoured lot in any organization. On the flip side, they may find themselves loathed by disgruntled and envious colleagues who do not appreciate their loyalty to the management. That's only a natural reaction just the same way siblings relate to each other in relation to their obedience to parents.

There will be employees whose attitudes are perpetually negative towards the employer, sometimes for no good reasons or for reasons that have never been shared with the appropriate segments of leadership in the institutional hierarchy. Employers may never even come to know why a particular employee is disgruntled. Instead the affected employee is talking to the wrong people about their dissatisfaction. That's now grumbling. That amounts to shaming oneself by continuously pouring one's frustrations and complaints to the wrong audience.

The truth is that negative people continue to stagnate in their organisations, not just for lack of open interaction with the employer, but more fundamentally for their lack of goodwill which God sees from their hearts. On the other hand, faithful frontline teams will gain by learning the ropes, including the secrets of business management. Remember, frontline teams wield a lot of power since they are the stakeholders closest to the organizational clients and therefore their names have high premium. They carry with them the institutional goodwill. Those who eventually leave their employers gracefully are given good testimonials which land them in lucrative jobs elsewhere.

But some employees don't attain these benefits because they burn their curriculum vitae prematurely through poor work performance and poor record of trust. Others act out of malice to please arrogant employees who left the organization not knowing they are only compromising their own future careers. They keep moving from one organization to another without understanding that employers seek to hire stable employees who will work for not less than two years on average in any one institution. It is expensive and arduous task to

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

hire, induct or give orientation to new employees who again disappear after only few months. Guaranteed staff stability is key to employer's choice of whom to hire. However, we all have the beautiful gift of free will or freedom of choice from our creator.

There is nothing wrong in seeking for greener pastures. It is true that some employers tend to forget to appreciate loyal and hardworking employees. Sometimes they compensate them poorly. Even promotions don't come-by for such people. They are simply forgotten, often inadvertently. Others are not considered for salary hikes or for any other forms of gestures in appreciation for their hard work year in year out. That is devastating and highly demotivating. But as you move on to 'greener pastures', resolve to be highly productive where you will land. Don't go there to make the green pastures begin to turn brown and therefore unattractive.

Others working in hardship areas have been overlooked for years while their colleagues who have served in the same areas for same or shorter periods got favourable transfers. No explanation is given to the employee who gets overlooked. Such blatant discrimination can be frustrating to say the least. But my objective view is that employers may not be privy to these omissions until the affected employees raise the concerns. This is so in the absence of vibrant human resource department. It is possible for the hierarchy never to realise existence of such loopholes until it is brought to their attention.

Instead of quickly resolving to move on and seek for greener pastures, talk to your employers through the right channels or even directly. What jobseekers hunting for greener pastures may not seem to realise is that there are extremely hard working and loyal workers on the other side of the fence where the grass is greener. These are workers who have had the goodwill to sweat for years to realise that which attracts you across the fence. Are you prepared to add value there and propel them to yet greater heights? Could it be you are only keen to take advantage of the greener pastures compared to

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

where you are running away from? Could it be you would most likely end up dampening their morale immediately you there instead?

There is also the likelihood that there would be high 'water bills' paid by the employer across the fence to keep their pastures greener. Definitely they must have hardworking and loyal teams for the grass to remain that attractive. And again, sometimes the closer you approach the greener pasture, the more it tends to turn brown even when nothing has changed. The truth remains that the more frequently an employee changes jobs, the more negatively it affects his or her curriculum vitae as far as job stability is concerned. It also dents the job-seeker's personal image.

We already talked about the effect of high staff turnover on the image of an institution to the public and potential clients. This is besides the high cost of hiring process right from advertisement to shortlisting, then interviews and finally the recruitment and induction of new employees. All these are costs borne by the employer. It is not desirable to repeat that process frequently.

Besides, let's not forget there could also be the possibility of an issue of negative attitude mentioned earlier which may eventually dominate and govern other aspects of one's life. This reminds me of the day I was hired for the first time in a university as a senior lecturer after acquiring my doctorate degree. The same week I reported, two senior administrative staff took me aside to tell me how much mistaken I was to accept the appointment. They tried to dissuade me to leave by telling me how exploitative the university management was to staff. Staff were reportedly earning meagre salaries.

They argued that instead of considering to uplift staff remuneration, the university management reportedly kept expanding the university land by spending millions of shillings to buy out neighbours. But one may wonder why this would become employees' concerns. It should actually be none of their business neither my business as employees. That was an issue of willing seller, willing buyer. My response was

## **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

simple that I signed a contract already with the university management after consensual agreement and the day I will feel I need to move on, I will do so without blaming anybody for my decision. Little did they know that by then, I had been and still was an employer for nearly forty years. I worked in the university for six years, with the two senior colleagues treating me with contempt all through. I never minded that since I understood where they were coming from with their attitude.

### **Qualities of vibrant frontline teams**

This suggests the need for vision bearers to be thorough on the strategies, precautions and qualities to look out for when assembling members of frontline teams. On the same, Moses was given specific qualities by Jethro to look out for when appointing front-line teams to lead the tribes of Israel (Exodus 18:13-27). These were '*able men* (competent, self-motivated, equal to the task) *from all the tribes of Israel* (fair representation), *such as fear God* (ethical men of faith), *men who are trustworthy* (loyal to Moses and to people they serve) and *who hate a bribe* (men of integrity). We can't emphasise these qualities enough.

Without the foregoing considerations, vision bearers would easily end-up appointing or recruiting disgruntled staff who will only come as dream killers whose interest is only in the so called greener pastures. They will start to apply for jobs elsewhere even before they settle down in your organization. Such would have no slightest interest nor commitment to do what they are hired for.

Orientation and mentorship on the part of the newly formed leadership teams should be given priority in order to develop the appropriate attitudes. To succeed with frontline teams, it's crucial for vision bearers to inculcate intrinsic values that prepare the teams to be equal to the task ahead with the right attitudes. For instance, training on the dynamics of teamwork, team leadership and communication skills will be of paramount importance for the frontline teams. This may be attained through one-on-one dialogue or group contact

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

with the trainers or through dispatch of appropriate reading materials for them.

Team leaders should conduct weekly team retreats such as to discuss the insights presented in this book among other relevant materials. The most likely initial reaction to such innovative ways of leadership is usually that of resistance to change. Team leaders should be patient with such spontaneous reaction. Ironically, people sometimes feel threatened by freedom to take charge and lead themselves. Resilience will be necessary here until teams get used to leading themselves and leading their followers as well. Vision bearers remain the shepherds who only show-up occasionally when necessary.

Individual opinions and views should not be lost or neglected or even underrated just because we urge for group consensus. Consensus should be a result of full discussion putting into account all members' views. Pragmatic management requires a mix of decision making strategies for best results. It is therefore crucial to allow each member of the team to have a say on issues of importance to the group. In strategic management perspective, teams discuss three important questions:

- Where are we coming from?
- Where are we going or where do we want to go?
- Where are we now at this stage?
- How are we going to get there, to get to where we are going?

It is only an effective leader who can help followers to discuss the three questions and make decisions on the way forward (Writer's chat with Prof. Peter Lewa, February 2021).

### **Innovation takes courage**

It is true that to chart a new path and leave a trail for others to follow with ease in future takes great courage, hope and faith. To attempt to lead from the back while your followers are in the front is already taking a great risk for your organisation or

## **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

project idea. This is much more so if you erroneously happen to believe you are the only one with 'divine anointing' to do what you do and to show others the way.

That's what Moses of the Bible believed to end up burdening himself until Jethro, his Father-In-Law, rebuked him and ordered him to share out his burden of leadership with some of his followers. Before then, all the twelve tribes of Israel were bringing their reports and cases directly to him for arbitration. I surmise he didn't mind this even though it weighed him down heavily. It gave him a lot of power and power is sweet. After all, he was the only one who had the privilege of speaking to God directly on behalf of his people. Ordinarily, anyone with the privilege to talk directly to the top most authority in a hierarchy would not want to share such privilege with any other soul. But Moses had no option but to obey his senior.

It should always be remembered that while democracy brings freedom, too much democracy without checks and balances breeds chaos. This is characterised by disorder and anarchy. This is because too much democracy is tantamount to creating power vacuum with weak or total absence of central authority that can assert control. No wonder it is commonly quoted of Chinua Achebe that: When the center cannot hold, things fall apart. Hence, even when the shepherds lead their flock from the back, they watch over those who attempt to digress and mislead. They quickly bring them back to the flow. Those who become uncontrollable are usually first to be permanently separated from the rest.

## **What constitutes a team or group**

**Wisdom of the year:** *'When you are at the top, be careful of the monster called PRIDE. Pride will make you look down on the people who haven't attained your level of success. When you are at the bottom, be careful of the monster called ENVY. Envy will make you bitter and think that other people are the reason you haven't made it. When you are on the way to the top, be careful of the monster called GREED. Greed will make you impatient and make you steal or seek short-*

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

*cuts. When you are on your way down, be careful of the monster called DESPAIR. Despair will make you think it's over, yet there is still hope.' By Nelson Mandela.*

Working in teams is one sure way to circumvent the limitations of 'strongman' syndrome. The same way ideas are shared in teams, roles and risks are shared as well. Teams, just like groups, are made-up of two or more people working together. Let's look at it from another perspective. Talents and gifts in individuals are fairly weak until they are linked up together with others to wield more power and influence that comes from synergy created by solidarity.

When individual potentials in talents and gifts are networked, the resultant effect is achievement of spectacular and previously impossible results. It has been claimed that minority populations in any country continue to be exploited and taken advantage of as they usually remain disjointed individuals without a common voice. Immediately they begin to network between themselves, even the powerful authorities who once kept them in bondage, begin to tremble. They may ban meetings and outlaw 'unlicensed' gatherings but when the minorities remain united, any such attempts to silence them makes them even stronger in their resolve to fight for their space to protect their rights. It is then the idiom comes alive: 'When spider webs unite, they can tie up a lion' (an Africa Proverb).

The emergence of the idea of leading groups and institutions through teams stems from the desire to critique and demean the outdated belief that 'great leaders' are people born to lead. The great-man theory advocates great leaders are not created by the society but are born with the 'greatness' in them. These are often considered some kind of demigods dropped down from the space with supernatural gifts and powers to lead. They manipulate people at their will and whims. Their followers have little or no right to challenge them. Needless to say, this notion reduces followers to mere spectators or stooges whose views are rendered useless. Leading through teams reduces this risk as leadership roles

### THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS

and responsibilities are shared according to various talents in the group.

*“An organization’s ability to learn and translate that learning into action rapidly, has the ultimate competitive advantage.” – Jack Welch, former CEO of General Electric*

Time has come when teamwork at the workplace has become synonymous to organisational effectiveness and efficiency. Gone are the days when prowess in technical or professional skill was the only qualification that mattered to acquire a job. It is a common phenomenon nowadays to find the ‘ability to work in a team’ and a ‘self-driven person’ as the basic requirements to qualify for a job, whether in the private sector of a corporate business or in public sector. According to D’Souza, A. (1994), research has shown that good human relations and the ability to work in a team will account for 75% of one’s job security. Competence in terms of skills or job-knowledge only account for 25% of job security. When one has the right attitude (values), skill can be acquired through on-job training.

Mahatma Gandhi was once quoted saying that **at one time leadership meant muscles; but today it means getting along with people. It simply means building and affirming people’s dignity and recognizing their value as human beings. Through leadership, one makes or breaks people’s lives. Such sentiments are** considered the precursor to team-building efforts in organisations. In creating working teams, interdisciplinary professionals or technicians are usually drawn from diverse disciplines to work on a given institutional agenda. No wonder it cannot be assumed that in such diversity, harmony would be attained spontaneously without investing in team building efforts. This requirement becomes imperative to enhance the scope of compatibility that would be sufficient to make individuals in a team work together productively as a result of symbiotic effect.

Yet, of paramount importance is institutional policies that stipulate terms and conditions of employee engagement. It is in the same policies that guidelines would be provided on

## **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

the procedures for internal conflict or dispute resolution. Without such provisions, no team can stand. Differences will always arise where people work together.

*“The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams.” – Eleanor Roosevelt, former first lady of the United States*

Effective leadership from the back requires leaders who remain sensitive and awake to these essential fundamentals. The process of developing such policies should ensure full consultation with various stakeholders who have interest in the implementation of the same. After wide consultations, the final drafting of such policies should be an exclusive prerogative of the vision bearers. It is in such sensitive undertakings that vision bearers must lead from the front.

## **Ingredients that make a team**

But what truly makes a team? Below are some of the key indicators or prerequisite ingredients that will be found in a solid team:

### ***Fate interdependence - ‘We feeling’***

Members are aware of belonging to the team. Membership criteria are clear to all. Fate interdependence is strong. That is, whatever happens to an individual member of the team, affects all the other members and whatever happens to the team as a whole, affects each individual member.

That gives members social security. Many people member themselves in many groups and invest heavily in social networks for their social security. But wrong choice of makeshift groups lead to loss of cash contributions as they disband the soonest after their leaders begin to lust over the group resources. Others choose to invest in insurance schemes for their social security. The problem with insurance schemes is red-tape bureaucracy in time of need. Claims are not settled in time, if they are ever settled at all. Perhaps small groups and personal savings are the best bet.

***Active purpose***

Where a team has collective aspirations, its purpose is kept alive amongst members. Goals and objectives are documented and well understood. Regular reviews on group goals are held regularly and necessary adjustments are instantly made.

***Direct contact***

Frequent interaction and free exchange of information will be found in authentic teams. Team meetings are held regularly. There exists established horizontal and vertical (hierarchical) linkages within the team, both formal and informal. Members enjoy direct personal contacts.

***Team values, group culture***

Values, norms and regulations are collectively developed and observed by all. Members are conscious of those values, subscribe to them and seek to adhere by them and are committed to defend those values. There exists room to give honest feedback to wayward members without fear or favour.

***Role division and capacity building***

There exists shared roles amongst members based on member's ability and talents. This involves sharing out of capacity building opportunities among members as opposed to creating what Monica Wambua calls knowledge silos. There is not room for creating skill and knowledge monopoly. That is, there is deliberate effort to avoid concentration of skills and knowledge in the hands of few members. Emphasis is put on increasing member's abilities and competencies as opposed to reprimanding them on their individual weaknesses.

***Long enough lifespan to develop cohesion***

Team leadership and the members should allow themselves reasonable time together to develop group cohesion. Spending a reasonable period of time to share experiences builds a trail of common history and identity. Quality time together leads to the emergence of more internal team leaders.

### ***Clear leadership structure***

There should exist well defined leadership structure and order guided by collectively developed constitution, rules and bylaws.

### ***Verifiable trust***

Tested trust will exist among members of an authentic team as opposed to blind trust for the sake of it.

### ***Loyalty***

Individual and collective commitment and loyalty to the purpose of the team and the purpose of their institution cannot be compromised. Purging out of non-loyal members is done promptly and without apology after giving enough warnings without significant reforms. Jesus himself illustrated the place of loyalty among leaders by narrating the parable of the man who travelled abroad to be installed a king but some of his subordinates back home chose to be disloyal in his absence. They got appropriate rebuke and punishment on his return (Luke 19:12-27):

### ***Mutual support***

Vibrant team members will be able to co-exist (interdependence) and willing to learn to be team players.

### ***Effective communication***

Each one listens to other team members and shares relevant information to help the team grow. Members are open and sincere.

## **Balancing team power and authority**

*“Leadership is something you earn, something you are chosen for or appointed to by an authority. You can’t come in yelling, ‘I’m your leader!’” – Ben Roethlisberger, Pittsburgh Steelers quarterback*

Authority and power are two different but equally important components of leadership. Authority is the right to act. It is usually granted by the appointing hierarchy. Power is the ability to act after getting appointed to a position of authority.

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

Power is earned. That is, one either exercises authority to act from a position of power, or may choose to act powerless. In the same vein, Kevin Brimhall (2014) argues that authority handed down but power is earned by what a leader does to win respect and trust of the followers. That is, one uses the granted authority to exercise power of implementation.

If a leader fails the test of integrity for instance, by his or her irresponsible actions, then he or she weakens his or her position of power over their followers. Authority is the right granted to somebody to represent or to act on behalf of the delegating entity. Power is the capacity to influence the behaviour of others to do your will or to implement your plans.

Ideally, everyone possesses the potential to be powerful or to act powerfully. But only a handful are ready to exercise that power by taking charge of situations after they are given the authority to lead. Leadership is the art of getting someone else to willingly do something you want done. While authority is pegged on one's title or position, power to influence people does not depend on such title, rank or position and can be limitless. It has to do with the personal ability or charisma to motivate followers to act on what must be done.

Someone may possess a great deal of power but absolutely no authority. These are regarded as opposition, fugitives or informal leaders and can be troublesome in an organization. They often seek to lay blame against the formal leadership hierarchy to whom they are not accountable. They may command large following through their charisma. Similarly, someone could have authority but remain absolutely powerless. How could one balance the two aspects? By delegating authority. Remember, delegating power and authority doesn't exonerate the leader from responsibility over what happens. They will still bear the blame should things go wrong!

*“Nearly all men can stand adversity, but if you want to test a man's character, give him power.” – President Abraham Lincoln, former U.S. President*

## **Verifiable trust as the bonding glue for teams**

A story goes that when President Ronald Reagan and President Mikhail Gorbachev were signing the truce to end 'cold war' between their two countries and eventually abolish communism, President Gorbachev signed instantly without raising any questions or doubts. But President Reagan delayed signing the peace treaty. When asked why he did not want to sign the document, he is reported to have replied (paraphrased): before you trust anything enough to commit yourself, you must verify. In other words, even though he trusted the document, he said he needed to verify the facts. That suggests that blind trust without adequate verification is imprudent.

Trust must exist both horizontally (among the people you lead) as well as vertically (within the hierarchy). That is between the team leaders and their followers and between the team leaders and their appointing authority, on whose behalf they lead and to whom they remain accountable. Devolution of power to choose and decide can only be delegated to people who have withstood and passed the test of trust over a period of time. That is, it is not a case of 'Don't You Trust Me?', but a case of verifiable trust.

Why should you claim to be worthy of trust? What concrete evidence exists to attest that you are trustworthy? Vertical trust should exist between the appointees and their appointing authorities. Besides the vertical trust, is the horizontal trust that must exist between the team leaders themselves and within the cluster groups of those they lead. It is only gullible or naïve people who are easily misled by sly and crafty people. They are messed up easily because they trust blindly without stopping to raise critical questions, without suspecting or raising doubts. They don't question where they are being led to.

*"Be faithful in small things because it is in them that your strength lies." – Mother Teresa, Catholic nun and saint*

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

It should also be noted that there is no true trust where there is fear. Trust is one of the most evasive but critical virtues in any human relationship. It has been one of the most abused virtues (both in public and in private realms). Trust is the cornerstone in relationships. Yet, it is either taken for granted or left to chance. Trust has been the overriding core drive in the success of any family or organization. The existence of trust in a team has to be tested and verified.

This is the truth about trust as advanced by the what the Bible to admonish us: *“Do not trust a neighbour; put no confidence in a friend. Even with your wife, guard the words of your lips. For a son dishonours his father, a daughter rises up against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law, a man’s enemies are the members of his own household” (Micah 7:5-6).*

In the recent years, teamwork is increasingly gaining recognition as the prerequisite for institutional effectiveness and efficiency. Trust-building has taken the center stage as the backbone to team’s success. Trust-building is an ongoing process, but a fragile one. Failed trust leaves a trail of wounded lot, which is hard to heal. Once wounds inflicted by failed trust heal, often that leaves behind lifelong emotional scars that tell the story of the past hurts. That is why trust has to be cultivated and nurtured continually.

*“A finger that wiped away your tears during hard times is far greater than a thousand hands that clapped for your success” Nicole’s Inspiring Quotes.*

### **Restoring eroded trust in a team**

I treasure this scripture: If someone has done you wrong, do not repay him with a wrong. Try to do what everyone considers to be good. As far as possible, do everything on your part to live in peace with everybody. Never take revenge, my friends, but instead let God vindicate you. Your unwillingness to revenge will make those who wrong you burn with shame. Do not let evil defeat you; instead, conquer evil with good (Romans 12:17-21).

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

One thing people dread most is coming under the power of somebody they don't trust. Leaders whom people don't trust reciprocate by sometimes mistreating the same people they lead. What follows is hell on earth. Coming under the power of a leader you don't trust will impede all forms of goodwill and progress. Where mistrust reigns, any move made or action taken by one party (between people and their leaders) will almost always be interpreted in bad faith by the other party. This in essence means, where there is no trust between leaders and their subjects, there cannot be productivity of any kind as relationships are constrained. Where relationships are constrained by mistrust, team building becomes a viable option, among other effective options.

According to Hope and Timmel (1996), we can increase our trust in others by being open and sharing our fears, feelings, ideas and our hidden self freely. In-depth communication increases trust. The key words here are openness and magnanimity in forgiveness. Trust grows by allowing others 'to be themselves' without imposing our choices, our ideas, goals, ideals, values and beliefs upon them. A trusting relationship is one in which each member creates for the other warmth and acceptance regardless of any personal differences.

To reinforce this same fact, Chinua Achebe says when villagers come together in the evening to warm themselves around a fire, it is not because they cannot light up the same fire each in their own homesteads to warm themselves, but it's because they seek to bond with each other through the stories they tell and the food they share as they warm themselves around the fire. With such bonding, it means whatever happens to the village, it affects each one of the villagers and whatever happens to any one of the individual villagers, and it affects the entire village. That's what has been termed as 'fate interdependence' as they get glued together by trust.

One does not attempt to coerce another person they deeply love; neither shall we attempt to control another person whom we deeply trust. If you truly trust someone, you will set that person free. You will not seek to impose your interests,

## **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

perceptions and virtues on the one you love. It should be an interaction of equals who set each other free. If that person comes back, it is because the person also trusts you. If the person doesn't come back, they were never meant to bond and belong with you beyond the time you have spent together.

### **Why work in teams – The need for synergy**

According to Linda A. Hill (2010), a Professor of Business Administration at Harvard Business School, the most effective leaders in the next decade (2020's) will be those who will lead from the back (from behind), not from the front. She borrows this concept from none other than Nelson Mandela who is said to have equated a great leader with a shepherd who stays behind the flock, letting the most agile and alert managers go ahead and manage from the front as innovative visionary leader leads from the back. Soon the organisation comes to realise that all along, it is being directed from behind by the 'shepherd'. This is certainly an exciting idea whose time has come.

*“A leader . . . is like a shepherd. He stays behind the flock, letting the nimblest (quickest, most agile) go out ahead, whereupon the others follow, not realizing that all along they are being directed from behind.” – Nelson Mandela, former President of South Africa*

It is believed that many hands together make work much easier to accomplish. Working in teams helps solve problems better by joining hands to lighten tasks. It also enhances sharing of ideas and sharing emotional stress. Working in teams enhances efficiency towards higher productivity as a result of synergy and its symbiotic effect. Teams ensure there is optimal utilisation of individual potentials by tapping different talents and experiences. People working in teams arrive at decisions of higher value than individual decisions.

*“I think one of the keys to leadership is recognizing that everybody has gifts and talents. A good leader will learn how to harness those gifts toward the same goal.” – Ben Carson, U.S. Secretary of Housing and Urban Development*

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

Setting up teams of employees based only on the professional skills required to meet a particular goal does not guarantee that those individuals will work together towards the set goals. In forming working teams, we need also to recognise different personality traits and temperaments besides their skills base. Ignoring individual differences guarantees that teams will operate below their level of optimal potential. When each member of the team pulls their part of the rope in harmony with the rest, the sum total output ultimately surpasses the normal production per capita. That is the effect of synergy of efforts and energies. But rivalry over power supremacy in teams and negative competition weakens productivity. That requires strong-hand leadership to neutralise harmful retrogression.

Building solid teams requires responsive and transparent leadership. Such solid teams learn to analyse problems effectively and critically. They should have the ability to regularly evaluate team progress. They should have the ability to logically piece information together such as to extrapolate meaning towards meaningful conclusions out of the evaluation exercises.

This ability gives a team the new impetus necessary towards attaining its goal. Hence, teams should be made up of people who can think and act creatively, make decisions, challenge inertia and ineffectiveness in their members. Team members should be able to listen to what is said and what is not said by both other team members and followers and be able to stitch ideas together. An ideal team possess diversity of skills and abilities galvanized by good interpersonal relations. It should be able to blend and match all these elements.

### **Shared leadership happens in teams**

*'May I stress the need for courageous, intelligent, and dedicated leadership...Leaders not in love with publicity but in love with humanity. Leaders not in love with money, but in love with justice. Leaders who can subject their particular egos to the greatness of the cause' (Martin Luther King Jnr by Ryan Holiday, 2017)*

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

According to Ralph Nader (2017), the function of good leadership should be to produce more leaders, not more followers. That means leadership should be shared through delegation of roles and responsibilities. Nobody is self-made as much as there is nobody who can be self-sufficient. This is unlike what some people tend to believe. When we say somebody is self-made, that is only valid if by that we mean the person doesn't thrive on paternalistic relationships of benevolence of godfathers and godmothers in a perpetual relationship of dependency.

Let us succeed in life through personal initiative and drive fired by strong desire to excel. Incidentally, many successful people tend to be those who have relationship with and strong faith in God. **There is certainly something indisputable about faith in God that works in favour of those who believe. In fact, most genuine celebrities I have met or listened to, acknowledge the power of God working in their lives as the secret behind their achievements.**

In effect, according to Myles Monroe, God brought us to this world as a finished product with all the specifications in place necessary to accomplish his purpose for us here on earth. Just like for any manufacturer's product, God's image is imprinted on the finished product called (wo)man. God cares enough about his own reputation to ensure that (wo)man will accomplish the purpose for which God created the and put them here on earth. That's why he equips each one of us perfectly well before he places us here on earth. However, we need other people to fellowship with and reassure one another that we are complete together as we complement each other with skills and emotions that we may lack individually.

Talking about protecting our image, somebody has admonished that we should be careful with four categories of people who can wittingly or unwittingly tarnish our reputation: a child, an insane person, drunkard and a malicious person. That may sound silly and simplistic but the truth is that these categories of people do not have the word 'privacy' in their vocabulary. The first three categories will 'shout' about what

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

they know, hear or see without due regard to the implication of their words. The fourth category may choose to ‘shout’ with intention to destroy you and demolish your empire out of malice. Hence, we should be careful how we conduct ourselves whether in private or in public just in case any of these people pick it up.

*‘Speak to a person in a language he understands and you appeal to his mind, speak to him in his own language and you appeal to his heart’ – Nelson Mandela*

### **Speaking through ‘the voiceless’**

We need the support of other people to succeed in life. Nobody can succeed alone. We are who we are today because of the many people who have touched our lives as teachers, mentors, counsellors, advisers and encouragers. Hence, we are the sum total of the inspiration, mentorship, as well as admonishment from the people of goodwill we have met in life. The Holy Spirit is also at work behind the scenes to guide and rebuke us at the appropriate times.

According to Pope Francis, to listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit, essentially means to listen to the voices of each one of us and especially the whispers of those who are suffering and the down trodden in society: the poor, the homeless, young people addicted to drugs (and the writer has one recovering in the house) and everyone else that the society rejects. This means giving attention to the voices of those around us and near us, as well as those physically, socially and psychologically far from us. This is so either because they live in uninhabitable locations such as slums, or because they are socially separated from us by lifestyle, education or social class, or those whom we consider as social misfits. According to Pope Francis, Holy Spirit speaks to through what they need to tell us, if only we can humble ourselves enough to listen to them.

In fact, all we mean to say here is that we are not self-made. I believe everybody we meet in life, is not by chance or accident. God sends people our way for a purpose, to bless

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

us, encourage us or correct us. Whoever boasts of being self-made has already allowed personal ego to overshadow the truth. That's simply a false sense of self-sufficiency which doesn't exist anywhere in the world.

*"In periods where there is no leadership, society stands still. Progress only occurs when courageous, skillful and inspired leaders seize the opportunity to change things for the better." – Harry Truman, former U.S. President*

To be a good leader, one must have the goodwill to do things right at service to the followers. There must be devotion, patience and more importantly, the ability to work in harmony with others in a team and be able to negotiate and work with each other to achieve a common goal. Good leaders are made and not born (Bass and Bass 2008). In fact, experience, knowledge and technical skills may not be fundamental prerequisites for good leadership. It is one's good and positive attitude (values) that will determine the ability to learn and harness contribution of other team members for the good and growth of all. That's the most essential factor in teams. Experience, knowledge and skills can be acquired through on-job training as long as attitude (values) of the trainee is positive and properly aligned with the expectations of the team, group or organisation.

## **Departure from 'Great Man' theory of leadership**

*"Perfection is not attainable, but if we chase perfection, we can catch excellence." – Vince Lombardi, legendary Green Bay Packers coach*

True leadership is about love-driven service. This is affirmed by Haggai (2013) who argues that positive self-worth and success comes from focusing on generosity, service, and loving relationships more than from accumulation of wealth, recognition, and power status. This value of service and loving relationships can only best be attained through groups and teams. It also follows that team leadership enhances relationships of accountability as opposed to 'one-man' show'.

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

*'A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed' (Proverbs 11:25)*

The relatively new thrust in the perfection of leadership through teams is a direct critique of 'Great Man Theory', often conceptualised interchangeably with 'Trait Theory' of leadership (Bolden, R., et. al. 2003). In the same context, Carlyle, T. (1841) suggested that great leaders are born, not made. It is their behavioural characteristics and natural talents charisma which catapult them into leadership. According to Carlyle, these inborn traits include intelligence, charm, confidence, sociability, intuition, judgement, courage, aggressiveness, persuasion and such like natural talents. These are assumed to be inbuilt in the family's genes and are passed on from generation to generation.

Leadership through teams is a radical departure from the great man theory of leadership. The great man theory is characterised by domination of leadership by dynastic succession. These are families believed to possess innate qualities with 'divine' inspiration 'necessary' to lead anywhere anytime. This is an idea that believes history could only be made by the impact of individuals who are uniquely gifted with natural attributes of superior intelligence and heroic courage. More often than not, imposing body physique is also considered an important criterion to qualify for leadership.

In many Western countries, wealth status is also considered as a criterion to qualify for leadership. In fact, it is widely believed that one cannot make it to presidency in United States of America unless they are reasonably wealthy above average. Those who belabour today to seek to create structures of leadership founded on the new values of people's empowerment often do so under great resistance. The Great Man Theorists believe that nothing can change the fact that leaders are born into the world and not created by any other means, not even by training of followers. How mistaken such notion is!

While historical track record in the world over the years tends to validate 'Great Man Theory', it may be foolhardy to adopt it

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

wholesome and allow it to permeate our leadership practice in our modern democratic world without challenging it. In the normative realm, the Great Man Theory makes sense for sure. Nevertheless, in the empirical field of research within the framework of the modern thrust in people's empowerment, shared team leadership is what seems to make more sense

The Great Man Theory has given birth to the rise of oppressive dictators who can only be removed from power through popular anarchist uprising or through military coups. There is no way new leaders could emerge to promote shared servant leadership where 'Great Man Theory' governs a society. Such leaders rarely respect the verdict of popular elections from a democratic process for obvious reasons. They believe their leadership is God ordained and therefore tied to the destiny of the people they lead. With such notion, their leadership can only be passed on to their blood relatives.

Whenever we are determined to succeed in our leadership service and in whatever else we will lay our hands on, then we will do so with a touch of perfection. With that determination, we would need no supervisor to oversee what we do. We would resolve to render the best of our services to humanity wholeheartedly as leaders without the expectation of personal benefits such as kickbacks. That's one reason why it would be wrong to pay our children to perform ordinary domestic chores at home. They should learn the virtue of service to humanity by serving their own families without compensation. That's a value that should be inculcated right from early childhood if we expect to grow leaders who would serve the society without necessarily expecting personal benefits. The good news is that God is not unjust. He will not forget our work and the love we have shown him as we have served his people and continue to serve them (Hebrews 6:10).

It should be remembered that as leaders, we can either build and nurture people's ego and sense of worth or destroy it by the words we use when addressing them. These are called 'builder' and 'killer' statements. As leaders, our words carry a lot of weight and especially on what we tell and advise

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

people. Followers often trust words from the mouth of a leader without reservation. Let our words be more edifying and avoid condemnation and judgment.

Professional counsellors usually desist from advising and directing people on how to handle their life issues. Instead they ask them soul-searching questions that lead the counselees to deeply reflect on their situations until they themselves discover solutions to their own issues.

There were certainly many good things done in our favour when we were young and growing up. These were done by our parents, relatives, our teachers, our mentors out there or even community leaders. Most of these meant to mold us for our own good, to build us up. Yet, because we were young, sometimes we thought they were maliciously punitive. We remember with fond memories some of these good deeds and compliments given to us when we were young.

One most inspiring phrase given to me at the age of twenty-five was from an American Catholic Missionary Nun with whom I conducted a training workshop for capacity building among community leaders in Kaduna State of Northern Nigeria. This was in 1978. As I was leaving for Kenya, she gave me a thankyou note with the following remarks: 'Take care of yourself Francis, you are precious in the eyes of many'. I can't get the right words here to express the great uplifting that statement did for my life. The impact it had on me as a young man and for the rest of my life was immeasurable.

This went a long way to reassure me (as a young professional) that my skills and competence were relevant beyond Kenya. That came to pass since by the time of my 'retirement' at sixty, I had trained thousands of leaders in fifteen Anglophone countries and shared my experiences in eight countries of the Western World. All I am emphasising here is that we have the obligation as leaders to speak life and inspire confidence to the people we serve and especially the young generation.

This is reinforced by the conviction that the fundamental function of leadership is to create more leaders, and not to

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

create more followers (Ralph Nader- envision.engage.enliven). A pragmatic leader knows when to lead and when to step back and accept to be led, giving room for followers to lead. Those who don't believe in capacity building for leadership tend to intimidate their subjects with the phrase: 'You either lead, follow or get out of the way' (In Daily News Articles by Rhodes Weaver, W. 1961). Nevertheless, training for capacity building is meant to create new leaders from multitude of followers.

'Enabling Leadership' is a brilliant concept though still at the experimental stages. 'Enabling Leadership' promotes the kind of leadership that is suitable for shepherding flock from the back instead of from the front. This is a brilliant metaphor worthy of meticulous attention to accord it its credence and establish its efficacy. That's our intention in this book.

In my view, authentic leadership is rooted in sincere love for the followers. Anything short of that is fake and corrupt. This honest kind of love can only be validated by offering our leadership services sacrificially to improve other people's lives and their welfare without hidden agenda of self-glorification. Am coming from strong culture and background of people's empowerment through their participation. People are expected and facilitated to identify issues of concern in their lives that need to be acted upon to ameliorate suffering. They are facilitated to carry out analysis of those issues and plan for action to transform of any undesirable condition of life.

*"Ninety percent of leadership is the ability to communicate effectively something people yearn for." – Dianne Feinstein, U.S. Senator*

This can only be realised where there is leadership that promotes unity rooted in desire to attain justice that is driven by love for the people. This desire is characterized by transparency and simplicity. At the risk of sounding a religious fanatic, I would want to categorically state here that such kind of virtues can only be found in God fearing leaders. These are leaders who are conscious of serving God through their service to mankind. Without that sensitivity to upper power, we tend to lose focus on the ultimate purpose of

### THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS

our service as leaders, and find ourselves acting trivial as we begin to lower our focus to immediate personal gain, whether material gain or seeking to attain more power.

## **Obligation of leadership teams in mitigating climate change**

The writer is an organizing secretary in a Kenyan Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) by name 'Environmental Voice Today'. This is an NGO committed to creating awareness on the effects of climate change and our obligation as humanity to reverse or at least to reduce the adverse effects of climate change by doing whatever we are capable of to play our part in an effort to increase and preserve African greenery. It is our collective responsibility as to preserve our heritage for this generation as well as for posterity or for future generations.



In these early years of my retirement, the writer has given himself to making a contribution to the mitigation of climate change, particularly in planting trees wherever there is space within his jurisdiction of leadership. His initiative to plant

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

trees started way back about twenty years ago when he owned his own land. It had always been his natural desire to create the ambience of greenery around wherever he lived but until then, his habitation was in towns without much space to plant a tree. Since twenty or so years ago, he has been planting trees totaling to a few thousands. His tree planting is not commercial but more of a hobby and more for aesthetic purposes.

## **Promotion of Green Economy; trees support human life**

Green Economy is an economic policy that aims at reducing environmental risks and ecological disasters through the management of sustainable development agenda. This gives priority to focus on renewable energy options and all other developmental strategies that seek to avoid degradation of the environment. This has bias towards low-carbon, resource efficient and socially inclusive development strategies. This relatively new impetus is packaged under the term “Economics of Ecosystem and Biodiversity” which hand down certain standards and conditions that must met and certified through environmental audits. For instance in Kenya, such audits are carried out by Kenya National Environmental Management Authority (NEMA) as a precondition for the licensing of industrial activities and business operations.

According to CORDAID, an international NGO in the Netherlands committed to a wide range of social justice issues, in their bulletin article entitled: *‘Turning a growing problem into a sustainable solution’*, climate crisis is increasingly unsettling the planet. Bush fires, droughts, floods and cyclones are becoming more frequent, more extreme than ever before and more widespread in all parts of the globe. In addition to their immediate disastrous impact, these catastrophic events are also steadily increasing food insecurity as a result of salinisation of the soil. By training farmers to grow salt-tolerant crops, CORDAID contributes to a sustainable solution that creates new opportunities for smallholder farmers in the countries

## **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

they operate in spread all over the world.

Premese Africa, a private organization in Kenya, is similarly making an intervention as a humble contributor to this noble cause of reversing the adverse effects of climate change. It is doing so by sponsoring afforestation activities of Environmental Voice Today (EVT), an NGO promoting green energy through tree planting and solar energy initiatives in Makueni and Machakos counties of Kenya.

The writer is the Executive Founder Director of Premese Africa and the secretary in EVT initiative. We are planning to plant at least one thousand trees a year within the next three to five years. This doesn't sound too ambitious. That is intentional because we plan to be more practically realistic than rhetorical. We also want to invest more in ensuring greater percentage of survival rate of the seedlings we plant.

Right since time immemorial, vegetation including trees has always been intertwined with animal life, and in particular, with human living. Since the time of Adam and Eve, the first human beings to occupy our mother earth, farm trees were part and partial of human life. In fact, the Bible tells us that Adam and Even were given to enjoy all kinds of trees in their garden except for one which was forbidden as it had to do with human life and death. I believe only God knew why fruits from that particular tree was not meant for human consumption but had to be preserved. Since then, the following have been the major purposes for which trees have been used to enrich human life (but not limited to this):

- For food as they produce fruits and berries among other edibles
- For medicinal purposes
- For much needed shade
- For firewood
- For timber and poles for house construction
- For furniture

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

- For wood carvings and other similar artefacts
- Aesthetics (environmental beauty to behold and for decorations)
- For academic research among other purposes
- Purification of air against pollution: As human beings pollute the air by breathing out carbon dioxide and as industrial activities emit carbon monoxide, trees on the other hand absorb the pollution in the air and release oxygen in return.



### ***Forests, Hills and Mountains - Our Collective African Heritage***

*“You will go out in joy, and be led forth in peace, the mountains and hills will burst into song before you, and all trees of the field will clap their hands” (Isaiah 55:12)*

According to a research published in June 2020 (World Bank, IBRD – IDA) the global response to the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in unprecedented global reductions in economic activity. Consequently, it was glaringly evident in 2020 that environmental pollution dropped drastically worldwide.

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

Nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter (or particle pollution) levels are said to have reduced by about 60% and 31% respectively in 34 countries. This was owing to the COVID-19 containment measures and especially the global lockdowns.

This has proved beyond any reasonable doubt that with collective agreement and solidarity, it is possible for the world community to reverse and control the adverse effects of human activities that destroy the environment. We have been destroying the environment in the name of growing human civilization with concomitant consumption and technologies for economic growth.

The flip side of this positive turn of events as far as environmental conservation is concerned, was that the world economy nose-dived resulting into one of the worst economic depressions ever experienced by mankind globally. To rehabilitate and revive the world economy, leaders have an obligation to sensitise both their followers and families in particular, on the need to begin to conserve the environment locally (especially at the home-front), as well as in community institutions.

We can appropriately make reference here to religious exhortations on environmental conservation. It is believed that while science and religion are often thought of as being at odds on many issues, they are however said to be in agreement on many issues of environment. From Buddha to Christianity to Hinduism to Islam, various faiths acknowledge the need for environmental stewardship and their holy texts urge adherents to be caretakers of the earth.

When the first human being was created, he was given the Garden of Eden to ‘work it and take care of it’ (Genesis 2:15-20). “Out of the ground the Lord God caused to grow every tree that is pleasing to the sight and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, which is also referred to as the tree of knowledge of good and evil. A river is said to have flowed out of Eden to water the garden...” (Genesis 2:9-14).

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

Adam was not given commodities to trade with, neither farm machineries such as tractors and combine harvesters. Instead, he was given the requisite intelligence to invent those things for himself and to utilise them in the conservation of his environment and multiplication of his production. He had the obligation to conserve the environment as he made the land productive. By extension, we have a similar obligation to conserve our eco-system that sustains life.

We are mere tenants, squatters if you wish, assigned to be the stewards and trustees of God's creation. We are meant to tend what belongs to the owner of the earth as we benefit from the proceeds. We are not to abuse or neglect it. In other words, as stewards of God's creation, we believe that humans have a responsibility towards the environment. We must be environmentally responsible and sensitive against any action that attempts to destroy or destabilize the environmental harmony. All creation worships, glorifies, honours and sings for God (Revelation 5:13; Nehemiah 9:6; Psalms 66:4; Luke 19:40)

Ecologists would urge us to be mindful of environment and particularly the preservation of space for its creatures other than humans as we develop our cities with concrete everywhere. They remind us that we should always create sufficient open and green spaces for other living creatures. We should also plant enough variety of trees and other vegetation for birds of the air and other creatures which would seek to co-exist with city civilization in appropriate habitation. In fact, wherever we have planted trees within the schools, birds of all different species and colours have merged. The environment is overwhelmed by nice melodies from singing birds.

We are already familiar with the effects of climate change as we witness the expansion of desolate lands as a result of soil depletion and overuse of land. Deforestation is a sure tragedy today as millions of acres of forest cover is lost annually. Nations world-wide have intervened by slowing down use of wood and timber through institution of appropriate policies to ban depletion of forests for wood. In some countries such as Kenya, use of some of the most valuable wood for timber has

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

been outlawed. Policies have been enacted to slowdown the use of river sand in construction industries. It's also illegal in Kenya to interfere with a riparian land. Let's play our part in environmental conservation, no matter how negligible, and at the end of the day we will gradually begin to see the positive impact.

In the same spirit of conserving environment, alternative sources of energy such as geothermal and solar energy for commercial and domestic consumption including cooking and lighting are increasingly becoming popular. Governments and commercial banks are increasingly advancing loans to fund these initiatives globally. Premese institutions have also started harnessing solar energy for lighting and water heating. This initiative is financed by the Premese directors all of whom are also directors of Environmental Voice Today. The solar lighting energy only requires replacement of the solar batteries after every three years or so while solar heating has virtually no maintenance cost at all.

We have an obligation to re-create the lost Garden of Eden within our homes, as well as in our community institutions such as school compounds, Mosques and Churches. As leaders, let us make it part of our mission to beautify and make our homesteads attractive through environmental aesthetics. This goes beyond the mere appreciation of the art that seeks to embrace environmental objects as well as natural and human environments. Development of agroforestry (intercropping of forest and food crops) and the development of natural sites within and outside our homes should be encouraged especially among the youth and school-going children. Let us make it part of their culture as they grow-up, a culture of friendship and interaction with environment.

Landscaping and creation of flower beds as well as planting of indoor and outdoor plants adds to the genre of aesthetics. However, we will always need to be conscious of the huge difference between planting of trees and growing of trees. Planting of trees ends just at that, but growing of trees pertains to maximising the survival rate of the planted seedlings by

**THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

nurturing and monitoring their growth to maturity instead of abandoning them after planting.

# CHAPTER 4



## Sharing Leadership Authority With Front-Line Teams

*‘The greatest of leaders, in my view, is first a vision bearer. He or she sets the direction and pace of work including organisational vision, core values and policies. He inspires his people’s resolve and courage to accomplish goals they have collectively set themselves. He spurs people’s motivation to willingly go out of their way to maximise their potential in accomplishing what must be done and done well. At the end of it all, when success is attained, he lets people take the credit. But both the people and observers acknowledge that the shepherd is leading from the back. Should things go wrong by chance, the shepherd accepts the blame and apologises on behalf of the organisational team, then moves on to correct the situation without apportioning blame on any individual members of the team, believing it was a spontaneous mistake.’ (A chat between the writer and one of his Senior Staff, Friday 15<sup>th</sup> January 2021).*

### Why lead from the back

According to Prof. Peter M. Lewa (in our one-on-one discussion in February 2021), engaged leadership, inclusive leadership and servant leadership are some of the emergent leadership theories. These three have so much in common. It is within the context of servant leadership that the author has conceptualized the practice of leading from the back. The basic idea is giving space for the followers to take liberty for creativity and innovation in their work but within the parameters of set policies. This challenges stakeholders to move on to predetermined goals through creation of new and novel ideas and experiments. However, the vision bearer,

## **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

though leading from the back, still retains the ultimate responsibility over the outcome of that process. Vision bearers may unknowingly stifle people's innovation and creativity if they takeover leadership from the front. They should continue to lead from the back while keeping a tap on things. That is the essence of servant leadership”.

*“To my amazement, it is only now when am almost turning seventy, that it is dawning on me after meditatively listening to a gospel music by Dolly Parton and Zach Williams in their lyrics ‘There Was Jesus’, that for everything I have gone through in life, good or bad, there was Jesus in the midst. That’s precisely the meaning of ‘I will never leave you, nor forsake you’. What a loving and forgiving Savior we have”*  
(Mulwa, F.W.)

The essence of deliberate choice to lead from the back emanates from leader's conviction that followers would have the capacity to lead themselves but only under certain conditions. Capacity building through training is certainly a prerequisite for the followers to effectively and successfully take up the mantle of leadership. Often, we don't know what we can do until we jump on to the pedals. Training for capacity building gives people confidence once they know they are already equipped to lead. As they gain confidence in themselves, they begin to change their attitude from ‘I can't do’ to ‘let me try it’.

The society we live in has certain entrenched beliefs that limit the goodwill and determination to do what is good. The efficacy and effectiveness expected from leading from the back can only be realised where there exists great frontline teams. The challenge will always remain real where personal success and acquisition of power among leaders remains the fundamental motivation of leadership. It is the whole question of values and attitudes both in our leaders as well as in the people they lead. Training for capacity building is meant to instill new attitudes in the leaders to realise they are not more than people's servants in the strict sense of the word. The followers on the other hand are trained to demand accountability from the leaders they choose.

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

As we enter into the realm of capacity building as vision bearers, we should remain cognizant of the fact that leaders in the society will continue to seek for opportunities to take advantage of their leadership positions to grab and amass wealth through corrupt deals. They will therefore not willingly let go by sharing power with frontline teams.

On the other hand, some of the frontline teams may also harbour similar ambitions for personal gain. In such a case, the noble dream of vision bearer to empower the frontline teams gets frustrated even before the process begins. That's why it is a big challenge to get the right people with the right attitude to sell the servant leadership dream effectively. Incompatible attitudes must therefore change through capacity building efforts before the emerging leaders can be expected to take up the leadership mantle and stand the test of accountability with transparency.

Authentic leadership from the back requires disciplined vision bearers who are resilient enough to wait until the frontline teams get the idea and begin to behave and work with great sense of belonging and responsibility. This is when differentiation between sense of belonging and sense of owning is clarified frequent enough to avoid ambiguity. To protect the interests of the vision bearers, it should repeatedly be made clear that frontline leadership teams remain employees of the institution with consensual contracts to that effect. They are hired and work under the labour laws of the land and therefore not more than employees of the institution even when they are highly elevated.

There was drama not long ago in one of private universities in Western Kenya after they hired a very powerful Vice Chancellor (VC). After only few years in the office, this particular VC succeeded in setting up a parallel leadership structure that pushed out the Founder University Chancellor together with his entire university council. The new VC had been delegated full authority and power to run the institution with little interference of the Chancellor and his university council.

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

The founder chancellor believed whole heartedly in the new concept of leading from the back and therefore decided to delegate most of his functions and powers to the new vice chancellor. Little did he know the new vice chancellor was coming from the old school of thought that leadership pertains to grabbing and concentration of power for personal gain. She decided to take advantage of the new opportunity to abuse power and authority bestowed upon her. She dismantled the university council and formed a new one.

Within three years, the founder chancellor was declared a persona non grata (a security risk) in the institution through a court order. He could not step into the university leave alone to give executive orders. He instituted a counter process to regain the institution through court appeal. He succeeded and instituted the formation of new leadership structures, this time round with cautionary measures. These are the typical setbacks that can be expected anywhere if the process of empowerment of frontline teams within the new framework of paradigm shift in management is rushed. In such a case, such change should of necessity be backed up by parallel efforts for capacity building to change stakeholders' attitudes and organizational practices to align with the new approach in leading from the back.

The demarcation between sense of belonging and sense of owning should be clearly drawn and communicated to stakeholders within the framework of the new leadership approach in leading from the back. Any wild and unrealistic expectations should be ruled out as early as possible. The employer institution and programme thereof should remain the brain-child of the vision bearers.

Vision bearers who are fully convinced on the potential of their frontline teams to lead effectively with minimal or no supervision should take time to prepare them, especially by equipping them with appropriate attitudes and values before they invite them to the table of leadership from the front. Preferably, such orientation should be an ongoing process such as on-job training before vision bearers begin to lead

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

from the back. They become consultants to whom frontline teams can fall back in case of need for guidance, counselling and arbitration.

Vision bearers should trust in the ability of the new leadership to whom they entrust what they have painstakingly built over the years. They should prepare the new leaders and trust they can perfectly do what they did for years and perhaps even better, with appropriate training and mentorship. Without such belief on the part of the vision bearers, the handing over of the leadership mantle will become an uphill task as well as a threatening measure.

As discussed earlier under the lessons on delegation, vision bearers are not expected to handover and disappear from the scene. That would be ill advised and tantamount to irresponsible leadership as they still bear the ultimate responsibility unless they are due for retire. As long as they guard against their own unwarranted interference, they should remain available for consultations when their guidance is required by the new leaders.

Professor Peter Mutuku Lewa quotes Greenleaf, an authority on servant leadership (Greenleaf, 1904-1990). He observes that it is one of Greenleaf's record breaking and influential academic works: *Servant is a Leader*. Greenleaf asserts that a *Servant-Leader* must first be a "servant" before any other consideration (Greenleaf, 1977; 2002). Servant leadership starts with the natural sensation that one has the desire to lead. It is this awareness of the desire to offer service that leads one to want to serve and sets him or her to the course of seeking for leadership, specifically as a servant leader.

It is close to or synonymous with "leading with purpose" or "purpose driven leadership" among other similar adages. In the Greenleaf's view, it is the kind of leadership that says "if you do not know where you are going, any road will take you there" (Chinese Proverb). Hence, it must be clear in your mind to what destination you want to lead your people. The major difference with other forms of leadership is that in servant leadership, the desired destination or goal or purpose

## **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

is jointly determined with the people, with all stakeholders.

*“When we face challenges that lie just beyond our ability, we enter into the realm of faith and hope. It is as we face new frontiers in our lives that we truly encounter what our Creator has endowed us to do. Don’t be afraid to desire to accomplish more in life no matter what circumstances you may find yourself battling out with. Hope will see you through. For hope gives us the strength to walk away from failure and move on to our destiny.” (Source: God’s Little Devotional Book for Leaders” Lighthouse Inspirational Books, 1997)*

Servant Leaders who lead from the back are busy strengthening organisational structures that provide vision and direction. Professional discipline is never compromised. Their employees are privy to innovative work with significant creativity. Our Project Management Lecturer at St. Francis Xavier University in Canada, Professor Amit (1980), used to repeatedly hammer into our minds that, if you don’t become creative and innovate in your work, and instead repeat the same routine work (e.g. same schemes of work and same lesson plans) for ten years, you will brag of having ten years’ experience while in actual fact it’s only one year experience repeated ten times. Doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results is in futility, which has been described in many quarters as ‘madness’.

*“Brothers and sisters, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong”. 1 Corinthians 1:26-29 New International Version*

Linda Hill observes that it is in the desire to effectively lead from behind that leaders must invest heavily in training budgets to build capacities that would enable people manage their own affairs independently and effectively without need for external supervision. Once leadership capacities of frontline teams and subordinate managers in general, vision bearers may now step back from active day today routine leadership functions and instead keep inspiring, mentoring and enabling as a continuous process. While they still remain

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

in close touch with the frontline leaders, vision bearers are no longer in the daily operations of their organizations. Instead they remain available for constant consultations whenever necessary.

Those who lead from the back believe that, to use Linda's words, the society's notion of the brilliant innovator, and the solitary genius with sudden flash of creative insights, is fast vanishing. What will remain is the style of management where most innovation is the result of collaborative work. This involves collective effort of think-tanks of innovation where each member of the employees throws in a 'spanner' into the works as a slice of 'personal genius'.

This is said to be more productive and sustainable than waiting for the 'big idea' to come from the boss. This does not suggest relegating the boss to the oblivion. On the contrary, the 'boss' remains the driving force behind the institution other than its day to day operations. It is only in such a setting that ordinary employees begin to make extraordinary contributions in ideas and practical innovations with brilliant performance. Appreciate them and recognize their great work.

Leading from the back will not compromise your fundamental role as long-term 'direction-setter' and 'vision-bearer'. If you expect your team to produce something truly original and truly big, then you must take the courage to let go of day-to-day decisions and responsibilities which the trusted and competent subordinates can execute effectively and independently. This must be done within the confines and parameters of the wider organisational policies and strategic plans. Vision bearers must be kept informed. Thus, inclusivity and full engagement of key stakeholders is assured.

*'You can have everything in life you want if you will just help enough other people get what they want' (Zig Ziglar)*

### **Two levels of stakeholder interaction**

Ideally, there are two levels of team input and interaction in an organisation. There are internal teams which may comprise of organisational employees. Some of these would be more

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

senior than others. Similarly, there are external teams made up of management advisory boards and committees who may not necessarily be organisational employees but remain among the key stakeholders of an organisation.

These are either the organisational founders or appointed people to advise and render support services required by the organisation from time to time. Depending on the nature of organization, the external stakeholders may or may not be compensated for their time-input. The Management Board usually comprises of the vision bearers and directors. Management Advisory Committees and boards assist in the organizational problem solving, decision making processes, personnel recruitment and matters of staff discipline. Usually implementation of what is deliberated in such committees and boards is the responsibility of organizational employees. It is important to note that none of these teams should be permanent in an organisation.

A vibrant organisation will always remain vigilant enough not to create sense of entitlement among individuals and teams that serve it. Nobody should be indispensable. Our experience points out to the fact that when members of a particular organisational stakeholders, whether internal or external stakeholders, provide service for too long, they begin to develop sense of owning, leading to the feeling of indispensability. When individuals begin to imagine an organisation cannot do without them, then they become a liability to that organisation. It is a cancer that begins to eat up the organization as impunity begins to grow. Even founder directors themselves should never imagine the organisation's lifespan will always remain tied to their own individual and collective lifespan. This is reckless thinking for an organization that is meant to outlive the founders. Instead, they should begin to prepare and mentor their successors.

Complacency may begin to emerge in long-serving stakeholders and this should not be permitted as it leads to suppression of creativity and innovation. If not dealt with from the bud and immediately so, complacent members of the team will

## **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

begin to discourage or slow down new innovations from new employees. Best practices offer employees consensual contracts of three years renewable. Time-bound contracts go a long way to clear assumptions of indispensability for long serving stakeholders. Yet, long serving stakeholders are a great asset when it comes to organizational stability and organizational memory.

*'It is not the strongest, nor the most intelligent species that survive the possibility of extinction over the history; but the species that is responsive to change' (Adapted from Charles Darwin 1809-1882)*

In some organisations, individual contracts are not renewable after six years without major changes in terms of service. This may mean physical transfers or relocation of one kind or another. One such relocation may mean mandatory requirement to go on a sabbatical leave or sabbatical year of study in a meaningful course that adds value to the reflections their work experience. Such retreat gives the long serving employees time out to synthesis lessons gained in their many years of working experience. In the process, they are expected to come back with new insights. They also come back re-energised, perhaps to play a more senior role, or to work on a new project in a different institution altogether. All these changes would be in bid to stimulate greater productivity.

### **Shepherds create environment of security**

All through, 'shepherds' make sure the flock stays together through these operational dynamics. They use their rod (policies) to shove back the flock that is straying too far away from the formation. For great leaders, the major task in working through teams is to harness people's collective genius. They create a world to which people want to belong. A shared purpose makes people want to stay together. It makes them to be willing to do the hard work of innovation. On your part as a leader, you make sure your people feel secure with constant assurance that all is well. The leader ensures there exists adequate warmth and protection without necessarily creating paternalistic dependency. That is the same way a

## **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

shepherd ensures his flock is secure and feels secure from external attacks even when the shepherd leads from behind.

The shepherd remains alert and sensitive. He sees far ahead of the flock but from behind. Seeing far ahead of the flock means that he is somewhere on the “balcony” providing an oversight view of the flock. The recent wave of devolution in Kenya has seen the introduction of the word ‘oversighting’ to mean supervision. That’s how the shepherd would be able to accurately judge when there is a looming danger anywhere in the vicinity of the flock.

Often quoted on this strategy is Julius Caesar among many others. In the modern world of leadership, we can cite Mahatma Gandhi (Goodreads 2020) who was quoted as having said: ‘There goes my people. I must follow them, for I am their leader’. I believe Mandela of South Africa comes from the same schools of thought. The bottom line of leadership success here is ‘Enabling Leadership’ of front teams as you lead from the back. Imagine a shepherd who follows flock that spreads into diverse routes. Where sense of direction is lost compounded by lack of cohesion in a team, the centre (shepherd) will not be able to hold.

*“A man who wants to lead the orchestra must turn his back on the crowd.” – Max Lucado, Christian author and preacher (Thus, you don’t have to be conspicuous to lead).*

## **Leaders navigate seasons of change with courage**

For a period of twenty-two years (1992 to 2015), we ran vibrant transformative programmes for capacity building among entrepreneurs, development and education professionals. We did this under the umbrella of Premese Africa Development Institute. By end of 2015, we had trained over 25,000 (Twenty-Five Thousand) young (and not so young) professionals, from all walks of life, including government civil servants, parastatal officers, project managers, politicians, NGO managers; Managers of Community Based Development Organisations (CBOs) and Faith-Based Organisations among others.

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

We equipped them with both short-term professional courses as well as academic Diplomas and Certificates. All these courses were registered and recognised by both Ministry of Education, Technical and Vocational Education and Training Authority (TVETA) and Commission for University Education.

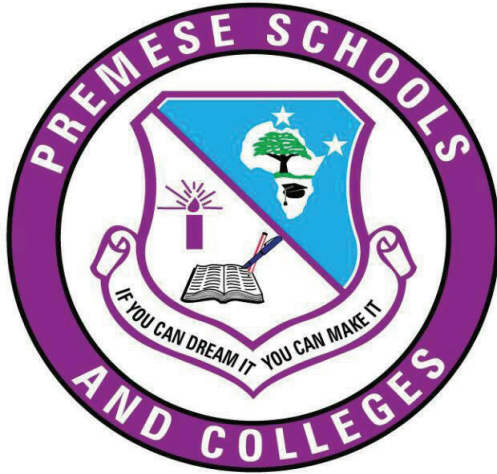
The students were drawn from Eastern Africa, Central Africa, Southern Africa, Horn of Africa and West Africa. Some who had been unemployed for years acquired jobs on the completion of our courses. Others were promoted in their organisations. Many were admitted into universities locally and abroad for their undergraduate and postgraduate degrees with credit transfers.

The courses ranged from Business Management and Administration to Community Development; Social Work and Development; Human Resource Management; and Community Health and Development. Come early 2020, we ‘closed shop’ on these course to concentrate on our schools and early childhood training programmes. Part of the reason for this drastic measure was the onset of COVID-19 pandemic which exacerbated poor student enrollment. With rent remaining constant, we could not afford to sustain the training.

*“Develop success from failures. Discouragement and failure are two of the surest stepping stones to success.” – Dale Carnegie, author and motivational speaker*

*“We do not need magic to change the world, we carry all the power we need inside ourselves already” – J.K. Rowling, author of the Harry Potter series*

## The niche of Premese Educational Institutions



### Description of PREMESE Logo:

#### MEANING OF THE ACRONYM PREMESE:

**PR**ime Education and  
**ME**ntorship **SE**rvice

**AFRICA:** Our identity  
and cultural heritage  
as Africans

**PREMESE MOTTO:** “Character & Self-Discipline Wins Everything”

**GREEN TREE:** Continuous development and transformation of PREMESE as an institution and our continuous growth with our clients into the future. It also signifies our sensitivity to and focus on environmental conservation through planting of trees as a strategy for mitigation of climate change.

**CANDLE:** Radiating light and warmth to Africa instead of ‘cursing the darkness’. We radiate that light through stakeholders’ enlightenment with collective decision making and collective responsibility.

**ACADEMIC CAP, PENS & BOOK:** Focused on Academic excellence

**PURPLE COLOUR:** It is traditionally the colour that symbolizes wisdom and power to act in order to transform communities and society.

**STARS:** Focused on building a bright future where not even sky is the limit.

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

**PREMESE VISION:** To become center(s) of academic excellence, with a niche in nurturing talents, through holistic world-class education that seeks to develop the intellectual, physical, emotional, spiritual and social competencies.

**PREMESE MISSION:** We endeavour to collaborate and partner with like-minded individuals and institutions in our desire to inculcate and restore values in our society through the kind of education that instills appropriate virtues, churning out astute leaders and hard-working moral citizens.

**PREMESE CORE VALUES:** Service to God's People With Humility; Integrity Through Accountability; Team Work, Partnership & Net-Working; Solidarity in Cause for Justice; Empowerment & Participation; Gender Equity; Self-Support; Sustainability Through Wealth Creation; Unity in Diversity; and Interdependence in Autonomy.

### **Ultimately**

Ultimately, we see ourselves in PREMESE schools and colleges with a larger agenda than just enabling our pupils and students to pass their regional and national exams with brilliant colours. Even though that is also important, our ultimate vision is to bring up an adorable, conscientious and astute generation of leaders and citizens who will influence the society, radiating unmatched moral values of integrity. Through the new pedagogy of Competency Based Curriculum (CBC), we aim to churn out credible leaders who will become the 'salt and light' of the earth wherever they will serve in the world community. We believe it will be a dependable generation that will bring to an end many vices that bedevil our society today.

A Head Teacher was quoted addressing parents and pupils in a certain school on a closing day. He said that it must be understood amongst the pupils and students we have in class sitting for exams today, there are artists who will not desperately need chemistry in their professional life. There are musicians who will not so much need mathematics in their life. There are entrepreneurs who won't care about history

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

and English literature. There are sportsmen and women who will care more about their physical fitness than their grades in grammar.

What does this message boil down to? It simply means if our children don't perform that well in one subject or another, we should not condemn them but instead we should take it as our homework to find out in what subjects or skills they are good at. That's why according to Albert Einstein, it has always been wrong to judge our children only by how they perform in a standard exam that doesn't necessarily recognize their different gifts and talents. He says, if we judge a fish by its inability to climb a tree like a leopard, then we will make the fish live its entire life believing it is stupid just because it can't climb a tree. Obviously that's a very wrong standard of judgment on the fish.



***One of the Administration Blocks of Premese Schools***

**THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**



***Premese Pupils chatting in front of their academic block***



***Premese School Academic Block***

## **Commonsense habits to be observed by parents at home**

- Avoid watching adult videos and movies with your children.
- Avoid unhealthy habits such as smoking and drinking alcohol in front of children for obvious reasons.
- Undressing only in front of babies, not your children. This has been done in the name of modernity and its unhealthy.
- Avoid bathing your children naked in front of adults or in front of their siblings.
- When entering the house greet your children, when leaving hug them and bless them. This will develop in them sense of love and self-worth. It makes their day.
- Never backbite your neighbours or speak ill of other drivers on the road when with your children.
- Encourage your children to bond with your parents. That's how they will help you in your old age. They will also teach their children to bond with you.
- Tell some motivational stories when driving them back to school. This will give them some wisdom about life.
- Drill your children to memorise your telephone contact as a parent or guardian.
- Share meals, stories and prayers together as much as possible as a family. Memories are made of that.
- Decent dressing and personal grooming should be emphasized for all to observe.
- Try not to blame or comment on every word or action children say or do. Learn to overlook and give space at times.
- Ask your children's permission before entering their bedrooms to show you respect their privacy.
- Inspect your children's bedrooms and clothes at random without prior notice to nip any unhealthy habits at their early stages.
- Apologise to your children if you made a mistake. Apologising teaches them to be humble and polite.
- Don't be sarcastic or make fun of your kid's views or feelings, even if you "didn't mean it" or was "only joking". It really hurts them.

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

- Maintain patience and consistency when you teach them. Repetition is necessary in training kids.
- Help your kids make their own plans for each day. Without own daily plans they usually join peer plans.
- Appreciate every good effort made by your children.
- Reinforce the concept of gratitude, the importance of saying thankyou to kind deeds from others.
- “The greatest gifts you can give your children are the roots of responsibility and the wings of independence” (Denis Whitley). But they should learn to handle that.
- The greatest disservice to our children is to fail to correct them when they are wrong, assuming they will learn to correct themselves as they grow up.
- Children should learn not to interrupt when adults are talking. Train them to wait for their turn to speak, then speak with confidence and clarity.
- If children live with criticism, they learn to condemn; if they live with hostility, they learn to fight; if they live with ridicule, they learn to be shy, if they live with shame, they learn to feel guilty; if they live with tolerance, they learn to be patient; if they live with approval, they learn to be confident
- If children live with fairness, they learn about justice; if they live with acceptance, they learn to feel secure; if they live with love, they learn to love back and care.
- It is from home that children learn to greet people with eye contact, firm handshake and with courtesy – ‘Nice to meet you Sir’ or ‘Nice to meet you again Mum’
- Teach your children right from young age etiquettes of courtesy such as: Excuse Me; Thankyou; May I? Please; and such like.
- It is at home where children learn NOT to eat with their mouth open neither to speak with their mouth full.
- They learn to respect what does not belong to them.
- At home they learn not to talk back at their parents and other adults.
- They learn it is not right to exercise authority over their domestic servants and adult relatives.

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

- They learn it is wrong to look down upon the aged, the poor, the less fortunate, or the sick but instead they learn to render kind support.
- They learn not to pick their nose in public, and to do so with their handkerchief.
- At home they learn basic hygiene such as to wash hands after visiting toilet.
- They learn to knock on closed doors before entering.
- They learn to pick from parents' hands the stuff they bring home as parents walk in through the door.
- It is at home children learn it is wrong to lie or cheat.
- Never pay kids for carrying out their home chores like washing dishes or making their beds.
- Kids should be taught the courtesy to get up from the chair for the elders or visitors to sit.
- They learn not to sit by visitors when being served food.
- They learn not to point fingers at people at all.
- They learn not to talk, play and jump around when prayers are on-going.
- They should learn to take responsibility and clean up after themselves such as when they create dirt or untidiness.

### **Testimonies about Premese mentorship**

Below are samples of testimonies from some of our past students in appreciation of transformation they experienced in their lives after leaving Premese institutions. These were pretty generous compliments. I share these testimonies with the highest possible humility, only for the sole purpose of encouraging the readers. My aim is to drive home the truth in the fact that it is never in vain to serve God's people with sincere spirit:

“Dr. Mulwa, you have always encouraged me in your motivational talks. You ignite me just like one ignites a car engine. Your motivational talks make me see my dream more clearly. Thanks for the risk you took in your career life that inspires us against our fears. We now believe it can be done. Your personal story serves as shock-absorber in the potholes of our

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

lives. We have also learnt that there is no limit to possibilities of a life surrendered to God. I pray God continues to enable you to inspire, motivate and shape people's lives as you have done to us. May you triumph over sorrows and setbacks as you remember that we do pray for you' (Former Diploma Student of PREMESE Africa, transformed from a Primary School Teacher to CEO of an NGO, now holder of a University Degree and a Senior Consultant).

I will forever remember what you told us that 'Happy are those who dream dreams and are willing to pay the price to make them come true'. I am now living my dream! You have been our bridge to our destiny.' (E.N., Kenya).

"Dear Dr. Mulwa, I am very glad I chose to register as a development studies student at Premese Africa Development Institute. I learnt a lot from the clinic workshops. In particular I was very much encouraged by your motivational talks which you gave to the students. Your Motto: 'If you can dream it, you can make it' and your own determination made a turn-around to my life, as I began to see things differently. I am glad I am achieving my life dreams, despite my past as a school dropout for lack of fees. In conclusion allow me to quote you Dr. Mulwa from what you told us during your motivational speech: 'Obstacles are those things that you see when you take your eyes off your goal'. I am determined to remain focused on my goal' (P.K., Kenya)

I am happy for your words of encouragement during our final exams at your college. Thank you for encouraging us to dream big. I am finally doing my degree at the Catholic University of Malawi where I was admitted on the basis of my Diploma qualification from Premese Africa. I will encourage more Malawians to come to Premese Africa. God can really do wonders through people surrendered to Him'. (Jane Mkan-dawire, Malawi).

I was among those affected by retrenchments in my organisation when you came to give us a motivational talk. I was also diagnosed to be HIV positive just about the same time you came. I had decided I would not bear such a burden and

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

that the best for me was to take away my life. But before I executed my suicidal plans, my confidant advised me to hold on until I listened to a motivational speaker invited by our NGO to cushion people against the effects of retrenchment. That's how I met you Dr. Mulwa. I was in the crowd of the 130 members of staff that you addressed. Your 19 grand lessons were so inspiring that I decided to change my plans and keep my life. Later I tested HIV negative. The initial test turned out to have had an error. The other good news is that I was not affected by the retrenchments after all. My retrenchment was reversed and I was reinstated. You should believe me when I tell you I am the happiest man in the world. Who else would have used you this way but God?' (An employee in an NGO in Western Kenya, initials withheld for confidentiality)

'This is a thank you note to you for encouraging me to choose Premese when I first spoke to you. I had been a housewife and jobless for over 15 years. At first, I thought I could never study again but you encouraged me, then I joined your college to pursue Diploma in Human Resource Management. I was encouraged by the motivational talks during workshops and today I am proud to inform you that I got a job at NSSF and in addition, I have become a motivational speaker too. I have had to cross many rivers and mountains but I thank God that today I can look back and say the Lord has been my Ebenezer. It is finally confirmed true that: 'If you can dream it, you can make it'. God bless you Dr. Mulwa' (H.N.A. Kenya).

'Good evening Professor Mulwa. You are one of the sweetest and most remarkable friends I have ever had the privilege of knowing. Thankyou sincerely for being so generous, extraordinary and good-natured... You are such a gem! Thankyou! (Text by I.W.M, a renowned radio presenter with Royal Media Kenya, Saturday, 3<sup>rd</sup> Oct. '20).

*Basic definition of management is: Getting things done through people, then allowing the people to take credit for success*

## **‘Enabling Leadership’ attained by leading**

**from the back** *(Quoted verbatim from an article by Jack Dunigan, 2015. <https://thepracticalleader.com>; <https://www.chieflearningofficer.com>)*

The term and the concept of leading from the back (behind) have found their most academic expression in an idea put forth by Linda Hill of the Harvard Business School. She claims it originated from reading Nelson Mandela’s autobiography when he likened leaders who shepherd their flocks from behind. Hill’s concept is that of collaborative effort within teams who take responsibility for projects and goals. Actually, the dynamics and principles of effective leadership are universal across cultures.

According to Linda Hill, “leading from behind” is not the phrase used by Mandela but it has been kicked around in the media with both positive and negative intentions. She argues that leading from behind does not mean missing in action. Missing in action as the vision bearer is tantamount to giving room to chaos and turmoil. Someone somewhere must remain the shepherd who holds the flock together. A clear and certain trumpet call must come from the ‘commander-in-chief’ to assemble the troops. A sure and steady voice gathers the attention of the workforce. That’s the role of the vision bearer.

### **WHAT IT IS:**

- The basic idea in **leading from the back** is that of allowing followers to exercise their freedom to create and innovate, while the leader takes ultimate responsibility. It encourages the people to move on to collectively determined goals through creation of new and novel ideas and experiments together.
- **It is deliberate not accidental.** It is a collaborative effort that should be intentional. The shepherd can let the sheep wander on their own only within set parameters. There exists both dangers in grazing too far away from the shepherd but also good opportunities out there beyond

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

the confines of the familiar grounds. The wisdom comes in the ability to strike a reasonable balance between the two realities. Effective leaders are not always predominantly hands-on, but they are always available and accessible.

- **‘Enabling Leadership’ by leading from the back is collaborative.** One technique I use in workshops is to give an assignment, then break up the group into smaller clusters of three or four people. With assignment in hand, the clusters are told they have but only a few minutes to accomplish a task. If there is a natural and confident leader within the cluster, the group will quickly gather together, divide the job into smaller tasks, and then assigned the tasks to different individuals. Those who fail to do so lag behind. Nothing productive takes place until they realise the missing link which is the leadership structure. Quickly arguments arise and confusion begins to reign. Leading from the back means exercising influence indirectly. Such group enters into confusion since there is not clear leadership, neither from the front nor from the back.

**“Leadership consists of nothing but taking responsibility for everything that goes wrong and giving your subordinates credit for everything that goes well.” – Dwight D. Eisenhower, former U.S. President**

- **Leading from the back works best in times and places of non-crisis.** If a child is running into the street and into traffic, it is not the time to convene a focus group to discuss the threats of playing in the street. It is time for action. Leading from the back, as Hill describes it, works best in non-threatening and non-urgent conditions. Otherwise in cases of danger, vision bearer must temporarily jump into the front as a short-term rescue measure.
- The approach works best in organisational teams and groups. It may not be desirable to run an entire complex of an organisation without effective coordination of people, departments and activities. There must be someone of authority at the helm of big organisations giving direction

### THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS

and inspiring stakeholders as they 'let people chat the way'.

#### **WHAT IT IS NOT:**

- **Leading from the back is not ignoring or neglecting a situation in disarray**, then going ahead to justify oneself as only leading from the back, by empowering people. This is a face-saving argument from someone who is either reluctant to take leadership responsibility or lacks ideas and common sense.
- **It is not passive.** Even those who lead from the back still DO LEAD. They do not just sit and do nothing then call it leadership. They are exercising influence deliberately and purposefully. An intent is fixed, a purpose is validated, and actions are thought through. One does not sit idly by way side and hope something good happens. Effective leaders know that hope in itself without action is not a valid strategy and that faith without works is dead.
- Leading from the back is not an **excuse for doing little or nothing while at the same time claiming to be leading.** Neither laziness nor inertia are qualities found in an effective leader. Shepherds do not sleep while flocks wander about. They do not sit under a tree while the sheep stray off over the hill. Shepherds are constantly scanning for potential danger. They also know the sheep will need food and shelter at the appropriate time. They direct the flock accordingly.
- Leading from the back cannot **take the place of strategic thinking and strategic planning.** It is the fundamental role of effective leaders to provide foresight, define vision, and strategize for motivation and partnering at work. In short, one can lead from behind only if one knows what lies ahead and what it will take to get there. A leader must supervise everything from the back or from the background. They must have "super-vision" exercised from the "balcony" of leadership.

## **The Principle of Self-Manifestation**

I happen to have come across material depicting excerpts from speeches delivered by three great golden gentlemen of our time, at different times in different places. I have attempted to paraphrase their compelling wisdom here for our benefit as leaders. These are none other than the late Myles Munroe (may his soul rest in eternal peace), Denzel Washington and Steve Harvey. I believe you will agree with the writer that these are no ordinary men of our time. The views they espouse about life (see below) are out of this world. They challenge us as individuals and as leaders to take active responsibility in using our unique God given gifts to perfect this planet. Their views are extremely impressive, and more so for leaders. That's why I have found it appropriate to share some of their reflections here.

One of the views they advanced with passion is what they call the principle of self-manifestation which advocates that people are not looking up to us for what we are per se. People are looking up to their leaders for what the leaders can impact on the people's lives for their transformation towards a better future. How much concern do you have as a leader about people's situations and problems?

*A ship is safe at the harbour, but that's not what ships are built for. They are created for the deep seas. The water at the shore is dirty and it will soon corrode the stagnant ship and make water get in and sink it. Venture into the deep seas where opportunities are hidden (Paraphrased from John A. Shedd).*

Our three great golden gentlemen advise us that to get something you never had before; you must do something you never did before. You are likely to lose everything in the process before you can gain. Life itself is a risk. It takes faith to pay the price of your dreams. But don't forget to pray. Can you name one thing you prayed for before you embarked on it and it failed? Most likely not. God pulls people through when they depend on Him.

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

By the way, why do you think these great golden gentlemen have maintained their faith in God despite their enormous success? Food for thought. God will always be there for you, but will not take risks on your behalf, because He gives us the freedom to choose. Make it your goal to facilitate greatness in other people too. That will pave way for your own growth to even greater levels. Every fruit has seeds in it. This is because it's supposed to maintain and sustain life and multiply for the good of the world.

The great golden gentlemen conclude by admonishing us to let our whole life desire to make other people greater than ourselves even when some people around us may not desire to see us succeed. Some of them failed in the past, and that's precisely why they want to discourage you. We often live in a culture that doesn't encourage manifestation of new and unique gifts of our people. You will always face resistance, opposition and discouragement when you have something unique to offer. That's is rooted in our selfish spirit of cut-throat competition.

It has been argued that you can live your entire life in this world and never be noticed or known to have ever existed. Why? Because you failed to manifest what God put within you for the good of others in the planet. Just because you exist, doesn't mean you will be successful. Riding on the pride of success of your co-employees or friends or relatives without your unique personal contribution towards your own success is futile. That is denying the society the special gift in you that is meant to complement others in making a difference in the life of the world.

*All that we are is God's gift to us, what we make out of it, is our gift back to God. Use your talents to glorify God by serving his people selflessly and with gratitude. (Catholic Sisters of Mercy in Kaduna, Nigeria, 1978).*

Many people live on earth but never attain manifestation of their gifts and talents. If you are happy waking up in the morning to go to work, then that means you are living up to your talents depending on the difference or productivity

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

you are making at work. If you are unhappy going to work, it simply means you are living other people's purposes on earth and not your own purpose for which you were meant to manifest your gift. You better quit that job than continue to suffer bitterness and boredom. That's foolishness, whereas quitting, on the other hand, is wisdom.

We are not saying it's bad to inherit or to work for others, but you should celebrate and enjoy what you do, and maximise your creativity there by manifesting your unique gifts and talents. Perform your work right and enjoy the good feeling associated with success. Invest your gift in the ability to expand the enterprise you work on. Raise that company a notch higher than you found it and joy will be yours, not necessarily from what you get in return, but for the great feeling of victory. Make that company rise to the cutting edge in this highly competitive society. In other words, go out of your way to do good. Not necessarily to impress your boss, but more importantly, to attain joy in life by maximising on your talents.

The goal in your life should be self-manifestation by ensuring the highest productivity, the best quality in whatever you do. Let the world admire and say: 'wow, wow, wow... look at what God can do through human beings'. Look at the amazing TV programmes such as 'America Has Got Talent' or Churchill Show of 'Laugh Industry' on NTV station in Kenya. See the way people display their gifts and talents. It's so amazing and marvelous to the world. What is it you do so well with your gifts and talents which make stakeholders and onlookers exclaim the same... 'wow, wow, wow look at that! How does he or she manage to do that?' If your job makes you 'sick', then you are living a lie. Give a notice and quit. Move on to where you will come alive. You will be loved for that than hanging on in that job but in pain and without much to show. That's tantamount to punishing your own spirit. Free yourself.

*"What you do has far greater impact than what you say." – Stephen Covey, author and educator*

## **Courage: the most noble of all human virtues**

*“I am not afraid of an army of lions led by a sheep; I am afraid of an army of sheep led by a lion.” – Alexander the Great, former King of Macedonia*

According to Brian Tracy, courage is not the absence of fear. We can only overlook the challenges of fear in us by remaining focused on the noble goal we set ourselves to attain. Courage to endure is said to be one of the most important traits in a human being. That is, to persist, and to ‘hang on there’ in the face of doubt, uncertainty and criticism from others. There is a critical period between the launching of a new venture and the results that come from that venture. During this period, many people lose their nerve. They cannot stand the suspense of not knowing, and of the possibility of failure.

They break emotionally before the battle is over and flee prematurely. They dread and shiver at the imagination of the possibility of failure then quit business before it bears fruits. They lack patience, they lack persistence, they lack resilience, and they lack courage to face the risks of the unknown. Actually, the tenacity of courageous patience is not only the acid test of success but also of effective leadership. It is the courageous leader who has the audacity to encourage others, to instill confidence in others and to help them perform at their best against adversity.

*Nothing in the world can take the place of persistence. No talent, no education and no ingenuity will succeed where persistence is lacking. No wonder we have many highly talented, highly educated and great geniuses who are unengaged just because they gave up their brilliant dreams too early (Calvin Coolidge – 30<sup>th</sup> President of United States)*

I don’t see God failing you if you truly depend on him! I see Him intervening because it is my conviction that for every purpose, dream or vision from God, he guarantees provision. That’s how we become co-creators with him. We are actually meant to complete his creation process, and it is precisely

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

for that purpose he put us in this planet. That's why I don't see him denying us what we need to accomplish his purpose. This does not mean that we cannot fail. Remember that failure is part of the package of success. We fail so that we may learn and start again, this time more wisely! Whenever we fail, instead of blaming ourselves or entertaining the spirit of defeatism, we should remind ourselves that the past is history while tomorrow and the future, present to us a clean slate waiting for us to write on our life all over again and afresh.

*The appropriate adage here is: tomorrow will be a better day than today.*

Abraham Lincoln is one person famed for his steadfastness and resilience in pursuit of his dream despite failing constantly. 'He failed in business at age 22; He ran for legislation and was defeated at age 23; He failed again in business at age 24; He got elected into legislature at age 25; His wife died when he was 26 years of age; He had nervous breakdown at age 27; He contested for the position of Speaker at age 29 and lost; He was defeated for Elector at age 31; Defeated in his bid for Congress at 34; Elected to Congress at 37; Defeated for Congress at 39; Defeated for Senate at 46; Defeated for Vice President at 47; Defeated for Senate at 49; Elected President of the United States of America at 51 (Bits & Pieces Vol.R/ No.26). All these, in many ways, translate to one fact; that success is 99% a product of failure!

### **Servant leaders act with good measure of originality**

Great achievers are usually the least understood by their friends and colleagues! They appear unreasonable, perhaps crazy, and indeed they are crazy at times! How else would you explain their daring spirit against all odds to challenge and overturn strongholds of wrong values and enslaving traditions? Take for instance Biblical legends such as Moses, Esther, David, Job and the likes of Albert Einstein, Martin Luther King Jnr., Shakespeare, the Wright Brothers, Abraham Lincoln, Socrates and Christopher Columbus among others.

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

Add legends of our time including Nelson Mandela, P.L.O. Lumumba, Jomo Kenyatta, Julius Nyerere, Soyinka, Ngugi Wathiong'o, and President Patrice Lumumba of Congo, Steve Jobs, Bill Gates and other similar heroes of history. What these people had in common is that they were so focused on unfamiliar vision of better life for their people with such a passion that they appeared unreasonable. Often their own people understood them the least!

John Stanko (2012) captures this quite well in his book where he observes, "Yes, I know that leadership manifests itself when someone steps out in front of the crowd and the crowd follows". But such followers should not be blind and passive. Instead, they should be critical and questioning their leaders. It should be the kind of leadership that invites the followers to demand accountability from the leader. It is extremely deplorable to have so many leaders around at different levels of the society, and at the same time witness so much poverty, suffering, misery, despondency and corruption amongst us. There is so much child abuse, even child trafficking and so many youths wasting themselves away through drug abuse in our glaring view as leaders. Yet, very few of us, if any, are willing to raise a finger against these vices. Professor P.L.O. Lumumba (2019) would ask, are we leaders or mis-leaders?

I may not be that angelic leader myself, but it pains to see so many talented and highly educated people jostling for leadership positions only to forget about the welfare of the electorate almost immediately after they capture those positions of power. Instead, we become unapproachable, unreachable demigods, who cannot even receive phone calls except through our Personal Assistants (PAs) whose major role is to constantly block people from reaching the leader until the time for another cycle of elections arrives.

To be fair in this analogy, I must admit that it is true we need to ward-off every Tom, Dick and Harry (so to speak) that may want to bombard the leaders with litany of personal problems. Of course, we need to be 'shielded' from being weighed down by all sorts of paternalistic requests for favours from all

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

and sundry. But at least a leader should be accessible and available in a particular place and day known to the public when he or she can be visited, perhaps in an office.

*'Do not go where the path may lead, go instead where there is no path and leave a trail'. – Ralph Waldo Emerson, poet and essayist*

Remember, no matter what your circumstances, someone else has been in exactly the same situation or worse, and many emerged victorious. You can succeed too! Someone has been weaker than you and gotten strong. Someone was poorer than you, and made it! Someone was more worried than you about what the future holds, and conquered that future in the long run. Someone by name David was younger than you but felled Goliath. Someone by name Saul was more sinful than you, a murderer, but God used his conversion in a mighty way. Elijah was more timid than you, running away under the threat of a mighty woman by name Jezebel, after God had used him to kill four hundred prophets of false gods of Baal. No wonder success comes with a heavy price tag. It costs courage, time, money, and sometimes, it even costs relationships. However, if it serves a noble cause, then it is worth the trouble, go for it.

Albert Einstein once said, "Great spirits have always encountered violent opposition from mediocre minds." Whatever you do, it will take courage. Whatever path you take, if it is the winning path, there will always be someone to tell you that you are wrong. They would want you to take the paths of least resistance, and therefore the ones which are least risky.

### **Paths of least resistance make rivers and people crooked**

It is the paths of least resistance that make rivers and people crooked. On the other hand, it is against strong wind of resistance that huge aircrafts take off. Do not, therefore, shy away from the paths of maximum resistance, for that is where the treasure lies. St. Paul said it is through challenges and suffering that we build resilient character. Just go ahead

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

and accomplish your dreams despite the strong winds of resistance! Do not give in to the pressure from the majority who would want to see you conform to the expectations of the majority – the paths of the least resistance.

*“Keep your eyes on the stars, and your feet on the ground”. – Theodore Roosevelt, former U.S. President (Be practical in your dreams)*

Unfortunately, we live in a society where those who seek to get rich quick through dubious means are often regarded as heroes and heroines. The public opinion tends to side with those who can promise to deliver favours through political influence, social connections, and monetary handouts. Yet, those who can appropriate such favours generously and without limit are people who have gotten rich quick through paths of least resistance. They often bribe their way through to acquire whatever they want from institutional bureaucracies, thus denying justice to the poor. They are usually ready to cheat at every opportunity, as they ‘grease’ the hands of public officers to get early attention and get settlement of court cases in their favour.

They grab public land and deprive the defenseless poor of their little property through fraudulent schemes. These are the people who follow the paths of least resistance. They also receive bribes from both rich and poor to dispense public services, which otherwise they are supposed to render for free. They use their wealth to commit abominable deeds with impunity against their powerless neighbours. They will use their wealth to deny the poor their rightful justice. This is what provoked Prophet Amos to declare the following to the powerful and the wealthy of Israel:

*For three crimes of Israel, and for four, I will not revoke my word; because they sell the just man for silver, and the poor man for a pair of sandals. They trample the heads of the weak into the dust of the earth, and force the lowly out of the way...they hate him who reproves at the gate and abhor him who speaks the truth. Therefore, because you have trampled upon the weak and exacted of them levies of grain, though you have built houses of hewn stone, you shall not live in them. Though you have planted choice vineyards, you*

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

*shall not drink their wine! Yes, I know how many your crimes are, how grievous are your sins: oppressing the just, accepting bribes, repelling the needy at the gate (Amos 2:6-7; 5:10-13).*

St Paul admonished young Timothy against greed and the desire to get rich quick. Let's borrow a leaf from that great classic advice. He wrote to Timothy the following:

*But godliness with contentment is a great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. If we have food and clothing, we shall be content with that. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and into a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires, which plunge them into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is the root of all evil, and some people in their desire for it have strayed from the faith and have pierced themselves with many pains (1 Tim. 6:6-10).*

Talk of contentment and absence of it. I have always wondered why people must be so acquisitive with endless madness in the accumulation of wealth and property, and particularly senseless acquisition of land. You just watch people on how they over invest in land, even if it means grabbing it from the poor and the public. Am I being jealous here?

I am only trying to be sincere about this astonishing trend. Ask land grabbers and they will tell you the land or plot they will skyrocket in value in ten years' time. So what? Who tells them they will be alive by then? Who tells them their children will be interested in that land in the countryside? The grandchildren we are grabbing land for to inherit will sell it and squander the proceeds as it often happens. Easy gotten, easily scattered. So says the Preacher, it is all vanity: "vanity of vanities, all is vanity. What does a man gain by all the toil at which he toils under the sun? A generation goes and a generation comes, but the earth remains forever" (Ecclesiastes 1:2-4).

While it is true in those ten years to come the value of land will have doubled or even tripled, the price of essential life commodities such as food will also have skyrocketed. It is senseless to be greedy in accumulating land. Go to London today and you will find people selling land with it property

## **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

on it. Others are buying it to demolish its property to erect or build more modern structures. What's the greed for? In her speech during the 65<sup>th</sup> Graduation ceremony of the University of Nairobi on 24<sup>th</sup> September, 2021, the Madam Chancellor reminded us in her speech: "There is enough in the world for everybody's need, but never enough for everybody's greed".

### **Dare to be different by shunning evil**

*A story is told of a young man on a sea-shore who decided to rescue some fish which were gasping for air on the sea-shore after the tides of the sea had receded leaving lots of fish exposed. He decided to pick several of the struggling fish and throw them back to the sea, one after the other. An old man saw what the young man was doing and asked him: 'Youngman, what are you doing? It's all in vain. How would you be able to save all these thousands of fish all over the northern and the southern parts of the shore?' The young man replied: "Truly, I may not be able to save all of them". Then he picked one more fish and as he threw it back to the sea he said: "But for this one, it will make a difference".*

Wherever you will find yourself and under whatever circumstances, resolve to do good and make a difference by being unique regardless of whether you will have people cheering you up or condemning you as a loner on your own. Just resolve to make a difference as much as your conscience leads you.

Implying that we should shun corrupt practices with the desire to get rich quick, St. Paul again admonishes us to be content with what we get from the proceeds of our work. In other words, we should conquer our instincts for greed. He declares: 'I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content with whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learnt the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want' (Philippians 4:11-13).

It is even more unfortunate that corruption has permeated into the education system in many African countries. A country's moral fabric is totally destroyed when it comes to

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

corruption in its education system. Examination cheating in particular destroys the country's children and youth. Moral values in a society can only be safeguarded through quality education for its young generations. To validate this argument, Kenya Private Schools Association (KPSA) has drawn our attention to a memorandum said to have been found posted at the gate of a university in South Africa for public contemplation. It said:

“Destroying any nation does not require the use of atomic bombs or the use of long-range missiles. It only requires lowering the quality of education and allowing cheating in the examinations by the students. Why?

- The humanity dies in the hands of such ‘doctors’.
- Buildings collapse and kill people in the hands of such ‘engineers’.
- Colossal amounts of money and resources are lost in the hands of such ‘economists and accountants’.
- Humanity loses souls in the hands of such ‘religious leaders and religious scholars’.
- Justice is lost in the hands of such ‘judges’.

That is precisely how a nation systematically deteriorates into self-destruction when its integrity and morality is compromised to the core of its education sector. We live in a world that has glorified the appetite of greed and under-emphasized the importance of values. It's therefore our responsibility as leaders of integrity to reverse that attitude and trend. The problem is that it is leaders who don't believe in life after death who are causing havoc in the society as they live only for here and now without minding the spiritual consequences of their actions. They only care to selfishly benefit themselves for today. They believe tomorrow will take care of itself. Very dangerous people without the slightest of morality.

The question that begs an answer here is: can we be different and succeed despite being different? Can we overcome the opposition if we choose to oppose corruption? Can we succeed

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

against the powerful current of public opinion and common practice in adoring what is evil? The real challenge begins when we dare to be different within a community. When you declare to live a corruption free life, public applause ceases. Why? Because corrupt power barons happen to have had the loudest voice, and certainly, the largest influence for so long that their lies now appear like the truth in the eyes of the public. People who “care” about you will remind you that you must tread cautiously when you challenge the status quo.

And yet, efforts to transform the attitude (values) of the society cannot be fueled by terrified individuals who are easily swayed by the crowd. The greatest impediment in overcoming corruption in Africa is the absence of efficacious witness protection policies. Many witnesses of high voltage corruption cases in Africa are assassinated just before they submit their evidence. Yet, without convincing facts, the culprits are released by justice systems for lack of evidence. Often, the cases end at that.

*“It takes twenty years to build a reputation and only five minutes to ruin it. If you think about that, you’ll do things differently.” – Warren Buffett, investor*

Experts tell us that ‘crowds’ could easily be the enemy of innovation and change. It is not until we change the way people think and their attitudes (values) that we can expect them to be responsive to the issues of justice. The problem is that the ‘crowd’ will naturally follow those who assure them of easy and immediate gain, and the crooked men and women will always tend to have their way against the righteous.

According to the moral teachings of the Roman Catholic Church, there are seven heads of evil vices: 1.Pride or Vainglory; 2.Greed or Covetousness 3.Lust or Illicit Sexual Desire; 4.Envy; 5.Gluttony or Drunkenness; 6.Wrath or Anger and 7.Sloth or Idleness. These vices can also be considered as the source of all evil in any society. With vibrant moral and civic education, these can be overcome with time and people’s values are transformed.

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

It is my sincere conviction that much of what we see as the evil vices afflicting our society today will be wiped out in twenty years' time when the current young generation in our schools take over political power and institutional leadership. Such vices as suicides, abductions, homicides, child and human trafficking, substance abuse, illicit trade on drugs, corruption, unaccountable leadership governed by greed, negative ethnicity, exam cheating, land grabbing and such like malpractices across the country will end with the exit of the current generation of leadership.

We believe these vices will be wiped out and become a thing of the past. That's not a long time of waiting if we begin to work towards that future through our schools by instilling the right values and culture of accountability as opposed to greed. Our youth today (that is the current students in our secondary schools and pupils in our primary schools), are all undergoing appropriate moral and social training through the new thrust of Competency Based Curriculum (CBC). The subjects in CBC meant to address learners' attitudes and civic competencies is social studies, humanities and religious education.

### **CBC meant to address challenges that bedevil our generation**

It is our expectation that current teacher training college curricula are effectively preparing tutors to grasp the concept, values and the spirit embedded in the new CBC thrust. CBC is essentially geared towards enabling the child to learn by discovery instead of rote memory. Creative thinking and reasoning as discussed in the first chapter of this book is central to the CBC pedagogy, with more emphasis on learning more than teaching. It is a learner centered approach as opposed to teacher centered. It is meant to cultivate and nurture gifts and talents in the child.

Learners are seen as subjects that can be inspired to learn as they create and generate knowledge themselves. This is unlike the conventional or traditional kind of education whereby the

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

teacher deals with pupils or students as objects or empty vessels into which knowledge is deposited by teachers. In the latter case, exams are meant central to the system in order to measure the quantity of knowledge (not the quality) deposited to the supposedly empty vessels and how much of that they can remember. In the CBC system, the teacher and the student are both active learners sharing knowledge through creative thinking and reasoning.

This is a new kind of thinking about education system. Education had all along been perceived as a preserve of teachers or educators who must 'deposit' knowledge to supposedly empty vessels called students or pupils. That perspective has changed since the inception of CBC system in Kenya. Instead learners are now perceived as active participants in generating knowledge in a creative learning environment.

The traditional approach to education emphasizes on both bottom line and topline limit through examination systems. In the new CBC pedagogy of learning, there cannot be top line. This is because imagination and innovation are more superior to what is already known. Experimentation and creation of new knowledge is essentially limitless. As pointed out elsewhere in this book, this kind of approach is likely to threaten those who believe they are the custodians of the 'correct' way of thinking and therefore the correct knowledge. No wonder there exists heated debate currently in Kenya for and against the Competency Based Curriculum (CBC).

I believe we are the second post-independence generation of gatherers. The preoccupation of many of the people of that generation and the generation of our fore fathers who fought for independence has been the accumulation of wealth, whether through hook and crook. Sometimes we cannot even explain why we are running helter-skelter gathering wealth. No wonder corruption has become a lifestyle for many in our out-going and current generations.

Gathering of wealth has often taken precedence over the need

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

for preparation of competent successors in leadership. As a result, the Bible predication comes to play in that many are those who toil throughout their life only for strangers to plunder their wealth when they are dead. The Bible calls this vanity of vanities. Recently, Kenyans were treated to amazing scenarios of filthy rich people who died without having prepared any specific successors. It is anybody's guess what would happen to that wealth.

It is the college and secondary school students and primary school pupils currently undergoing competency based curriculum (CBC) in our educational institutions who will be the savior to transform our country in less than twenty years' time when they begin to take over our positions of leadership in the society. This is the third post-independence generation who are emerging with a different set of values. They do not see any political, ethnic, racial, tribal or religious barriers between them. Their priority would not be the selfish, individual desire to accumulate wealth as has been the culture amongst our leadership.

In less than twenty years' time, these young people will have grown up and completed university education. They will have taken up positions of leadership that we hold today in the society. Intermarriages among different ethnic groups will cool down tribal animosity. Exam cheating will have become a thing of the past as negative academic competition will have come under control. Ironically, we have had cases of parents in some schools who are on record breathing fire against their school head teachers who declined to accept money from parents to bribe invigilators of national exams to permit exam leakage! What values are such parents passing to their children and our young teachers? Education authorities are currently devising strategies to counter exam cheating, such as abolishing some of the national exams. The latest strategy is to merge some of the exam centers.

To quote the curriculum declaration in the national CBC document, the primary purpose of social studies is to help young people make informed and seasoned decisions for the

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

public good as citizens of a culturally diverse and democratic society in an interdependent world, intended to churn out people who are knowledgeable, skillful, and committed to democratic way of life, and participating as members of a global community (Kenya National Council for Social Studies).

This is a generation whose culture, fortunately or unfortunately, will be that of ‘scattering generously’ what they would have inherited from their parents and ancestors as opposed to accumulating wealth for themselves. However, they will also be productive investors but largely for common good. Their priorities with zero-in on forging good relationships and building authentic democracies in the political front.

There will no longer be negative politics. There will be little or no desire for irrational accumulation of wealth for the sake of it. This is because everybody in society will feel economically and socially secure. The rampant corruption with the ‘excusable’ tag that ‘this is Kenya’ will become a thing of the past. On the contrary, this third generation will be scatters, selling what they inherited just to lead good quality life free of much care and unnecessary worry. Jobs will be available in the absence of corruption and therefore social security system will be strong and stable. They will be assured of security in the old age. Insurance systems will also be vibrant, strong and reliable.

Land registry offices in our country are currently busy digitalizing legal land ownership documents across the country. This will make it difficult for land grabbers to succeed in forging documents to swindle unsuspecting land owners. I believe that in twenty years’ time, large populations will be more enfranchised within voting age bracket. They will have gotten good enough education and adequate social awareness to defend their right to vote without being lured by a bribe.

Such exposure to our young generations including other similar social studies, will certainly go a long way to address the vices enumerated above which bedevil our society today.

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

I believe our new CBC education system will impart the appropriate attitudes, skills and knowledge (ASK) which will create a great society of justice when the current young generation takes over leadership positions in near future. In other words, we believe the young people are gaining new moral values and attitudes which are more humane and just.

## CHAPTER 5



### **Astute Leaders Radiate Values**

*'There are some people who are so poor that the only thing they have is money' (That is, they lack humane values: empathy, courtesy, compassion, and respect for human dignity) - P.L.O. Lumumba*

#### **Value systems that galvanize politics and economic power-base**

Values are principles or standards of behavior and practices that manifest what is perceived to be or held as important in the life of a given group of people or community. These include beliefs that people have high opinion about and are held with high regard. They embrace religious and traditional values. They form the basic and fundamental point of reference in our conscience that guides us in determining the best course of decision making and action in any given situation. Those are the strong elements that glue a community together. That's what gives people their identity in society.

Values are created and handed down from generation to another, mainly through informal or traditional education: their practices, story-telling, folksongs, dances, myths, ceremonies and such like cultural activities. Time and space see values evolve through changing environments and seasons. In the process, values get refined to suit different generations. One harmful cultural belief that seems to have defied the possibility of evolution through the influence of modernity associated with education and religion is the practice of witchcraft, at least in Africa.

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

Similarly, many people, both educated and illiterate alike, still seem to strongly believe in the power of evil spirits from the dark world operating into their lives from time to time. They tend to believe that power can only be exorcised by spiritual diviners and witchdoctors. That's why the practice of witchcraft and devil worship still remains deeply entrenched in many African communities. Such beliefs determine what happens to that particular individual or community that believes. As discussed above in another section of this book, it is squarely a matter of one's faith. I suggest therefore we be careful with what we choose to believe.

Am therefore not necessarily dismissing such beliefs as invalid or otherwise, but I would strongly argue that their validity and potency depends on the believer. Actually, it is true that what you believe is simply what will be. That's why Jesus would usually inquire of those who desired to be healed by him: 'Do you believe?' After a touch of healing, he would often tell the beneficiaries: 'Thy faith has made you well' (Matthew 9:22) and "Daughter, your faith has made you well, go in peace, and be healed of your disease" (Mark 5:34; Luke 17:19; Luke 18:42). It is a matter of personal faith and not necessarily an issue of universal validity or community faith. What you strongly believe is what will befall you because of your faith! How do you find that?

It is the belief in witchcraft in particular that is responsible for breeding fear and despondency within families and communities. Hatred has ruled in families to become the major source of disharmony. Some villagers in some western and coastal areas of Kenya have reportedly burnt some elderly men and women alive accusing them of practicing witchcraft. Such is unlawful since more often than not the perpetrators would have no concrete evidence that can win a court case. That's tragic belief system. Local law enforcement authorities should be made to account for condoning such practice if they fail to take measures to bring the perpetrators to face the courts of law.

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

It is value systems that dictate or justify social structures of a community and the society at large. A community or society is usually organised around these value constructs and parameters. Traditional structures and opinion leaders are usually the custodians of these value systems. That's what makes participatory and democratic processes that seek to empower ordinary people a daunting task given the many layers of socio-cultural structures and authorities to penetrate and get validation or permit in order to reach the desired target groups.

This is because any outsiders visiting a particular community in the society would be expected to adhere or conform to the given cultural values and norms. Where these expectations have been corrupted in the name of modernity and respect to the hierarchy of authority, bribes find their way in before visitors are granted permission by the community gate keepers. Those members of the community who fail to abide by the rules are ostracized as social deviates. They are heavily penalized before they can be accepted back to the fold.

Politics is yet another important system that plays a significant role in organizing a society. However, political front will always seek the 'blessings' of the social-cultural and religious value systems in order to validate their agenda. No wonder politicians begin to run helter-skelter across the country in time of national elections seeking for blessings from community elders and religious leaders. Not forgetting the fact that both politicians, religious and cultural leaders need each other to consolidate their power-bases. Politicians hunt for votes while other interest groups seek to enlarge their membership base. The bottom-line here is economics of survival. At the end of the day, it is essentially a question of who gets what and who doesn't and what safety-nets can be created to protect the poor who don't have the 'muscle' to shovel through it all. As I write this paragraph, both Catholic and Anglican churches in Kenya have banned political rallies within houses of worship with immediate effect country-wide. This decision, however, does not make the church any less than what it is, what it has always been and what it will always remain as the moral compass of society.

## **The etiquettes espoused by astute leaders**

A Tanzanian priest from the Catholic University of Eastern Africa keeps repeating in his sermons, 'Humble yourself to God and to people and you will lack nothing.' In other words, humility will literally earn you favour with God and with people. It is one of the fundamental virtues that touch the heart of God. Remember the self-righteous man who came to the synagogue to pray, thanking God that his sins were not as ugly as those of the tax collector praying next to him. All this time, the Tax Collector was quietly sobbing, repenting his multitude of sins, too ashamed even to raise up his head. The Bible tells us that the tax collector was justified while the proud, self-righteous man was not.

Humility entails counting others better than ourselves (Philippians 2:3). That's hard! That's why I would consider humility as the ultimate litmus test of true godliness. To excel in servant leadership, we must discard the spirit of 'know-it-all.' *God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble* (James 4:6). We must be ready to learn from others, both big and small. That's the wisdom of humility. We must resist the temptation of behaving like, as the adage goes, "a drop of a genius in the sea of fools", like the custodian of knowledge.

Socrates, a Greek philosopher, admonished that to succeed one must make oneself a 'wise fool'. In my interpretation, that means one must humble oneself enough to accommodate all people regardless of their social or intellectual standing. Rivers and lakes, seas and oceans, attract water from hills and mountains because they lie low. Similarly, leaders who are humble attract many people and their blessings.

To discard the spirit of 'know-it-all' means possessing the ability to listen to others. This calls for humility. Dialogue is rooted in respect for others, their knowledge, their dignity, and their self-worth. You can only enter into real dialogue when you consider others as equal, if not better than you, and, therefore, you value them. This basically pertains to embracing collective learning. Real dialogue stems from the be-

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

belief that nobody knows everything, and nobody can claim the monopoly of knowledge. Similarly, nobody is totally ignorant, unless mentally retarded, which in itself is considered a special case. Each person has valuable information to contribute.

#### ***Let's tell a story to affirm this conviction:***

*A story is told of a University Professor of Sociology. True to the lifestyle of Sociologists, he loved to work closely with poor communities from the slums of the city. He was particularly close to a school dropout hustler from the nearest slum to his residence. They were buddies with the Professor. The young man liked joining the Professor for outdoor camping in a nearby picnic site. One day they went camping as usual and pitched their tent at night to sleep. But the hustler woke up in the middle of the night. To his surprise, he was able to see stars in the sky. He quickly woke up the Professor and asked him why they were able to see the stars. The Professor narrated at length to the hustler what stars are and how they constellate to make galaxies in the cosmic system.*

*The Professor continued to explain all that they could see in the sky and what it meant. He noted that clear skies indicate absence of clouds, which is typical of deserts during summer season. A clear sky at night is also an indication of long spell of a dry season to be expected. After all the astronomical lessons from the Professor, the hustler retorted: 'You fool. Highly educated people like to complicate simple realities of life with long winding descriptions using sophisticated language. Don't you remember we slept under a tent? Now that we can see stars in the skies, it simply means our tent has been stolen!' (Story narrated by Rev. Dr. Karita Mangara)*

A wise man once said, 'Show me a man who speaks like he knows everything, and I will point to you the person to avoid at all cost'. We are gifted differently and therefore the more diverse talents we possess the better contribute to a worthy cause and the better the outcome will be. This also produces collective sense of ownership and responsibility. We should also be cognisant of the fact that the sustainability of any worthy cause is heavily dependent on the participation and

## **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

contribution of its diversity of stakeholders. These operate synergistically on the basis of a shared vision, innovation and creativity to produce superior results.

### **What servant leadership is about**

Apparently, there is wide consensus from Christian perspective that servant leadership is premised on the person of Jesus Christ and his teachings. He himself practiced servant leadership and literally demonstrated the same when he washed his disciples' feet. He did that to dramatically demonstrate as to what extent servant leaders must stoop low with humility to serve all even in the most rudimentary manner (Matthew 20:26–28 and Matthew 23:11–12). Servant leadership is ultimately expressed by practicing ideals from the life, works and teachings of Jesus Christ Himself

Whoever wants to be the greatest must be a servant of the others and must not lord oneself over the followers. Dr. Susan Lewa (Lewa, S.K, 2010) argues that there exists inadequacy of leadership in the manner in which public institutions are managed today. Dr. Susan Lewa is sharing a view that implies lack of servant leadership, a view supported by Dr. John Stanko (2012). Servant leadership is a relatively new paradigm in leadership theory and practice. Academic discourse is yet to provide an overall conceptual framework for servant leadership. However, it is widely accepted that those leaders who merge their inspiration to lead with an immediate urge to serve not only express but also practice servant leadership.

According to Robert K. Greenleaf (1970) of Centre for Servant Leadership, a servant leader is servant first. Servant leadership begins with the natural desire to serve first, not to lead. It is a philosophy and a set of practices that enrich the lives of individuals, builds better and stronger organisations and ultimately creates a more just and caring world. A servant leader is not engaged in the dynamics of power rivalry, neither in the acquisition of material possessions. Servant leaders give top priority to the needs of the people they serve. As a result of this service, people become healthier, wealthier,

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

wiser, freer, more autonomous (less dependent) and more likely to become servant leaders themselves. The servant leader shares power and helps people develop as individuals and as a team or group.

According to Jim John, an American entrepreneur, the major purpose of leadership in the corporate sector is to help those whose lives are doing poorly to prosper. What is good must give way to whatever is better while the better must give way to the best. A leader must be seen by his subjects as being there for them, to make them better. He or she is there fundamentally to help them develop the skills they need to advance their careers, giving them 'wings to fly'. A leader will ensure that everyone has the resources and knowledge they need to meet their personal and organisational objectives. This leads to high engagement and productivity.

Servant leaders are meant to be the salt of the earth. Whenever the salt leaves the salt-shaker, it is meant to enliven wherever it lands. Salt gives flavor and taste to the food. It also preserves food. Servant leaders protect, defend and seek to restore good cultural values and traditions in the communities they work in.

The interesting quality of salt is that, at its best, it should only be tasted but not seen in the food. Once it can be seen, it means it's overdone and therefore it loses its value. Servant leaders should only be seen through the impact they make in the society. They tame their ego enough to allow Christ to be seen through their work as their personal prominence gradually diminishes. They are careful not to domineer any circumstances. Blotted ego is alien in their life of service.

Servant leaders seek to inspire, encourage, enable and empower those they work with, both members of their teams and the people they serve. At the end of the day, when the work is done and goals attained, servant leaders are careful not to apportion credit to themselves but the people they lead. That's the fruit of humility.

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

Great peace comes from subduing the instinct within us that seeks to outshine and control others, the natural inclination to rule and govern over other people. We need to come to the realization that, metaphorically speaking, it is in futility for sun and moon to compete. The truth is that each one of the two shines in its own time. The absence of negative competition is a result of the realization that each one of us will have one's own time to shine and shine the brightest at that.

It is ultimate wisdom to come to the realisation that we need to subdue our inner craving for power and control over the others. This is what we may call the state of equanimity, the state of composure and level headedness when we realise we are stronger together. This is when we develop the ability to harmonise the extremes in our desires and behavior as we recognize and respect each other's worth. The principle of equanimity affirms us as neither greater nor smaller than the others.

One of the greatest virtues of a servant leader is that of humility. You can always spot it in true servant leaders called to serve. St. Paul espoused this kind of humility explicitly in his teachings as well as in his own lifestyle. He argues thus: 'For I am the least of the Apostles and I am unworthy to be called an Apostle, because I persecuted the church of God' (Corinthians 15:9). He adds: 'Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others'.

How many of our leaders can explicitly and willingly conduct themselves in such a manner as to suggest they are the least of their contemporaries? Jesus taught his disciples that whoever wanted to be the greatest amongst them must be the servant of all (Matthew 20:26). Should they have tried to humble themselves on their own without the power of the Holy Spirit that would possibly have given room to their enemies and even counterparts to trash them. They would have been demeaned and written off as it happens in our society today with those who have godly values. We have many examples of Godly men and women in Kenya who had to courageously fight many battles from within and outside

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

their circles of leadership just because they chose to stand their ground premised on their moral principles.

Yet, despite his humility, St. Paul triumphed as God lifted him to become the strongest pillar in the expansion, growth and maturation of the Church of Christ. Nevertheless, we should not lose sight of the fact that St. Paul had a traumatic moment of conversion and transformation when he was struck blind. That's what led to his powerful commissioning for deep teachings of the gospel and missionary work across Middle East. His epistles are classic teachings in building the Christian church of all time across ages and cultures.

Our current Pope Francisco is yet another prominent servant leader. He sees his foremost obligation and duty as to serve and bond the humanity with message of love and forgiveness. He seems to count his immense power and authority over billions of people as a global leader as nothing compared to the urgency to spread peace and forgiveness in a war-ravaged and disease laden world often governed by hatred. That's clearly communicated in his speeches and actions. He is most probably the first Pope to visit so many predominantly Moslem countries such as Iraq among others.

This disposition and spirit of forgiveness resonates well with the thinking and actions of the late Nelson Mandela, former President of South Africa. Standing at the prison doors at his release to go home after 27 years in jail, he was asked whether he leaves jail with anger and bitterness. To this he replied: "No. If I left with anger and bitterness, I would still remain imprisoned wherever I will go, unless I forgive. It is my responsibility to set my heart free by forgiving those who jailed me".

As though that was not enough declaration of his humility, Evangelist Raymond Derkey Mensah reported that few years after Mandela had been in the State House as the President of South Africa, he invited Percy Yuntar for lunch. This was the State Prosecutor thirty years before who sentenced Mandela to life imprisonment convicting him of sabotaging the apartheid government. Yuntar reportedly acknowledged that

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

such had never been heard of neither witnessed before of a whole President to do so. Mandela demonstrated a prototype of a man of great humility and unmatched honour. Mandela also shook hands with his greatest archenemy, Buthelezi, after he ascended to power.

In the same vein and in pursuit of his agenda for building a church comprising of humble souls, St. Paul admonished members of the Church to relate to each other with humility. In essence, this was meant to tame competition and power wrangles that were already rampant in the early church at that time. In my view, this was meant to forestall the kind of culture of rivalry and brawls witnessed in some churches today, two thousand years after St. Paul's plea with the early church. Can servant leaders make a difference in this respect?

### **Etiquettes that govern servant leadership**

Etiquettes are the habitual dos and don'ts that govern a community or society. They are often likened to laws though they are not necessarily legally binding. Some of the good etiquettes include the following examples below which are specifically to be found amongst servant leaders (there are many others predominant in different contexts). These specifically pertain to personal grooming:

- Be yourself, and allow others to be themselves. You don't have to impose your interests on them. Allow others to make their own choices.
- Say 'thank you' any time you are favoured, given service or given respect. It is considered impolite not to be grateful when you should.
- Give genuine compliments to others.
- Choose your words wisely and don't rush to comment about things you don't know much about.
- Think matters out carefully before you speak, especially if you are a person who may be poor at finding the right words to befit an occasion.

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

- Don't be boastful, arrogant or loud. Be watchful on your blotted ego.
- Listen to others keenly before you speak.
- Speak with kindness and caution. Guard against criticising others.
- Speak with understanding. Never take advantage of somebody else's occasion to steal the show by focusing on yourself.
- Remember, you are not obligated to speak if you are not an appointed speaker. Don't just open your mouth to be noticed.
- Do not criticize or complain before listening to understand. A religious guru once said "When you talk, you are only repeating what you already know. But if you listen, you may learn something new" – Georgeez Terrie.
- Be punctual in meetings. Don't waste other people's time waiting for you.

## **Bringing 'Hygiene' in the African Politics**

*Authority to use this material was given by Professor P.L.O. Lumumba over the phone on Friday 19th February, 2021 at 2.50pm.*

*"Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we've been waiting for. We are the change that we seek." – Barack Obama, former U.S. President*

In my opinion, we have a Kenyan 'Prophet' in our midst and lucky to have him in our time, and that is none other than Prof. P.L.O Lumumba. As would be expected of prophets, he doesn't sound like he can be a 'darling' to custodians of political power and state authority, the so called deep state. Being an impeccable and sound intellectual giant with a well-articulated message of hope for Africa, he is a fearless but prudent living 'saint' of our time. At least in my view.

If anything, many centers of power would certainly be threatened by P.L.O. Lumumba's radical ideas, especially against corruption. He is no doubt a vocal man who seems to live in his own 'lonely' world typical of prophets. This

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

is owing to his courage to challenge evil in society and to think outside the box. So far, he is widely acknowledged as such by the world of intelligentsia. He is frequently invited to address university fora across Africa and what comes out of his mouth is amazingly out of this world. For instance, Lumumba argues that when one is engulfed by greed, it can be likened to drinking salty water. The more you drink it, the thirstier you get (February, 2021).

Popularly referred to as Inspirational Pan-Africanist and Motivational Speaker, Prof. Patrice P.L.O. Lumumba is said to be ‘a very balanced thinker, spontaneously weaving together many aspects of treasured life truths, ranging from African economy, to African culture and African religion’.

*“I believe that we have reached a stage in life in the economic development of Africa where, moving forward is dangerous, moving backwards is cowardice and standing still is suicidal, but we must persevere because winners do not quit and quitters never win.” P.L.O Lumumba, February 2021.*

Listening to the Lumumba, one can with no doubt deduce that he is widely read with excellent backdrop of memory and rare power of language articulation. He doubles up as a seasoned motivational speaker, lawyer, lecturer, Director of the Kenya School of Law and a Church Minister. He opines that God is neither a Christian, nor a Muslim or Hindu, neither is He any of our other religious segments. These are our own creations here on earth as human beings. God is supreme and therefore cannot be owned or limited by any one of these human groupings. Quoting the bible truth, Professor Lumumba believes that those who worship God must worship him in spirit and in truth (John 4:24). We should therefore not seek refuge and justification in our often illogical denominational groupings.

The fundamental truth is that God created all men equal out of his loving-kindness without sectarianism or segmentation. He created us physically and emotionally different from each other but equal in value. Our role is to harmonise those differences to create a beautiful rainbow. Instead, we tend to

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

magnify our differences to justify our vain competition over who is more superior than the other and who is better refined as human species, and worse still, we compete over who is closer to God than the other.

To drive this point home more clearly, a story is told by Rev. Fr. Wambua of Holy Trinity Catholic Church in Kileleshwa, Nairobi. In his homily, he narrated about an imaginary interdenominational football match between Catholics and Protestants. The Chief Guest was Jesus Christ Himself. The crowd was excited and curious to know which side Jesus would support and applause for. The first goal was made by Protestants and the whole stadium roared with big applause including Jesus. The second goal was made by Catholics, and the same thunderous applause followed with Jesus leading with excitement.

At this juncture, some fans curiously approached Jesus, quite confused, and asked: Lord, we thought you were here to support one side of the competing teams, but now we are astounded to see that you applaud both sides! How come? Which side is really your favourite team? Jesus replied: 'That's right. I support both teams. It is because we don't have those segregations in heaven. This is your own making here on earth. We see you as our children belonging to the same Father in heaven. But we can understand. That's how even your own children behave towards you as their father. They want to be sure whom you favour more'.

That's unrealistic for a father. You may want to pass it as 'siblings' rivalry'. The hard truth is that not everyone will enter the Kingdom of heaven, but only those who do the will of God (Matthew 7:21). One illiterate soloist at her late 70's asked the audience in a song during a funeral gathering: "In what language does an infant cry when it is born"? She concluded that God created us equal, but out of our own short sightedness and human nature of competition, we began to segment ourselves into big vs small, rich vs poor, wise vs fool, black vs white, educated vs illiterate and Catholics vs Protestants.

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

Obviously, we are not born into our regions, tribes, cultures and religious affiliations by choice. We are actually born into the world, that's it, period. Being contextualized by these social parameters is only accidental. Hence despising somebody because of his or her religious persuasion or cultural orientation is a grave mistake bordering with prejudice, ignorance and short-sightedness. Suppose I was born in India or Pakistan, most likely I would be a Hindu or a Buddhist. I wouldn't be quoting the bible verses I quote in this book. Why would anybody judge me then? Why would anybody therefore despise me for not belonging to their particular religious faith?

In the same vein, my late employer and mentor, Rt. Rev. Bishop Urbanus Kioko used to preach to his congregations about unity regardless of religious and social differences. He used the metaphor that whenever God sent rains and sunshine, he did so to all his children without discrimination regardless of who loved him and who didn't. Thieves and other evil doers shared in such blessings together with the righteous worshippers as well as all kinds of believers in various denominations. It doesn't rain for Christians against Moslems or Catholics against Protestants. Then he would conclude that those who discriminate others on the basis of religion were blind to the truth about the nature of the God we worship.

*Our world is divided into two groups: Those who believe their gender, race, colour, tribe, religion, and politics is the best; and those who believe in the beauty of harmony in diversity, seeking to blend their differences to form a rainbow (Adapted from Mohamad Safa)*

Professor P.L.O Lumumba (2019) dwells heavily on decolonising our minds from the troubled past of the continent of African since our history of slavery, colonisation and modern-day neo-colonization. He argues that this and the misleadership that followed is what led to the diminished sense of self-worth as Africans. It made us feel inferior to all other races and cultures of the world. Yet, all great religious leaders in history and philosophers alike have sought to visit Africa

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

to source from our rich heritage or find refuge. To support his argument, Prof. Lumumba mentions biblical figures such as Moses, Jesus and Joseph as among those who came to Africa. He also cites the philosopher by name Socrates and the religious leader by name Mohammed of Islamic religion among other great people who visited Africa.

*“Simple minds consider themselves as drop of a genius in the sea of fools” (Source: Unknown)*

According to the Professor, man was created from the soil. From this premise, he continues to argue that he has never seen white soil other than the wasted saline soil and ashes. Good soil can only be black or brown. Hence, in the words of the Professor, original man must have been created black or brown, but not white. How come then we look down at our black skin colour with contempt? Our women struggle to bleach their skin to become ‘white’, which in reality, is not even white per se but pink. They also abhor their own black hair preferring rather to put on expensive imported wigs from dead human beings.

A four-year child from African descent speaking fluent English, French or Chinese will be applauded as a bright child. Is the ability to speak a foreign language what makes a person intelligent? Would a Chinese child be said to be bright just for speaking any one or more of our African languages fluently? Of course not. More criteria would be required to assess the child’s intelligence and not just the ability to speak a foreign language.

Foreign language is only necessary for widening the scope of social exposure and interaction. In fact, Prof. Lumumba predicts that in 25 years’ time, Africa will be speaking Chinese among other major languages. It is now a requirement in some school curricula in Kenya. We need to decolonise our mind-set and begin to think right.

On the issue of the decolonizing the African mind, he concurs with our father of literature in Kenya, Professor Ngugi wa Thiong’o, residing and teaching mostly in the USA. He has

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

vowed never again to pen down his ideas and thoughts in a foreign language but only in his native language, Kikuyu. Those interested to read may as well look for translators themselves.

In December 2019, Prof. P.L.O Lumumba delivered a speech to an audience in the University of Cape Coast (UCC) entitled 'African Renaissance: Leaders and Mis-Leaders'. This conference was organised by the Association of Africa Universities (AAU), a forum created for cross pollination of ideas towards the aspired Africa rebirth. Speaking in this conference, the Professor emphatically and without mincing his words declared that we have only a handful of true leaders in Africa (such as the late President Magufuli of Tanzania and President Kagame of Rwanda). Other numerous African leaders are said to be mis-leaders. They tend to wield absolute power that in turn corrupts absolutely. They do not seem to carry with themselves the best interest of the people they lead. He concludes that bad leadership is an anathema not only to the present generation but also to the posterity of generations yet to be born.

Lumumba laments that African agenda is systematically being sacrificed on the altar of bilateral donor generosity. We don't seem to have many enough African leaders who are known to be true crusaders of African interests and who can persistently push for special conferences exclusively to discuss the agenda on African solutions to African problems.

In the words of Prof. Lumumba, corruption in Africa has killed more people than civil wars in Africa combined. That's why corruption has been regarded as a crime against humanity. Instead of fighting corruption head-on, the practice has perpetually been concealed or sugar-coated under less threatening terms such as embezzlement, fraud, impunity and money laundering which are rarely taken to court.

Prof. Lumumba opines that many leaders would be scared of any attempt to be loud against corruption fearing they would lose favour with the Western donors. It is believed or at least alleged that contractors from Western countries win local

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

contracts more easily through kickbacks. Our leaders also fear being sabotaged by the local networks of powerful corruption cartels. It is assumed these networks practice evil for selfish individual gains against public interests. These networks are said to be so powerful that they easily neutralise the powers of any leader who would be bold enough to attempt to change the status quo. Occasionally they are known to have silenced potential witnesses who appear to have concrete evidence that can incriminate evil doers in the courts of law.

### **The cynicism of a rich beggar called Africa**

As discussed earlier, it is ironical that while Africa is said to be the richest continent in the world, it is also considered to be the poorest. Africa is rich in all types of natural resources including minerals, oil as well as animal and agricultural products. However, most of these are harvested and shipped abroad for value addition through industrial processing and packaging. The processed products are shipped back to Africa at exorbitant prices exclusively determined by the manufacturers abroad. They also brand them as the products of their countries.

Western economist have repeatedly told us globalization has ensured world economy plays on an even ground on the basis of equal rules. That's why we are continuously urged to open our markets in Africa. The result? Our textile industries systematically died, followed by our sugar industries. The water we drink all over Africa is bottled by Coca-Cola in USA and sold to us in our supermarkets and hotels.

The worst of it all is that Africans choose only leaders who can feed them for today through bribery handouts. That's precisely why the leaders misbehave. If you are a clean guy, you will have to wait until a universal transformation of the values that rule the culture of corruption in the society takes place. That might take another generation to come. This was recently affirmed by senior county official who told me Kenya was not ready for clean leadership yet. How I pray he is wrong. For me, I see change coming sooner than later. All it takes is

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

to get the right person on to the driving seat of the country. A person who will turn rhetoric in to reality by ensuring justice is done without fear or favour.

Not long ago, Prof. Lumumba, a staunch Pan-Africanist himself whose powerful speeches across Africa advocate African solutions to African problems, was appointed the Director of Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission of Kenya where he served from September 2010 to August 2011. However, he never lasted for his full term. Some powerful tender cartels are reported to have won the support of the parliament to quickly bundle out Prof. Lumumba and his entire office crew after serving in the said office for only one year. The powerful cartels had finally discovered they had supported the appointment of a ‘wrong’ guy who could not bend the law to accommodate and perpetuate their unethical practices.

It is for this same reason that Prof. Edward Waswa Kisiang’ani argues that credible and honest people of integrity will not even be chosen to lead a village cattle dip project. It is feared they would frustrate the interests of greedy power-brokers who double up as local community ‘gatekeepers’. These are village elders, petty traders and wholesalers among other beneficiaries of high level political connections whose interests they represent on the ground. The beneficiary stakeholders expect everyone to ‘behave normally’ and toe the line of compliance like the rest of the members the community who are ‘peace loving’. It a rather complex attitude. The universal attitude is to pay respect to those voted in or appointed to the positions of leadership. They are assumed to be the fortunate lot who would be the first beneficiaries as they are privileged to have been bestowed the opportunity to exercise power and authority.

The point I am trying to drive home here is that, we tend to burn out when nobody cheers us up in a fierce battle against corruption, or when we are striving with integrity to meet organizational goals. We all need to be appreciated and recognized for what we do well. But many employers

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

do the opposite. They deny employees opportunities to prove themselves. It is ironically true that some employers tend to be ambivalent on employees who shine beyond their expectation. Do they feel threatened? Let's trust our frontline teams with responsibilities. Sometimes it is the little things we do or don't do that count the most. Don't just tell good employees that you appreciate them. Show them by giving them more room to do greater things with free hand. Then keep verbalising your appreciation to inspire them even the more.

Choose the bold stance to shun evil instead of 'flowing with the current'. That might make you be ostracized and become the lonely black sheep. But does that matter for a professional who has chosen to follow one's conscience and do the right thing? Even when you become a target for scornful treatment, your heart will remain at rest and jubilant. One should be prepared to suffer isolation all these when shunning injustice in society. I pray my grandchildren in Kenya will not need to give a bribe to be served in any office, whether public or private office. I hope they will have strong enough morality not to accept to be bribed to render a service to deserving citizens who stand in need.

Dr. Susan Lewa argues that in her class lectures at Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT) and in the occasional speeches she delivers to her public audience, clean guys of integrity are only acknowledged in Africa after their demise. After they die, they are no longer a threat to the system. They can only be praised and acknowledged by the system when they are no more.

In fact, leaders of integrity can only be appointed in Africa by conscientious authorities but not elected through popular vote which can easily be compromised by corruption. Clean people are loathed by both the electorate and the system since they will block all channels of unwarranted gains. That would frustrate the beneficiaries of corruption. Power brokers would no longer have access to goodies from their masters in power. You will have to be one of them and bow down to their practices in order be supported to acquire a public office.

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

According to Professor Lumumba, Africans are not children of a lesser God. We can rise up and share at the dinner table of civilization, not as the food to be eaten, neither as waiters serving the dinners, but as dinners too. China was a third world country 30 years ago, today it is among the powerful first world countries. Today more than 90% of the technology we use in Africa is from China. Whatever the case, it's only by strengthening our institutions that we can overcome our vulnerability. According to Prof. Lumumba, having strong individuals is not sufficient to fight vices that pull us down. Individuals come and go, but strong institutions outlive strong individuals. Let's strengthen our institutions.

*Are you intending to hire a productive employee? Look for these qualities: Training, Experience, Intelligence and Integrity. But if the last one is missing, the first three will kill your company (Paraphrased from Billionaire Warren Buffett, Chairman and CEO of Berkshire Hathaway).*

### **Leaders should be trustworthy**

In my own understanding, trust is the litmus test for authentic leadership of integrity. As long as people can trust you, you wield a huge amount of influence in their lives. The opposite is also true. When people you lead stop trusting you, then you lower yourself to the level that will segment the group into two distinct groups: "loyalists and rebels". It is also natural for any group of people to comprise of the two opposing parties: supporters and detractors. This kind of outcome doesn't always entirely translate to the absence of trust in the leader. It can simply be attributed to opposing interests within the group as people jostle to reap maximum benefits out of a situation and if possible, to take it all.

Integrity is born of that inner desire and ability to do what is right, the resolve to do the right thing always whether you are seen by anybody or not. Integrity means radiating our values and respecting social etiquettes in our day-to-day lifestyle at work, with family, with friends, in public and even when alone. Such values include reliability, honesty and transparency. Integrity is simply living with honour. At

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

the end of the day, your personal integrity is one factor that will dictate what you are able and what you are not able to become in future. However, integrity is an expensive virtue that calls for self-denial and self-discipline by putting other people's interests first. The bottom-line question is; can you be trusted with your word?

*'Ordinary men and women are controlled by laws, rules and regulations but great men and women of integrity are controlled by their moral conscience' (Source Unknown)*

Ask yourself as to what standards you are setting as a role model leader especially to young generation of your community or society at large. People are watching us as leaders and are keenly following our tracks to see whether we walk our talk. This is especially so for those who profess their faith as men and women of God. People will be more interested to see how you conduct yourself more than what you tell them as a leader. Since many people find it difficult to remain consistent in keeping with their word for instance, they are watching you closely on that as well. It is 'expensive' to maintain personal integrity. It calls for self-sacrifice and self-denial. Are you known to keep your word on what you promise?

I always tell friends that my departed father was my mentor in the realm of integrity. For the years he was alive I had never known a single incidence in which he lied to a person or cheated or coned a customer as a small trader in the village. He paid his debts promptly. A polygamist of four wives, my father died at the age of eighty three years. I suggested to him he joins a particular local church that I knew would embrace and accept polygamists unconditionally and he did.

*Are you intending to hire a productive employee? Look for three qualities: Training, Intelligence and Integrity. But if the last one is missing, the first two will kill your company (Billionaire Warren Buffett, Chairman and CEO of Berkshire Hathaway)*

## **‘Prosperity’ will seek you out, but only if you do this.....**

*“The goal should not necessarily be to be prosperous. The goal should be to add value to what you do. Once you are valuable, instead of chasing prosperity, success will attract itself to you” (Brigitte Hyacinth)*

*“Stop chasing success. Let success chase you. The goal as a leader should be to serve, empower and develop those in your care. Everyone wants to be successful, but very few think about being of value. Once you focus on adding value - success will follow. We rise by lifting others. When they shine, we shine; we all succeed together” (Brigitte Hyacinth)*

The Bible admonishes us to seek first the Kingdom of God and its righteousness, and all these other things that we sleeplessly chase after will be added unto us (Matthew 6:33). We seek the Kingdom of God by serving and doing good to other people. In my view that’s one way in which we attain God’s righteousness. Of course, we must continue to work hard and perfect our service to mankind in order for “all these other things to be added unto us”.

That’s how we seek the Kingdom of God through the beauty of our work. In other words, knowing God and working for His Kingdom compels us to do things right and with touch of perfection. That in turn adds value to our work, our career in general and to us as persons. Again, with this kind of positive attitude, our works will follow us and that’s how success will seek us out. “God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them” (Hebrew 6:10).

In other words, prosperity, whatever that may mean to you, will seek out for you if you serve people with a touch of credibility and professionalism. I am of the opinion that a good number of our leaders in society tend to spend more time on issues that don’t add value to what they are employed to do. They seem to be so concerned about their ‘job security’, and supposedly ‘meager incomes’ that they spent more time

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

planning for and perfecting side hustles than working for what one is paid to do.

*‘The truth is that as long as you earnestly desire to meet people’s needs, and as long as you strive to resolve institutional challenges, you will always get paid well for it. Good income is not simply equal to or synonymous with getting a good job. Seeking to meet other people’s needs with touch of perfection is what will attract good income for you, whether salaried or self-employed (Late Joseph Kithome of Ministry of Education).*

Apparently, many workers tend to spend many hours and days working on machinations that will earn them more money than doing what they are employed to do. They seem to believe what they earn as their salary is not commensurate with what the employer gains from their knowledge and skills. Fair enough. In that case, be sincere to yourself and move on. That’s not the only employer that can hire you. Don’t waste your life hanging on there without your optimal productivity.

*‘You do not have to put-off the light from your neighbour’s lantern for your own light to shine. Let both shine’. Avoid negative competition (Swahili Proverb)*

It is unfortunate that some people (or employees for that matter), are rarely satisfied with their terms of engagement, not even when they negotiated for their packages before they signed their contracts. They are perpetual grumblers. A case in point is in one of the universities I was hired as a lecturer. Just one week after I joined the University as a member of faculty, some two senior lecturers cum-administration staff approached me and told me how mean the University was. They argued that their salaries remained meagre, yet the university had continued to buy land all over. I asked them whether they had time-bound consensual contracts. They responded on the affirmative. I advised them to renegotiate their terms after their contracts expired and if they don’t get what they want they should simply leave. They started ‘fighting’ me from that day.

There are two kinds of people in an organisation. The value adders and the parasites who live off the sweat of others.

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

Parasites are the disgruntled employees who find pleasure in inciting their colleagues and subordinates against the institutional management. No wonder they rarely grow beyond basic levels of leadership owing to this weakness in their professional attitude. What determines one's significance in an organisation is the value they add to the organisational growth.

Even the parasites happen to be gifted in many ways. But they choose to overshadow and compromise their talents with negative attitude (values). What such people may not know is that as long as they are at loggerheads with the fingers that feed them, they will never rise above their hips. Value of life is measured by your impact and not by just your presence and sticking your nose around. No matter how brilliant your papers are and how handsome or beautiful you may look, what will matter in that organization at the end of the day, is your productivity.

Actually, one would be remembered, not just by the ordinary work you do similar to others, but by what you do differently for more superior results. What is your particular trademark of unique innovation in your place of work? The difference between an ordinary stone and a precious stone is rarity. Once you remain focused on your work with great outcomes, financial prosperity will usually follow you. Your absence in an organisation will either create a vacuum or bring joy. It is really your choice. If your absence creates joy, then your presence was only tolerated and not celebrated. Employers are not blind to what makes their companies either grow or stagnate. If they are lucky to get a leader with a more positive attitude, they would replace you right away and you would come back one or two years later to marvel at the progress you will find, what you were not willing to achieve even though able.

It is not just an employee's or a leader's level of education or length of working experience that will matter most in the growth and stability of an institution, albeit the two are important qualities. These are not even the most crucial

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

benchmarks for one's own personal growth although they are important and essential. It is one's positive attitude at work blended with optimistic outlook that makes the whole difference. With positive attitude (values), prosperity will find such a leader in working garments focused on the institutional goals. If he or she learns to surround oneself with great teams of positive thinkers with versatile skills and talents, then no mountain will be impossible to climb towards the realisation of institutional success.

*"A leader takes people where they want to go. A great leader takes people to where they don't necessarily want to go, but ought to be."*  
– Rosalynn Carter, former first lady of the United States

### **Three cardinal virtues of a strong institution**

For any institution to succeed and remain strong, whether family institution, community institution or a government entity, it must be built on three cardinal virtues: *meritocracy, pragmatism and honesty*. This is according to Prof. Kishore Mahbubani, Professor in the Practice of Public Policy at the National University of Singapore. He argues that this is what made the formerly poor tiger countries of Asia transit into the category of developed first world countries within our generation. On the flip side, it is believed that it mainly lack of these three virtues in most poor countries that has kept them poor and even poorer each year. *Instead of hiring professionals on merit, we give critical jobs to friends and relatives without due consideration of the relevance of their training and competence.*

How about pragmatism? What is it? In his interview with American authorities at the Town Hall of New York in USA on June 21<sup>st</sup> 1990, Nelson Mandela was asked as to which economic model he would adopt after the impending independence of his country becomes a reality. In his response he said he expected such rather sensitive question from a quorum like that but whose answer is simple: *"It doesn't really matter whether a cat is black or white, as long as it catches mice"*.

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

Meaning, it matters little whether he pursues capitalist or socialist economic model but will pursue the economic model that will eradicate poverty and put food on the table for the millions of poor South Africans. Perhaps a mix of the two might do that trick better. That's what pragmatism is all about. He will run with what works. In the absence of pragmatic approach to leadership and decision making, many economic development opportunities for a country are lost.

It matters less whether one chooses to pursue socialist or capitalist economic path as long as it works for the growth of the economy of a country. That's what is meant by pragmatism, focusing on what works and thus discarding rhetoric. First world countries have developed through pragmatic choices, refusing to be biased in their economic decisions but instead remaining open to what makes sense and what works.

Honesty is the third virtue, a noble and expensive one. In the absence of honesty in leadership, lots of public resources are siphoned through corruption to build the 'economies' of a few members of the society at the expense of millions of citizens. These are deprived of their economic rights by the same people they vote into leadership. Honesty is not common to everybody. It is a rare virtue that will be lacking in many leaders except for those governed by their moral compass. Integrity and credibility should always be the standard measure in choosing leaders at any time and at whatever level of leadership, whether in an organisation or society in general.

It is leadership of honesty which enables economic growth with high levels of accountability. Could that explain why most 'tiger' countries of Asia have recorded astronomical economic growth in less than half a century just because they have chosen to be more pragmatic than democratic in identifying leaders in their societies? They are said to carry out professional interviews to hire the best, even in the positions of political as well as institutional leadership. They prefer to appoint their leaders more than putting them on vote through universal suffrage which is easily compromised

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

to end up voting in the wrong people. The three virtues may sound unbelievably simple but they are extremely powerful standards of leadership for any community or institution poised for greatness. Hire on merit, go for what works and hunt for integrity.

“To be persuasive, we must be believable; to be believable we must be credible; to be credible we must be truthful.” – Edward R. Murrow, American broadcast journalist

In other words, meritocracy pertains to assigning duties strictly on the basis of competence and not by affectionate standards of friendship, relationship, nepotism and such like. The outcome of meritocracy is great performance while mediocrity is all that can be expected of those hired through backdoors.

Pragmatism is going by what works and not necessarily by popularly held theories, beliefs or myths which may not be applicable in all circumstances. This challenges the tendency to hang on dogmas, such as we never do this or that in this organisation, thus closing all the doors to innovation and fresh ideas. *If your presence in an organisation does not add value, then you are not only a waste of space but an obstruction against organisational transformation through innovation and fresh ideas.* Ask yourself, does your absence in that organization for few days, few weeks or few months make any difference, does it matter at all?

Does the organization miss you when you are absent? Could it be you are occupying a space in that organization where somebody else could have sat and made a more positive impact? Are you an asset for that organization who adds value to whatever happens, or are you a parasite living off the goodwill and sweat of others? Parasites are usually the first people to complain about what is not working. The truth is, every agent of mediocrity is an obstruction to agents of transformation.

School education rewards you for your memory, for your ability to remember and recite theories and put them on

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

paper, but life rewards people for their creative imagination and courage to try out new things. School rewards people who take caution, but life rewards people who have a daring spirit. Don't make school to be your world, but make the world to be your school and use the lessons learnt each day to transform the world itself. That's what this book is trying to drive home as we draw from writer's lessons from the world for the last forty-six or so years of interaction with the professional world.

According to John Maxwell (2007), everything rises and falls on the quality of leadership. But knowing how to lead is only half the battle. Your character either powers your leadership ability or stands in the way of your success. Experience has validated this assertion over and over again. Many a time organisations that appeared to nose-dive to the drains picked immediately with timely change of leadership.

We can't change how people treat us or what they say about us. But we can determine how we react to that. The secret of success of a leader lies in persistence in pursuing one's calling regardless of scarecrows. But you cannot succeed in leadership alone. You need people of goodwill to walk with you as they also pursue their own dreams. That's how we prosper together.

Running through this book is one strong assertion on what the Lord requires of you and me as leaders in the society, even at family level: ... 'To act justly, show mercy and walk humbly with your God' (Micah 6:8). We have an obligation as leaders in society to first and foremost consolidate our relationships within families, groups and within communities we live in as we reach out to transform the world.

*"Leadership is a matter of having people look at you and gain confidence, seeing how you react. If you're in control, they're in control."* – Tom Landry, former Dallas Cowboys coach

Relationships between leaders and their subjects is of paramount importance, voluntary and reciprocal. Relationships cannot be forced on people. Relationships should be built on

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

a free give and take basis, in an environment of trust and acceptance. It would be foolhardy to keep a relationship alive by sacrificing your lot in order to be appreciated or loved. Do good to others and don't wait to be thanked, praised or to be appreciated by anybody. Just move on with life and seek to do even better elsewhere. Experts talk about secretion of hormone by the name 'oxytocin' when you do good to others. This is said to be generated and released by pituitary gland in the human brain. It is spontaneously released into our body system. It is a chemical messenger released to make us realise the pleasure in being cuddled, hugged, sexually aroused, recognized or even in being trusted. That's the same chemical that bonds a mother to her child. It stimulates good feeling of personal satisfaction following a good deed (<https://www.yourh.info>).

In other words, as people benefit from our generosity, we also benefit from that good feeling of personal social satisfaction after doing good. Hence the old adage, it's more blessed to give than to receive. The same hormone is secreted by cuddling, hugging or any other gesture of love. The more you do it (give), the more you in turn get back your 'fair share'.

Sometimes this hormone has been called 'love hormone' as it is released when people bond socially. Whenever we do good with sincere heart to someone without expecting anything in return, we benefit from that good feeling generated by 'oxytocin' hormone when it's released into our body organs by the pituitary gland in the brain. It makes us feel good and worthy living. Don't ask for or expect any returns for a generous action.

*"I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."*  
– Maya Angelou, poet and civil rights activist (*Make people feel important and needed*).

Let it be a sincere and spontaneous exchange of love and service. Could this perhaps be why some beneficiaries of good deeds sometimes subconsciously or otherwise, end up hating the good doer at the end of a season of generosity? Perhaps

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

they want to inflict some pain in the good doer out of envy realising the overwhelming joy that overtakes the generous person. On the other hand, as leaders we need to accept to be served and loved back by the same people we serve in a sincere relationship of give and take. It is such social transaction that creates true happiness in life. Otherwise, one sided generosity can also leave the giver emotionally drained.

## **Conscientious leaders have few close friends but many acquaintances**

You must have heard the statement many times before that the higher you go, the cooler it becomes. If not from elsewhere, you must have heard this from your geography class. You tend to lose friends as you climb up the social ladder. Moses of the Bible was not only deserted by his people but also rejected when he came back from the mountain where he met with God. That privilege of elevation to the level that he met the Creator enraged some of his co-leaders.

This can be interpreted metaphorically in the sense that the higher you move up the hierarchy of leadership, the fewer the friends you will maintain or gain. Can employees truly be close friends to their bosses in the true sense of friendship? It is doubtful. You tend to lose many friends and therefore become more and more secluded and lonelier with upward social mobility. Why is this the case? None of us would have an easy and definite answer to that.

The truth is that bosses tend to be 'lonely' in the same organisations they lead. Perhaps the social gap that exists between them and their subordinates accounts for this. No matter how much you try to be close to your team as their leader, there will always come a time when you realise there is a tight demarcation that cannot be penetrated between you and them.

*"If you are not losing friends, then you are not growing up" (The Success Club)*

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

The presence of a friendly boss in a group of employees would not only be most unlikely but when it exists, it certainly will have clear limits without which organizational productivity would like be compromised in many ways. Bosses may not go deep enough on issues that bond friendship among colleagues. In management theory, we casually refer to this kind of relationship with subordinates as 'being with the boys and girls but not being one of them'.

Many people, including leaders, have chosen to go slow on friendships because they were hurt in the past. Their trust was taken advantage of and they ended up being 'cheated'. They became more careful on whom to relate with and how close they would allow the relationship to become. In other cases, some executives have said they are careful to conceal their past life experiences and their present and future plans to avoid attracting contempt from subordinates.

Leaders are aware it is prudent to keep personal information about themselves as confidential as possible. Such information could spread like wild fire if it got into the ears of people around them. They protect themselves by limiting their interaction with staff. That's their choice. It would be wrong to judge them. What they need to know is that many went through similar hurts but gave trust another chance, this time more wisely and prudent.

It has been observed that many people choose friends on the basis of complementarity. If you are an introvert, it is most likely your friends will be introverts. The opposite can also be true. Vulnerability would also bring people together as friends. People who are going through similar life challenges will most likely become friends as they share their pain and vulnerability. Birds of the same feather flock together. But how we relate to people also changes as we grow and attain new careers, new social 'altitudes', on relocating to new environments of work or residence. That is, friendship is evolutionary. It is dictated by mutual exchange. You keep your friends because they have something in their personal qualities that you miss. That's not being selfish because they also see in you some qualities they need in their lives.

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

The digital era has made relationships grow and suffer in the same measure. Interactions are more intense with the use of cell phones. You can reach out to a friend any time and more easily these days than it was twenty years ago, whether by a call or a text. It is also easy to find people around a table who know each other but are not talking. They are busy texting or browsing on their phones. That's a tragedy to relationships.

All said and done, live the kind of life that pleases you as long as it is within societal norms and doesn't break the law of the country. Live life that you feel comfortable about without too much worry on what people think or don't think about you. All you may need to concern yourself with is to avoid extremes in anything. Sensible living is about moderation. Do not overdo anything, not even a good thing that leaves you exhausted to the extremes. Live normally.

It is leadership with integrity that builds stable families. Unfortunately, today we live in a fast-paced society where humane societal values have been nailed on the cross of wealth and success. Pursuit of the so-called prosperity has compromised respect for fundamental social and cultural values. Our parents handed down to us a society that had respect for our elders, respect for our parents and respect for authority at any level. These values kept the community glued together and supportive of each other.

Our parents made us believe the biblical truth that a good name is to be preferred to riches (Proverbs 22:1). The new generation seems to have put those values upside down. The new belief system seems to advocate that a good name has no value if it makes you remain poor. Unfortunately, the new belief seems to suggest that it is better to steal and corrupt your way through the system and amass wealth to earn respect from the society than to languish in poverty and shame.

In the absence of humane values, we can only expect a total breakdown of the moral fabric of the society leading to anarchy and 'loss' of an entire generation. Unfortunately that's where we are today and apparently heading to darker days. It is

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

only morally upright leaders who will seek to successfully reverse the trend by seeking to blend modernity with efforts to restore the lost values of our culture. That's not farfetched, neither is it a pipedream. It is attainable with best of leaders.

Rarely does the society care about how you got your wealth. Instead you are honoured for the achievement regardless of how you got it. No wonder some parents today buy examination papers to catapult their kids to the best national schools by cheating. What will come of those children when they grow-up and occupy positions of public responsibility while they know very well they acquired their qualifications by cheating, worse still, facilitated by their parents?

It is a fact that strong nations are founded on strong families. Strong families are founded on solid social and moral community values. It is the only way to build caring communities that cherish sharing through charity and promotion of justice and peace. That is why we have sought to dedicate a large section of this book to the consolidation of leadership of integrity. Yet, there can never be one best way of dealing with people. We can only help one another maintain our sense of morality as we learn from each other's experiences. We should desire to willingly transform our attitudes (values) such as to enable us co-exist harmoniously with others as we grow and sharpen our leadership competencies.

There is common adage that you have never really started living until you have done something for someone who can never repay you back. As leaders of our families and our communities, let's try to do the right things at all times regardless of what other people are doing or will think about us. Your contribution in good deed and with good faith will stir up other people's moral conscience. They will begin to emulate you. The ripple effect will go to great lengths to change the society. In fact that would land the devil on the wrong side of the equation of life. It is not his desire for human beings to help each other out in life but he aspires that we hate each other and repay evil for good done to us. He would celebrate to see hatred spread like bush fire instead of love

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

among the people. That's where he invests his energy. To sow the seeds of discord.

In that regard, we have an obligation to preach and show love as leaders regardless. Our lifestyle as leaders today should attest to what we believe and profess, hard as it may sound. This is especially so when it comes to building the capacities of others to grow and become self-supporting. I am not talking about leaders dishing out financial aid and alms but supporting those who stand in need by giving them opportunity for training in skills that in turn make them self-supporting. We must correct our mistakes of today, at least for the survival of our future generations. Somebody has said that, the most powerful human beings in the society are those who can stand alone when their conscience warrants so. Go ahead and do it by doing good when everybody else around you is hating and revenging against others.

*“Anyone who has never made a mistake has never tried anything new in life.” Albert Einstein*

### **The relevance of universal education for all**

Universal education pertains to availability, accessibility and affordability of education such as to provide equal opportunity to all as well as regardless of social class, gender, ethnic background and regardless of physical or mental disabilities. According to UNICEF, getting every child to school is essential to reducing global poverty, fostering social integration and national cohesion, improving health, fostering peace, bolstering democracy, improving environmental sustainability and increasing gender equity. Universal education is a basic human right.

*The secret of effective leadership is to be firm but fair (Martin Luther King Jnr.)*

It is a fact that we acquire education through three sources. First is the scientific theoretical knowledge that would quench the curiosity about mysteries of life about us and around us. For instance, we need to understand what brain is made of and where it is located in human body. We also need to

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

understand what clouds are made of and what holds them in the air while everything else is falling down. That's one way of looking at the value of education from scientific point of view but which may not be able to put food on our tables. It just makes us wise with wide perspectives. It should be remembered here that when we talk of education, we don't limit ourselves to formal and scientific education that is found in school text books and school classroom setting.

In regard to the foregoing, our second source of education is from informal settings. That's why it's also referred to as informal or traditional education. This is where we acquire the kind of education that instils appropriate societal values and morality. This is acquired from cultural traditions, practices and values passed-on by elders from one generation to another. This we acquire to enable us shape and model our attitudes (values) appropriately as expected of us by the society. It has been said that, the best academic education void of moral compass will lead to the creation of 'clever devils'. Could that explain why some students in some of our best secondary schools in Kenya are burning down their schools with the slightest provocation or no provocation at all?

Appropriate social and moral values will enable us coexist harmoniously with other people in our families, community and in the society at large. This is largely acquired through both formal as well as informal education. Informal education embraces all that we learn out of school such as from interaction with the society and especially with parents, relatives, peers, elders, mentors and counsellors among others. I believe raising a question is not being judgmental. It simply begs for collective inquiry.

The third source of education is the non-formal kind that embraces life skills such as training in technical skills outside formal education system or environment. These may either be career skills that would bring food on the table, or knowledge acquisition to make the learner better functional in a more improved or advanced manner in society. It doesn't always have to be technical. Even civic education and social

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

awareness seminars are other forms of non-formal education where knowledge is shared. Non-formal education enables us to manage our lives better and more independently. Often, informal and non-formal education have been referred to as education for life or life-long education ('university of life') as opposed to education for academic examinations.

Education for life is holistic in nature, seeking to contextualise the difference between 'owning the whole world' dubiously or living meaningful life with discernment and contentment. In other words, this kind of education drives out greed and ushers in the true meaning of shared community life. Contrast to living meaningful life is getting wasted by allowing oneself lose touch with the reality. Contentment is finding joy in what we already have in our lives, feeling or showing satisfaction with our possessions, status, or situation such as power. It is being happy without trying to find fulfilment in acquiring more material possessions.

Non-formal education for life is sensitive to issues of justice in society, charity (sharing) and solidarity (unity of purpose) with other human beings. Pope Francis calls these values the 'antibodies' against aimless and reckless living. Skills training make us relevant and useful to society. No matter how highly educated we could be, we will always need drivers, cooks, doctors, nurses, artisans, managers and leaders among many other skilled people. We should be able as leaders to facilitate in harnessing these skills to make them productive within families, communities and society in general.

This will be accomplished either by creating salaried job opportunities or facilitating self-employment for those with those skills already. Appointing authorities in the job-market expect job-seekers to show their competencies at work and not just going around waiving paper qualifications. Those poised for joy and happiness are those who use their skills to better their own lives and the lives of people around them in society. They skills are bound to make institutions more effective and efficient and not just to earn their salaries.

To acquire this precious commodity called education, it calls for deliberate effort and a good measure of self-sacrifice.

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

In the African context, and on a light touch here, there are only five known 'degree' holders: 'Doctors'; 'Pilots'; 'Lawyers'; 'Engineers' and 'Others'. Many of us belong to the category of 'others' with degrees whose purposes are not yet as clearly articulated the first four categories above. Where do you belong? In developing countries, many casualties of unemployment belong to this fifth category. However, in developed world, the fifth category of degrees are comparatively fairly popular including psychology, counselling, social work, psychiatry, linguistics, Jazz studies, music-art-and-design, poetry, anthropology, sociology and such like degrees.

These are skills that are needed to fix some of the most important aspects of human life. They rehabilitate drug addicts, they fill shops with designer suits for other degree holders, it is their category with less prestigious qualifications who will build and decorate our mansions, they will fix our malfunctioning automobiles, we will go to them for beauty grooming services among other similar crucial services considered to be peripheral by the society.

Where is this analogy leading us to? Education takes you to the top of a mountain or a balcony of social awareness with more superior and better understanding of issues. That's when it becomes possible to see more clearly where you want to lead your people to. You have a clearer vision of the world below you with a wider view and better perspective on issues and options available as your horizon is broadened. As an educated leader ('on top of your skills or knowledge mountain'), you can see the dangers and roadblocks that impede your people from reaching out to their desired dreams and destiny in life.



*“If your actions create a legacy that inspires others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, then you are an excellent leader.” – Dolly Parton, singer and songwriter*

## **Servant leaders are efficient and effective**

Men and women of wisdom tell us that you cannot be an effective leader of integrity and expect to be appreciated by everybody. Effective leaders are loved by many but loathed by many others in equal measure. They are hated by those who lack goodwill. Leaders of integrity do not tolerate inertia and lethargy at work which leads to non-performance. That’s why they are not liked by sly team members. Leaders ‘worth their salt’ must live up to the best management practices that lead to institutional or community success in attaining their goals. That is, in order to attain effectiveness with efficiency, leaders must be self-disciplined and decisive in whatever they set themselves to do.

*In fact, men and women of integrity are rarely voted into positions of public leadership. It is feared they would block the way for*

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

*unscrupulous cartels who aspire to corruptly benefit from public resources. If by any chance credible leaders happen to gain positions of power, it is believed that the cartels would find a way to bundle them out at the earliest opportunity (Paraphrased from P.L. Lumumba, January 2021)*

Effectiveness is attained where goals are met in their entirety as planned. Efficiency is attained where only minimum resources and effort have been employed to attain those particular goals. Somebody has expressed the same better by use of the following metaphor: while you will attain effectiveness by killing a mosquito with a hammer that will certainly not be the most efficient strategy to attain that particular goal. You may end up incurring more costs in replacing a broken window and repairing a wall, leave alone the physical energy that has gone into the effort. Mosquito spray would have been more efficient in this case with the same effectiveness.

Good leaders keep institutions on course. An effective leader will ensure his or her institution or community remains on course in tandem with the strategic plans and the envisioned goals. This is basically attained through effective resource deployment and management. The most crucial of these resources is the human resource. One particular aspect of mismanagement which would be likely to cause institutional stagnation is turning a blind eye to negative attitudes of some of the personnel. In his last speech, Martin Luther King Jnr said: 'May I stress the need for courageous, intelligent, and dedicated leadership.... Leaders not in love with publicity but in love with humanity. Leaders not in love with money, but in love with justice. Leaders who can subject their particular egos to the greatness of the cause' (Holiday, R. 2017).

Toxic staff are usually not in a hurry to leave an institution as they have a mission of their own to accomplish, either for themselves or for shadow external interests. These sly personnel are good at it. They often play hide and seek games with the management, sometimes faking to be the best thing the institution has ever had.

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

Toxic staff gradually undermine organisations by negatively influencing newly recruited staff as they arrive. They discourage the new staff from taking up key responsibilities which the toxic staff have either already declined or have underperformed. If anything, their major role is to keep discouraging new arrivals, and especially those who happen to be loyal and committed. Instead they encourage them to resign the soonest so that the status quo remains. Their biggest interest is their monthly pay-cheques. Their least priority is the attainment of organisational goals. The organizational CEO cannot escape the share of blame, especially if he or ignores action against underperforming staff.

A seasoned leader will deal with such situations resolutely, expeditiously and decisively without fear or favour to save an institution. Some of the options available include separation of negative elements in order to curtail the spread of the negative attitude. Separation could include departmental or institutional transfers that lead to relocation for spatial separation. In the worst-case scenario, the ultimate separation involves sacking.

These options of separation will generate even more negativity from friends left behind. A leader should therefore ensure such option for separation. Institutions that manage separation well are those with clearly defined policies and procedures that must be followed judiciously in order to avoid expensive litigation. Consultation on the provisions of the labour laws of a country should help as a point of reference.

### **Practicing civility towards public officers**

The first important consideration when visiting a public office is your manner of dressing. Dress-code for public offices is usually formal. Sometimes 'smart-casual' can also be a good alternative if you can't afford formal dressing. Remember, we dress for where we are going and not for where we are coming from. The unfortunate truth is, you will be served in most offices on the basis of the way you dress. Too casual dressing will make you be ignored or served with contempt and disrespect and vice versa. Incidentally, you

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

become more confident and bolder when you feel you are smartly dressed. This is particularly a wakeup call for young professionals who believe they can dress up anyhow because they are very confident about themselves. While it's good and commendable to be self-confident, it is important to consider the expectations of the others in society, especially when you are bound to meet important personalities.

It is also advisable to consider speaking up in a manner that you will be audible in your communication. Many young people miss opportunities because they don't speak loud enough with confidence and vigor. They only whisper and have to be requested to speak up loud. Here, we are not saying that you should shout, but speak clearly, audibly, briefly, then shut up.

Public officers have a duty to ensure government interests and policies are adhered to by the citizenry and the public in general. The fact remains that they wield a lot of power which can be used to build you and the people you lead. That power can also be abused to crush and silence you. It is therefore necessary to understand a few things around the whole scenario.

Νεπερτηλεεσσ, ιτ ισ πρυδεντ ανδ αδπισαβλε το approach public officers (as well as any other people) with decorum and confidence and without prejudice on your part against them. If people sense prejudice in you, for instance with assumption that they are corrupt, you will get it rough. That's totally wrong assumption since not all public officers are corrupt. Many have noble personal values and dignity to protect. Critical thinking demands that you face each situation as new and unique by locking out preconceived assumptions and prejudices from past experiences.

Don't give into any attempts by an officer, whether in public or in private office to intimidate you as some will try to do to magnify or prove their powers. Anyone who tries to intimidate, threaten or belittle you would do so expecting to cow you down or disarm you to the position of surrendering to their power and will. Don't crumble under fear, or show any signs

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

of anxiety at that. React maturely by ignoring the intimidation and instead respond in an 'adult-to-adult' transaction, as opposed to 'adult-child' mode of relationship.

Remember the psychology of transactional analysis in relationships? Remain firm and confident. Even in many cases, the most vicious animals are known not to attack their would-be victims or prey that stands still unmoved by their attempts to scare them. It's the vulnerable timid victims who are easily overtaken by fear. Their attempt to run away from the attacker gives more courage to the attacker to maul them. Act like you have a 'godfather' or a 'godmother' behind you even when you have none of those other than your God. Act like you cannot be cowed down even though you may be trembling from inside.

If they indicate expectation of some benefits from you before they can serve you, again handle that with diplomacy and decorum. You don't have to part with anything that belongs to you, but at the same time, avoid outbursts with rage. That will worsen the situation for you and weaken your position of authority as a leader.

Calmly but confidently, make it very clear that you are aware public officers are there for you, to serve you and facilitate your way but not to stop your dreams. Make it also clear that you are aware they wield the power vested in them to serve you or deny you that service at will. Remind them your future depends on their decision on the issue at hand. But it is also true that there is a God who holds the final authority over your destiny and over all decisions made by human beings.

You may or may not promise them a thanks giving in appreciation after they deliver the service to you. Don't ever negotiate the kind of appreciation to be expected neither its value. If you do, then that becomes an obligation for a bribe or inducement as opposed to voluntary thanks giving gift.

When you find no breakthrough, you may seek advice from the officer's colleagues or appeal to their bosses. But this last option should be handled with care since it may backfire and

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

complicate matters. Remember, corruption usually takes place in chain within an institutional hierarchy.

One thing I have come to observe in my working experience is that, it is always good and advisable to present your case to any officer, whether in a government office or in a private entity, with calmness, objectivity and open mind without resorting to arbitrary judgment against those you find in the office. Let your demeanor be full of respect, thus conducting yourself with honour as you restraint.

However, owing to the immense power these officers wield, it is possible they may try to look down upon you, or even attempt to frighten you. They may actually try to out rightly dismiss you. But most are those who will be happy to serve you and help you out with your problems. There are a few who are sadists by nature. Those are happier when they are unhelpful to anybody in need of their service. Instead they are out to frustrate the already desperate citizens.

In this case, don't look down upon yourself neither allow yourself to be intimidated. The Bible admonishes us not to let anyone look down upon us for whatever reason (Timothy 4:12). But we have an obligation to conduct ourselves in such a manner that they would have reason to respect us. In case you are being denied service by a sadists, stand your ground and if necessary, express your disapproval of any disrespect or mishandling. Do not act naïve neither arrogantly otherwise they will continue to oppress you. If necessary, appeal to their bosses depending on the gravity and urgency of the matter at hand. Politeness must be reciprocated with politeness and aggression with expression of displeasure.

All through, try to maintain your cool and respect for the officer serving you. All through, keep yourself reminded of the two approaches to challenging injustice in society: There is John the Baptist's approach in which he directly rebuked the King for taking his brother's wife. I believe John the Baptist was inspired by the Holy Spirit to rebuke the King, fully aware of the consequences. He was therefore prepared to lose his head for the glory of God. The other approach is the

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

more diplomatic approach of Prophet Nathan who challenged King David by telling him a story that revealed the sin he had committed leading to his conviction for repentance. Prophet Nathan lived another day to tell the story.

*“The greatest leader is not necessarily the one who does the greatest things. He is the one that gets the people to do the greatest things.” – Ronald Reagan, former U.S. President*

# CHAPTER 6



## **Pertinent Observations on Leadership Function**

### **Keys to becoming a true leader**

According to John Stanko (2012), there happens to be so many leaders around the world but with so little leadership. That's the same argument advanced by Dr. Myles Munroe in his video clip: "Keys to becoming a leader". In this video, Myles argues that leadership is very complicated because it is subtle, elusive and often understated. Munroe opines that most of the people we call leaders today are not really leaders. Most people we call leaders, in the words of Munroe, are not leaders but 'professional manipulators'. These words constitute appropriate provocation to leaders as food for thought. Leaders wield power, some with a lot of it, but which has often been abused.

Many leaders use their power to threaten people, force things their way, and they harbour oppressive spirit. Munroe observes that many leaders have the capacity to manipulate what he terms as people's 'sheepish emotions' to optimize their individual selfish interests. But true leadership is not about control but about service, not about power but about empowerment. Anybody referred to as a powerful person, a powerful politician, a powerful preacher, a powerful principal, a powerful investor, or a powerful businessman, cannot be a true leader. But where such powerful leaders are referred to as having empowered somebody or some powerless people somewhere, then those are the true leaders.

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

People will testify that so and so empowered me in my leadership ability, in my business, in the leadership of my family, in my ability to admonish my rebellious teenagers, he empowered me to think independently and avoid dependency on my seniors, parents or relatives. I got empowered by so and so to get married and know how to lead my family. In other words, true leaders do not seek to manipulation but to inspire and enable people to discover their purpose in life and find ways to their destiny. That's the highest form of leadership.

Leadership is not about trying to find people to follow you but finding your own purpose in life to follow as you do good in every opportunity. Put differently, true leadership does not seek to hunt for followers. Followers will follow the light they see in you. True leadership entails a person becoming fully 'liberated', then enabling others within reach to 'liberate' themselves in the process. They set themselves to pursue something they discover about themselves while helping others to come along as they follow their own stars.

The same way wealth without work is questionable (such as through gambling, rotary, corruption and such like), similarly politics without principles is suspect. Often, the problem is not with the elected leaders but the perception of electorate about true leadership and what qualities to look out for in electing somebody into position of leadership. That's why civic education is critical before elections take place. No wonder civic education raises eyebrows amongst politicians. They know its impact might turn tables against many.

Ironically, many smart people use their intelligence to violate or compromise their own character. Wicked leaders violate their principles to destroy humanity and a country's economy. Worship without sacrifice and morality will destroy our religion. True worshipers will worship God in spirit and in truth without attempts to manipulate religion to meet their own selfish needs. Some political leaders are more concerned with their next election than the welfare of the next generation. They tend to pursue their own interests

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

more than the interests of the people. We are not judging them since we may not be any better in their positions. But true leaders have the obligation to speak the truth regardless.

Talking about leadership, I am reminded of a day in 2006 when I was lecturing on the subject of Group Dynamics and Leadership in an undergraduate class at Tangaza University College, a Constituent Campus of the Catholic University of Eastern Africa. I had brainstormed the students on who exactly a leader is. In response, one of them shot up to argue that 'a leader is a scaffold'. I knew the term but not in this particular context. I was momentarily taken aback because I thought a scaffold had a lot more to do with construction industry than with the social dynamics of leadership.

I went to consult my dictionary again and surprisingly, the definition of this term served to precisely describe two crucial but polarised concepts of leadership. On the one hand, scaffold is a structure fabricated against a wall meant to support a mason to complete a high-rise construction. It's a source of support to enable attain preferred construction targets. In other words, scaffold is a structure built next to a wall meant to support builders while constructing, repairing, or painting a building. On the other hand, scaffold has been defined as a suitable platform meant to mete out capital punishment to wrong doers in a society. In this sense, dictionary defines it as 'a raised structure which was used in the past as a place to terminate criminals by hanging them or cutting off their heads'.

Conversely, a controversial debate has persisted for years in the academic circles of leadership studies: 'Are leaders born or made'? Obviously, the answer to this question has far reaching ramifications in our effort to understand leadership. If we choose to believe that leaders are born, then that justifies continuity of dynastic leadership from particular families who are assumed to be born leaders. Unless well-guarded by deliberate rules and regulations that limit their powers and influence, such dynasties may soon turn into dictatorship and exercise leadership of iron-fist.

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

On the other hand, where a community or an institution comes from the school of thought that believes that leaders can be made and not necessarily born, programmes are put in place to develop and nurture leadership skills. Ideally, one is not born with a skill but may be born with high intelligence, instincts, intuition, strong 'sixth sense' and such like in-born talents, which constitute potential abilities that are awaiting to be discovered, explored, developed and exploited.

Where leaders are developed through capacity building programmes, leadership positions are widely shared since many members of an institution or community would have the potential that can be developed into effective leadership. This concept challenges the status quo of dominant leadership structures. This calls for continuous emergence, identification and mentorship of new leadership in a framework of democratic culture. Deliberate capacity building becomes imperative for the younger generations who show the potential for leadership.

Above all, trustworthiness is key to positions of leadership as trust is fundamental to all manner of organised human groups. Only effective leadership will enable efficient use of resources, both human and material, towards attaining the organisational goals. Human resource is key in any undertaking in life. By extension, this means an effective leader should be able to inspire life and hope in people. See in the story below what we mean by hope and what hope can do:

*'Peter had a job interview to attend at 10am but his wife developed complications at 9am due to a pregnancy. He decided to take the wife to the hospital and leave for the interview there afterwards but on their way to the hospital, the taxi broke down. It was already 10:30am before he could get another taxi.*

*He arrived the hospital at 11am, dropped the wife and used the same taxi to go for the interview. He had not lost hope in finding the interview space still available despite his difficult circumstances that morning. He arrived at the interview venue at 12noon (2hours late).*

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

*He rang the bell but no one opened the door. Meanwhile, earlier at 10am, the company mail delivery man had rang the bell but no one opened the door too. When the door was finally opened, Peter said "I'm sorry, I came..."he wanted to apologise for coming late, but the Secretary interrupted before he could finish his statement and ushered him to the Board Room. The Secretary said, "I apologise, Sir, for keeping you waiting since 10am. We actually heard when the bell rang at 10am but we were held up in a meeting with our company suppliers. However, we had sat at 8am to deliberate on your job specification, your office and the salary."*

*Peter was baffled and said, "Madam, I haven't been interviewed yet". The MD who just walked in, answered him and said, "We decided not to conduct the interview at least to save time and also save the interviewees money on transport. So, we looked at the papers for the most appropriate person we wanted and we opted for you. Also, we had tested your patience this morning by keeping you waiting intentionally for 2hrs. That's part of your interview. You haven't shown any disappointment for that. You'll be shown your office, your secretary and the driver assigned to drive your company's allotted vehicle. You'll be on probation for a year."*

He got the job!!! On his way out, his phone rang and it was the wife. She said, "Honey, I was delivered of a bouncing healthy baby boy." It was their fifth child and the only male child. He immediately named the child 'Miracle'. He got a double miracle same day. All the disappointments turned out to favour him. God positioned the mail delivery man to ring the bell at 10am. God also held them up in the meeting until Peter arrived. According to Naylor (1999), effective leadership is a product of the heart and an effective leader must be visionary, passionate, creative, flexible, innovative, courageous, imaginative and experimental with ability to take initiative.

Sharing out of roles and responsibilities will not only lessen the burden of leadership on the vision bearers, but it also increases the chances of utilisation of other people's talents and giftedness for the common good. That will also

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

enhance efficiency and effectiveness (that is economical use of resources) in attaining organizational, group or individual goals. It is therefore unwise leadership practice to concentrate knowledge and skill in one or only a handful of people in a group or an organization. That would make the group get stuck when the privileged few are absent or resign. In other words, any key knowledge and skills in enabling function of an institution to run uninterrupted should be spread out to several members of that institution.

*It is better to live your life in such a manner that people will determine you are a leader of substance, than to act like one, but make it difficult for people to prove it from your lifestyle and character (Paraphrased from NTV Leadership Forum Debate, 23rd February, 2018)*

Does capacity building mean working ourselves out of job as leaders? Yes and no. It essentially means handing over key leadership roles to the emerging leaders as vision bearers adopt new and perhaps more superior roles as consultants, and advisors

I remember a case few years ago when my colleague and I were training a group of development workers in Maswa District of Tanzania. My colleague had just joined PREMESA Africa as a consultant trainers. After seeing the amount of information we were dishing out to our clients with plenty of handouts, my colleague quipped: *“Are you sure we are doing the right thing here? Are we not giving these people all what we know? Will they ever need us back? Are we working ourselves out of business?”*

The truth is that we did eventually work ourselves out of consultancy services as we advanced in skills and age. Our original materials also saturated the market. Meanwhile we moved on to test new business horizons. The good news is that we ended up creating new crop of young generation of university graduates whom we inducted into participatory development methodologies. They took up the baton and ran with it to even greater heights, skillfully blending the old and new pedagogical insights. Some ended up pursuing further studies for postgraduate qualifications. As a result,

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

some of them moved on to lecture in universities while others consolidated and expended consultancy portfolio. Others established their own family businesses in different persuasions.

It is precisely the fear of ‘working ourselves out of job’ that some of us at times hesitate from letting go our skills and knowledge as we build capacities of others. This perception has scared many professionals from multiplying their impact by creating many more professionals through training and mentorship. It can be a real nightmare where opportunities are perceived as ‘limited’ as opposed to ‘unlimited’. With this fear, sharing our knowledge and skills can become a real dilemma.

But that notion is changing. Many are gradually learning about the hidden treasure in the spirit of generosity that creates the desire to share out what we have. The more you give, the more you receive. People fear becoming obsolete and irrelevant after giving out all you have. This challenge becomes more real to those who believe knowledge, skills and opportunities in the world are finite (limited) instead of infinite (unlimited). The truth is that there is much more information today and with easier access compared to twenty or thirty years ago. This is courtesy of internet highway and the relatively easy access on-line to free information from the world of academia research.

*“We are all faced with a series of great opportunities brilliantly disguised as impossible situations.” – Chuck Swindoll, Christian pastor and radio preacher*

This fear becomes even more realistic in situations where we see ourselves as ‘catalysts’ in capacity building, and not subjects of the process as well. If we remain catalysts in its strict scientific sense, it means we are left unchanged as we hasten change in others. This is the wrong notion of capacity building. In true sense, we should allow the process of capacity building also to build our own capacities: capacity to acknowledge and embrace error, capacity to learn and unlearn, and the capacity to draw lessons from our mistakes of yesterday.

## **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

*Patience can cook a stone. It is not just the ability to wait, but also how you act when you are waiting (African Proverb).*

We can assert without fear of contradiction that almost everyone who exerts influence over people to enable them move to a future of better quality of life, exercises leadership. The values we have sought to drive through in this book is that of people's participation for empowerment in that process. The point of contention here is that we don't believe people should be led towards a destination they don't fully grasp or understand in the name of a strong leader. People have a right to be involved in defining and determining their desirable future. Leaders are simply drawn in play an active role in clarifying and shaping that future. But what is leadership in a nutshell?

- The art of motivating one or more people to set goals and act towards meeting those goals in one's life or life of a group or a project.
- In the process, stakeholders are helped to develop their potential to the full as they seek to attain organisational or project goals.
- Leadership is an art of organising people and inspiring processes that enable people to set individual and collective priorities and goals in life.
- Leadership function is visionary, exploratory, innovative and inspirational or motivational.
- Leadership involves facilitating the creation of appropriate structures of operation and governance. It is such structures that seek to organise, inspire and motivate people towards their optimum use of talents and skills for attaining their individual and collective goals.
- Leadership is the art of mobilising, organising, and guiding the resources (both human and material) of a group or an organisation in order to achieve defined goals. It is the ability to effectively guide and influence a people to reach their defined goals.
- In fact, leadership is about influencing people to do what they want to do but do it well, willingly and with enthusiasm.

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

- In the context of the innovative approach advocated in this book (leading from the back through teams), vision bearers challenge their people to collectively explore and discover ‘the way’, inspires them to ‘walk the way’ and constantly calls on them to ‘review the way’. This is paraphrased from the original concept of John Maxwell.
- A leader as the vision bearer, is pre-eminent in setting the standards and parameters of work in the light of gospel teaching, then allowing collective search for the way forward to begin.
- The purpose for my emphasis on involving stakeholders is to solicit their commitment in implementation but also to enrich the choices we make from different views of stakeholders.

## **What are the leadership and management functions?**

*“Management is doing things right; leadership is doing the right things.” – Peter F. Drucker, author and educator*

Let us now investigate the difference between a leader and a manager (Gary Yukl 2002; Kotter J.1910; Mumley 2009).

### ***Leader minds Ethical or Moral Decisions/Choices***

- Leaders and Managers serve two distinct organisational functions. ‘Leaders are people who do the right things (they consider the ethical and moral implications of the choices and decisions they make in accordance with the norms of the society). Managers are people who do things right (they make skilled professional choices and decisions based on the status quo)’.

### ***Leader is Visioning/Strategising; Manager is Planning and Budgeting***

- ‘Leaders are busy establishing direction in form of wider purpose, overarching goal, clarifying vision and mission, and setting strategies towards the big picture. On the other hand Managers are responsible for planning, budget-

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

ing, and establishing agendas and setting practical goals, setting work time tables, and allocating resources’.

#### ***Leader Initiates Change for Better Society; Manager Sets Order and Consistency for Effective Implementation***

- Leaders produce change and movement (rallies people behind his/her vision of a new society) while Managers produce order and consistency (organising people and resources).

#### ***Leader is Aligning People by Their Talents; Manager Organising for Staffing by Their Qualification***

- Leaders are busy assessing people’s potential and aligning them accordingly, as leaders communicate goals, build teams and coalitions and communicate goals. Managers are busy organising and staffing (job placements) as they produce structures (e.g. procedures, policies/rules, systems, contracts, committees, management hierarchies, etc).

#### ***Leader is Motivating by Inspiring***

Leaders inspire and energise the group/teams, empower the subordinates and seek to satisfy unmet needs. Managers are developing incentives, generate creative solutions to problems and take corrective and at timely punitive measures.

- Leader creates harmony of diversity by bringing about congruence of goals among members, then focuses on defining objectives clearly while maintaining group’s goal direction
- Leader provides the means for attaining goals by availing the necessary resources and facilities.
- Leaders balance group resources and capabilities with environmental demands, thus reconciling conflicting demands that arise within and outside the group (e.g. the society may demand particular standards or quality of service and if that is missing in the team, the leader goes about searching for short term resource people or additional staffing to fill the gap)

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

- Leader provides a group structure that is necessary to focus information effectively on solving problems (e.g. creation of the office of ombudsman/person to receive and manage internal organisational complaints)
- Makes certain that all needed information is available at a decision centre when required – that is, leader seeks to gather and avail appropriate and up to date information to the right organisational teams and for timely decision making
- Facilitates cohesiveness and interaction among group members by creating appropriate forums for the same such as retreats, regular but pre-planned meetings; interest-based initiatives such as staff welfare and staff savings and credit schemes etc.

#### *Other functions of Managers*

- Manager minds Professional Decisions/Choices such as personnel recruitment and placement
- They manage the organisation's environment and its resources – resources; plans and activities are well matched with organisational objectives and goals
- They organise, co-ordinate and provide reasonable rules and regulations to accomplish the objectives of the organisation
- They access and distribute relevant information coming in and going out of the organisation in keeping with the objectives of the organisation
- They facilitate the growth and provide the development of subordinates in accordance with the objectives of the organisation
- They transmit their own enthusiasm to others for attaining organisational goals
- They schedule strategy and review sessions to improve organisational performance and solve organisational problems.

## **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

- They monitor results as they solve problems

To summarise the above functions, we could conclude that Managers provide direction and influence within existing status quo of the organisation. Leaders initiate change that moves the organisation forward and in the right direction. Leaders inspire institutional teams into voluntary participation and commitment in the affairs of the organisation.

It is notable that the strongest attributes of leaders include: visioning; innovation; motivation; creativity; analysis; and passion for achievement. Yet it is possible for a Manager to possess leadership qualities and therefore play Leader-Manager roles while a Leader could also play Manager-Leader role if he or she possesses the attributes of a Manager as well.

But it is recommended to separate the two functions in assigning ourselves duties within a community organisation or a community project. One would need extra-ordinary energy, time and ability to play the dual roles. Evidence is said to abound whereby gifted leaders who become so distracted from leading by administrative issues. Wise manager-leaders (leaders with good management abilities) do well by delegating their administrative responsibilities.

## **Leadership styles and strategies**

According to Hope and Timmel (1996), below are the key leadership styles in operation in many societies.

### ***Autocratic Leadership (Low on People; High on Task Orientation)***

According to the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, authoritarian leadership is different from autocratic leadership. Authoritarian leadership is negative in the sense that it thrives by unleashing terror and instilling fear on the subjects. This is possible through the use of law enforcement instruments of power also known as state apparatus. These include police, courts, and prisons to coerce people into obedience. Basically, in this kind of leadership, the laws and pol-

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

icies to be enforced are not necessarily good or popular with the people. On the contrary, autocratic leadership is fashioned from its positive attributes. Autocratic leadership takes place where a leader commands and earns respect from his or her subjects. Such respect is derived from personal character or conduct, skills, competence, experience, abilities, talents and such like.

Authoritarian leadership as well as dictatorship, has top-down rules and policies, orders and instructions that are to be followed. Consultations are rarely made. These are handed down from the top echelons of power through the various layers of governance, right to the bottom. The led (the subjects) are expected to obey or comply as required by law and play by the rules without question or resistance. The people have neither privilege to give their opinions, nor power to make decisions.

People are only expected to implement decisions made from above. It is assumed that the leader knows what is good for everybody else and for the people as a whole. To practice authoritarianism or dictatorship effectively, the leader must maintain full control. This is the kind of leadership characterised by high centralisation of decision-making and control such as would be found in a cobweb structure.

The leader using this style makes decisions all by himself or herself. This is because such a leader has arrogated all the powers to himself or herself. Remotely speaking, this style may only be useful in emergency situations whereby decisions have to be made quickly and swift action taken (for instance to save lives during disease outbreak or during the time of war).

*“I learned that things are never as complicated as we imagine them to be. It is only our arrogance which seeks to find complicated answers to simple problems.” – Muhammad Yunus, Nobel Peace Prize Winner*

While it is true that authoritarianism or dictatorship enables quick decision-making and task accomplishment, it has seri-

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

ous consequences. The mother had the choice to stop the boy from his dream and crush his self-esteem, or reinforce his self-confidence. Dictatorial leadership injures people's sense of dignity and self-esteem. It erodes people's confidence, and promotes suspicion, sectarianism, and mistrust. In a group, this leadership stifles participation and creative thinking thus stifling the potential to benefit from a wide range of people's opinions, their talents and abilities. The end result is that people end up abandoning the group to join other groups where they feel their views are respected and considered.

#### ***Consultative, Benevolent Dictatorship (Moderate on People; High on Task Orientation)***

This style of leadership promotes individual thinking and initiative. It is best used for brainstorming on an issue which requires broad-based contribution of opinions and ideas e.g. when seeking to introduce change or innovation. In such circumstances we certainly need to hear from each and every body. Several ideas and options are floated before (possibly) consulting an expert-opinion on the matter and then the final decision is made by the leader at his best judgment and will.

This is what has been termed as 'benevolent dictatorship'. This kind of leadership is applied more by great leaders but who believe there will be time for pure democracy but only when people understand it enough to avoid being negatively manipulative by selfish side-shows from within or outside the group. In this sense, therefore, it is believed that too much democracy may breed chaos and anarchy when people are left unguided and unguarded. This is because sooner than later, when the centre cannot hold, people are easily swayed by negative influence and that's when things fall apart. Freedom must go along with responsibility.

According to politico-economists, many middle level economies of the world such as Singapore (under Lee Kuan Yew), Turkey (under Mustafa Kemal), Yugoslavia (under Josip Tito), Seychelles (under France-Albert Rene) and Rwanda (under Paul Kagame) are some of the countries cited to have thrived under 'benevolent dictatorship' (Gilson, *et. al.*). 'Benevolent

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

dictatorship' may allow for some economic liberalization or democratic decision-making to exist such as through referenda, or elected representatives with limited power, and often makes preparations for transition to genuine democracy after their term.

This style of leadership has a tendency to delay decision-making and eventual implementation of activities, as decisions are delayed by many and sometimes lengthy bureaucracies of consultation. Often times, when the decision is finally made, there is no guarantee that people's views, which were generously expressed, will be considered.

#### ***Permissive or Laissez-faire Leadership (Low on People; Low on Task Orientation)***

Some few years ago in the 1990's, the writer was running a Pan-African Workshop organised by Premese Africa Development Institute (PADI). This was taking place in Machakos town. As the director of PADI, he was expected to give direction on major decisions pertaining to the running of the workshop. Workshop participants were drawn from Eastern and Southern countries of Africa.

Suddenly, rumours reached us to the effect that the President of our country was unwell. This was because he had not addressed the Nation for the previous four days. The electronic media tradition was that they began day's evening prime news with what President said and from where. Now that four days had passed without mention of the president, that was sufficient cause to create panic across the nation.

I was summoned by the workshop participants from my house to go and give them direction on what to do, and particularly for those from other countries. Now that I didn't have concrete information either as to what had happened to our President, I decided to apply laissez-faire or permissive leadership approach. This is the kind of leadership which is non-committal, that is not expressing an opinion or giving direction on a matter of concern. In this case, I told the participants: *'What you know or don't know, is also what I know*

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

*or don't know. If I got to know something different from what you know, I will let you know'.*

This 'let alone' or 'leave alone' style of leadership leaves people free to do whatever they want at their own time and convenience and in their own style. The leader in a given situation is an impoverished one who has no authoritative information or mandate to give authoritative direction to his subjects. Needless to say, this kind of leadership in this particular circumstance, is weak, by choice or by nature. In such a case, decisions are made by chance. In this style of leadership, chances for group success towards reaching their goal are remote.

This style of leadership can be likened to a wire-mesh kind of structure with no obvious point of co-ordination. Instead, there are parallel efforts crisscrossing each other without seeking common direction neither collective influence. This style of leadership mainly fits best in a situation of passive conflict mitigation where the leader does not want to take sides, but rather to remain non-committal because of possible consequences or reprisals. The laissez-faire leadership approach has often been applied to save a leader from possibility of imminent danger or embarrassment in situations of dilemma or chaos. He or she can easily escape responsibility for being noncommittal all through.

The negative side of laissez-faire leadership is that it dissipates or wastes people's morale and promotes disunity within a group. It makes the leadership look like it has no authority, direction and decisiveness. Besides, it does not empower leaders neither group members in the whole process of decision-making and follow-up action. It is prone to breeding intragroup conflicts. It is also vulnerable to sell-out to external forces and interests who may take advantage of the absence of (strong) leadership. Talk about things falling apart and this is where it has a daily occurrence.

***Enabling or Democratic Leadership (High on People; High on Task Orientation)***

This kind of leadership can be symbolised by a traditional African hut with its poles rising up to converge at a central point, thus forming a strong pinnacle. A central pole is in place to provide an enabling pivot, giving the necessary support to reinforce the convergence.

The leader promotes participatory decision-making. In the event that there is absence of consensus on opinion, the decisions of the majority are accepted. Each person is regarded as equal to the other and opinions of every person are respected as well as considered in the process of decision-making.

This style of leadership can be devastating and leads to failure if the majority are not aware of the problems at hand. That's why opinions of the minority cannot be ignored and therefore must also be listened to even if they don't carry the day. Although numbers are important, it is not always numbers that count. Consensus is considered more preferable than majority vote unless that becomes impossible because of strong divergent views. Hence, decision-making is a slow process in democracy, though once decisions are arrived at, they are more binding, lasting and unifying as every member gets committed to their implementation.

This enabling kind of leadership involves active and evenly spread participatory processes of decision-making. Both the leader and the members of the group are likely to be empowered in the process if it is well handled. Responsibility and initiative are promoted as people's views are taken seriously. But if not properly handled (in terms of process), that freedom may be abused by self-centered and powerful individuals in the group who wield strong influence (passive or rogue leaders?). Freedom, which is given to members to participate genuinely in making their own decisions, may easily be mistaken for weak leadership.

This democratic, enabling leadership is seen as more desirable in community development processes that seek to attain

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

integral human development. Development aims at improving the socio-economic, political and cultural well-being of a people. Development of an individual or a group is a basic human right. Democracy gives citizens the opportunity to make real contribution to the development process.

This means that everyone has a right to help decide what type of development is needed and the best way of achieving it. It means that citizens have to decide how their resources are used to generate wealth for the common good and satisfy the needs of all citizens. That is the idea behind the current era of decentralization or devolution of development project funding to the counties (closer to the people) in Kenya.

Democracy also provides citizens with the right to distribute and use power. This means that citizens have to decide who should hold what power when they elect representatives and how the latter should use the power they are given. Where the state dominates society, it does not leave enough room for citizens to decide their development priorities. For these citizens, the lack of contribution (or democracy) means deprivation of a fundamental human right and therefore absence of meaningful development.

### **Author's reflections on leadership strategies**

The foregoing debate on different styles of leadership presents to us an enlightened array of choices. It would be on this basis that we can decide on the most appropriate approach in any given circumstances. However, while most of us would lean towards the democratic type of leadership as their choice, this stance should be reviewed in each case to ensure it suits given unique situations.

The concept of democracy has been hyped in Western countries as a noncompromising preference in leadership. This style of leadership believes that people would be empowered through participatory decision making and universal suffrage to determine their leaders. However, this has been said to have major loopholes as wealthy individuals and groups

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

have used huge resources to bribe and manipulate the electorate in their personal favour. Others have used their personal charisma to acquire leadership positions in society but with selfish interests.

They end up not being accountable the electorate once elected. According to some experiences from Eastern bloc countries which are emerging from autocratic systems of governance, more pragmatic approaches seem to bear better fruits. These essentially are efforts to merge pure democracy with some autocracy in order to keep public interests protected in the hands of wrong leaders. That's where 'Benevolent Dictatorship' gets preferred.

These pragmatic approaches are said to emanate from the concept of meritocracy, a combination of election and selection. According to Zhang Weiwei (2021), Director of China Institute, Fudan University, meritocracy seeks to select and elect leaders based on outcome of a series of internal evaluations which seek to establish and affirm candidate's competencies and character before they can be proposed and fronted for election or appointment.

That's how you get the best of the best leaders as you end up choosing those who have stood the test of time. In such a system, there is extremely slim chance of electing rogue leaders who seek to bribe the electorate driven by selfish motives. This is a critic to Western democracy where wealth and manipulation of the electorate largely determine the winners.

*There are two approaches to challenging evil in society: John the Baptist's approach, directly challenging the King who had married his brother's wife. This led to instant beheading of John. There is also the Jonathan's approach by using a coded story to challenge King David, distancing the evil from him. However, he soon discovered it was about the evil he had committed. That's when he bitterly repented to God' (P.L.O. Lumumba).*

### **Growing leaders by delegating**

Many leaders prefer to delegate leadership for multiple reasons:

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

- This type of approach to leadership exemplifies the true purpose of leadership: To grow more leaders from the followers. It seeks to maximise the utilisation of the potentialities that exist amongst the followers as those appointed to positions of leadership get the opportunity to employ their talents and giftedness.
- It creates the appropriate opportunity for hands-on training and mentorship of emerging leaders for institutional continuity and sustainability.
- This kind of leadership by delegation frees the hands of the top leadership for more reflective innovation, networking for the good of an institution and for the expansion of institution's core business.
- The top leadership has more time to research on more challenging institutional problems and issues referred to him or her by departmental heads or group leaders.
- In the application of principle of delegation of leadership, it is possible for the top leaders to tap into the diverse ideas and views from the contributions of many group leaders. This makes ultimate decisions and subsequent plans for change richer.
- This approach ensures wide participation which in turn elicits greater popular support.

### **Determining whom to delegate to**

Delegating responsibilities is a critical task that requires wisdom and understanding. Success of any delegation process will largely depend on the quality of the delegates. A leader, and more so founder leaders, should not just delegate for the sake of it. Without careful considering on to whom noble responsibilities are to be delegated, the end result would be miserable. Careful assessment of the quality of the delegates has to be made. Building on Jethro's Principle, emerging leaders who should be trusted with taking over the mantle should, of necessity, possess the following qualities:

- Able men and women who are competent in what is expected of them.

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

- People of good morals such as fear God.
- People who are trustworthy, can be trusted and are dependable.
- Credible persons of integrity.
- Persons who hate a bribe, who are incorruptible.
- Persons with the right attitude, who appreciate hard work.
- Persons who appreciate teamwork and therefore can accommodate ideas of others.
- People who are sufficiently equipped with the requisite knowledge and skills required to function effectively in the kind of work involved.
- People who are ready and willing to learn through training for capacity building as a lifelong process.

These are extremely important qualities to consider in the formation of working or leadership teams in any given setting where leadership from the back is being meditated upon. Founders of institutions and projects are ever concerned about sustainability of what they started after they give way or retire. Some business owners identify institutions to whom they can entrust family businesses to run on behalf of their children if none of the children has the interest or competence to shoulder its management.

This is also Biblical. The Bible says as long as the would-be heirs are underage (immature or incompetent), they are not different from employees, although they own the business by inheritance. Such heirs-in-waiting should be subordinated to guardians and trustees until the time set by their father (Galatians 4:1-11). This advice should be heeded if to ensure longevity of family businesses beyond the lifetime of the founders.

*‘Salt in food should not be visible but only be tasted; when it is visible, it loses its flavor. Similarly great leaders are more felt through influence rather than through conspicuous physical presence’ (Mulwa, 2010).*

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

One key reason leaders succeed in their leadership function is when they believe in the benefit of delegation. Delegation is the practice of assigning jobs to people and giving them the authority to see the job done. It is the act of assigning formal authority and responsibility to subordinates. The problem sometimes is that the delegates sometimes do not accomplish much with common excuse that the assigning authority doesn't give them power to act.

That is not entirely true. While authority is delegated, power to act or enforce depends on personal competence, not the delegating authority. Timid or lazy people keep dilly dallying without willingness to act. Those are the kind of staff called dead wood. Delegating is vital as it ensures longevity of leadership and broadens institutional or a leader's influence. Delegates use authority given to them to stamp their power to enable implementation of decisions made by the hierarchy. Responsibility comes with accountability. The one delegated to remains accountable to the leaders giving him or her authority to act. Equally important is to note that the delegating authority remains ultimately responsible for what happens to the assignment given.

When you learn to delegate leadership and responsibilities thereof, you can attain greater accomplishments within a short time. Delegation is the art of deploying people to utilise their talents, efforts, knowledge, skills and competencies to attain larger multiplication of results, impact and benefits from what we intend to do. Much of what we see in business chains which have thriving branches regionally, nationally and internationally, has more to do with ability to delegate effectively than the wits and competence of the vision bearers. Delegating enables vision bearers to avoid wasting their valuable time micromanaging what subordinate staff can do as vision bearers embark on more complex responsibilities.

In the business world they call this ability to assign tasks and authority as franchising. This is all about delegating your business licensing and permits to others to do business in your name but on their own behalf. This certainly multiplies

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

the ripple effect of the business entity as a basis for its expansion. The secret of success with delegation lies in the ability to identify the right people to delegate to, and your ability to let go while exercising a kind of super vision.

You must identify people who are trustworthy, motivated and persons of the right personality and character. Persons of right qualification, right skills, right temperament and above all, persons of integrity. *Where integrity is missing, people you commission your work to will use their intelligence, skills and experience to kill and bury your company.* But at the end of the day, you achieve more through delegating as you remain in the background providing brand back-up, quality assurance and coordination. That's how you free your hands to attend to duties which, by their nature, only you as the vision carrier can do.

### **Why and how to delegate effectively**

- Have you ever stopped to wonder why you are often overworked while other people look so relaxed? The difference lies in the style of work and effectiveness in delegation. One of our Diploma Students in Somalia proposed that the same way groups go through different stages of development before they stabilise (forming; storming; norming and performing), 'likewise, delegating should pass through similar stages namely: Directing, Coaching, Supporting and Delegating. This makes sense but may be summarised in two words: Capacity Building.
- The consequences of failure to delegate: Workload increases; You can't multiply the potential of your talents; There is less productivity; Poor time management leading to inefficiency (better be early on appointments by one hour than be late by one minute); Too busy and rushing; Wasting other people's time; Wasting human resources; Doing other people's work; Possibility of getting sick; Losing personal ability by concentrating on petty things; Missing time to recreate and relax; Disorganization; No time to care; Full of anger and stress; Deadlines are also missed; Money goes back to treasury; Working from crisis

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

to crisis. Ideally, all business owners will need to delegate some of their authority to other managers.

- When the volume of work becomes too great for one person to comfortably manage, you must delegate no matter how efficient you think you are. Business owners reach the point where they are simply not physically capable of attending to all the functional needs of their companies. In addition to increased volume, the complexity of the work being done also escalates. Many business owners are generalists who lack the ability and inclination to attend to all the technical details involved in operating a growing business.
- Delegating should certainly be one of the best strategies of developing subordinates. All the benefits of management development programs and seminars will be of little value if authority is not delegated or is only partially delegated. Preparing for succession is another valid reason for delegating authority. Even though most owners think that they are immortal, the time does come when they are no longer capable of managing their business. Owners who delegate wisely will have competent managers ready to move on as flag bearers when it becomes necessary. If done correctly, delegation can motivate subordinates because most people enjoy it when given greater responsibility.

### **Why do leaders find it difficult to delegate?**

- Not having trust, assuming staff lack requisite competence
- Too busy to delegate
- Thinking staff are not ready to accept 'more' responsibility
- Thinking there is general lack of control of staff performance
- Thinking it takes more time to explain than to do the job
- Assuming mistake made by staff would be costlier
- Thinking they can do it faster
- Thinking some matters simply cannot be delegated to anyone and

## **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

- Thinking the job is too specialised to delegate.

### ***You will find it difficult to delegate if you are:***

- Perfectionist manager
- Egoistic manager
- New or inexperienced manager or
- Insecure manager.

### ***The benefits of delegating include:***

- Creates time for other important work
- Increases results as more hands and talents are involved
- Increases efficiency on staff input
- Builds up the staff through on-job training and
- Increases motivation levels among staff.

### ***Delegation is not:***

- Abandoning or abdicating one's responsibility
- Losing control or
- Avoiding making decisions.

### ***How to delegate***

- Know the tasks that can be delegated
- Select the right personnel to delegate to
- Delegate the assignment and remain supportive
- Periodically evaluate progress.

People who assume management positions want to have the power and authority to perform the duties delegated to them by the business owner. Relinquishing that power and authority is extremely difficult for most business owners who have grown accustomed to being the only decision-makers in the business. Business owners often say “it takes too much time to delegate,” or “if you want the job done right,

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

do it yourself,” but they may actually be concerned that subordinates can perform certain duties better than they can. Owners who are unable or unwilling to delegate their authority to subordinates will have dissatisfied managers, and their companies may stagnate and eventually fall.

Because the obstacles to effective delegating can be identified, they can be overcome. For some owners and managers, the learning experience may be painful, but in the long run it will be a worthwhile lesson. Create structures, policies and systems that ensure security both for the business and for your own authority. Owners and managers need to feel that their position is secure and that they will not lose status or prestige if they delegate some of their power and authority to others. Instill in managers the need to delegate in order to accomplish more work. To delegate effectively, observe the following:

- Eliminate fear.
- Do not meddle with what you have delegated but keep tracking.
- Owners and managers who delegate their authority to subordinates should not hamper the efforts of those subordinates to successfully complete their assignments.
- Select the right persons with the right skill and positive attitude.

Do not over-delegate.

- Choose the right person to receive authority. Delegating authority to the wrong person is as bad as not delegating at all.
- Support the new delegates. There is a difference between support and meddling.
- Tolerate mistakes. Treat mistakes as a learning opportunity rather than a cause for termination. Managers who know that mistakes will not cause them to lose their jobs are usually willing to make decisions and take risks.

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

- Recognize the ability of your staff and show complete trust in your staff, have the continuous desire to develop your staff and know and appreciate that others can do good work perhaps even better than you.
- On the part of the staff, it should be noted that ability for them to foster good team relations and teamwork account for the greater part of one's success in an organization, while job competence accounts for relatively much less.

## **How NOT to delegate**

### **TEAM LEADER'S JOURNAL**

*One day, I made a big blunder on delegating as a young inexperienced manager. I was to delegate a task that was handed down to me by our senior-most boss in my organisation with strict deadline to accomplish. These were my early years of learning the ropes of management. I learnt a crucial lesson on delegation but in a hard way. It has been said wise people learn from their own mistakes but the wisest of people learn from the mistakes of others. I would want to share my pitiful experience to elevate the reader to the category of the wisest.*

*The boss of my organisation had attended a three days' conference in Nairobi. While there, he learnt that there was a report required to update the conference on some status of a situation in his organisation. He called me at 8am about the report. As his right-hand man, he directed me to prepare that report for him and deliver it to his office by 7.30am the following day to go back to the conference with it. That was exactly twenty-four-hour notice given to accomplish his assignment. However, it happened that I had a very important field trip same day covering 100kms one way for a community meeting that was to last for at least four hours. That amounted to about six hours including traveling to and from the field.*

*I was therefore in a big dilemma. That's when I remembered the strategy of delegation and quickly summoned my assistant officer. I directed him to prepare the report on my behalf but should place on my desk by 6pm the latest the same day. With that, I knew I would have adequate time to refine the report to my standards and get it ready for presentation to my boss the following day. I assumed*

## **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

*too much. I never even called the officer the whole day to monitor progress in the preparation of the report.*

*I had assumed too much. I was wrong. I came back at 8pm and there was no report on my desk. I called the officer who told me he didn't find time to do it. At first, I was mad with him but quickly realised that would not solve the problem. Tired and hungry, I prayed, calmed down, and immediately set on the preparation of the report. It took me almost the whole night to get it ready. I succeeded but learnt my lesson. How I dealt with my defaulting assistant officer is a story for the next book on staff chastisement.*

### **Dealing with fear to delegate**

Although most business owners know that they need to devolve authority to their managers, some do not delegate or only do it half-heartedly. Owners who want their businesses to grow need to be aware of and overcome the obstacles against effective delegation. The tendency of founders to want to do everything themselves is quite common but wrong. They know what has to be done and how to do it, and they feel that they can do it better than anyone else. Some owners or managers do not delegate because they are afraid of their inadequacies being exposed. Delegation might show that operations were not being performed in the most effective manner, or that the owner was neglecting some necessary functions.

Some owners are concerned that delegating authority to managers might provide them with the tools necessary to leave and start their own competing kingdoms. And that fear is realistic too. Some owners want to dominate over their subordinates. It is not uncommon for owners to want to influence others, participate in all decision-making, and generally be the lifeblood of the business.

Owners may not be willing to tolerate mistakes of their subordinates. There are times when owners are willing to delegate their authority, but they have no competent subordinates to whom they can delegate, and therefore they would rather do all the work rather than “burden” their subordinates.

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

In conclusion, we can confidently conclude it is truism that today we are facing unprecedented changes in almost all spheres of life. Yet, we must manage these changes effectively. Delegation of teams will become one of the critical strategies to remember as we try to influence others to move along with us in managing the required social change. Servant leaders do their part while God does the rest:

*“Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer; you shall cry for help, and he will say, Here I am.*

*If you remove the yoke from among you, the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil, if you offer your food to the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted, then your light shall rise in the darkness and your gloom be like the noonday.*

*The Lord will guide you continually, and satisfy your needs in parched places, and make your bones strong; and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters never fail.*

*Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; you shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of streets to live in.*

*If you refrain from trampling the sabbath, from pursuing your own interests on my holy day; if you call the sabbath a delight and the holy day of the Lord honorable; if you honor it, not going your own ways, serving your own interests, or pursuing your own affairs;*

*Then you shall take delight in the Lord, and I will make you ride upon the heights of the earth; I will feed you with the heritage of your ancestor Jacob, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken” (Isaiah 58:9-14)..*

**THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

# CHAPTER 7



## Managing Non-Threatening Change

*'To live is to change, and to live long, is to change often' (Fr. Quinn)*

*'Don't be afraid to change, though you may lose something good, you may as well gain something better' Buddha.*

### TEAM LEADER'S JOURNAL

#### Tracing the invisible poor

*After more than 30 years of community development work, I came to discover, to my great dismay, I hadn't quite recognised a category of communities referred to as the 'invisible poor'. I knew it theoretically from reading books by scholars such as Robert Chambers, Paulo Freire and Frik De Beer among others. But one day, a friend, a Catholic Priest from one the parishes in Machakos Diocese, walked into my office and told me he wanted to open my eyes to a reality he was sure I was not privy to, neither familiar with; that of THE INVISIBLE POOR. He gave me an appointment to visit his parish. I was dumbfounded by what I saw.*

*We reached Mwala parish at 8am eager to meet the 'so-called' invisible poor. The first amazing episode was overwhelming encounter with 120 (yes, one hundred and twenty) elderly men and women of ages between 60 and 100 or more years. These were not ordinary grand and great grandparents, but the poorest of the poor in the community. They visited the parish every week for relief food among other alms from the priest. I always challenged the concept of relief supplies to the poor, preferring more economic projects that would lead to sustainable source of income. But this encounter made me begin to wonder whether my principles against relief were not defec-*

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

*tive. Those principles were certainly not relevant here. This group was so vulnerable that the best one could do is to feed and clothe them. They had no energy left in them. The priest asked us to address them but we were lost of words. I personally didn't have appropriate words befitting such a group. It is the category of community members whose condition would not permit them to register in village development groups which I was more familiar with.*

*This was not the whole story about the invisible poor. When we began to penetrate into the villages, there were more amazing experiences awaiting to shock us even the more. As we drove through the bush, suddenly the priest parked under a leafy tree and called out: 'John?' (not his real name). An old man at his 70s answered 'here I am'. 'Climb down, I have brought you guests', the Priest said. The poor old man was dressed in rags and all he could call 'home' was on top of a tree, his only possession. His wife and children had deserted him.*

*Next to visit was a home of a widow whose husband had died eight years before, leaving her under the care of their firstborn son but who also died few years later. Their second born son was mentally handicapped. We found him in the house naked and with ashes all over his body. The grandmother was the only caregiver to the six children and the widow of the deceased first born son. They depended on a barren two-acre land inherited from their grandfather and relief food from the priest of the local catholic parish.*

*None of the six children aged between five and fifteen was in school for lack of school fees. The last case to visit that day was another widow who lived on a one-acre land with her five children. She would either borrow or purchase trees from neighbours to burn and sell charcoal. Unfortunately, she had lung tuberculosis. She was also a beneficiary of relief food from the local catholic parish. Talk of shackles of abject poverty.*

*When we went back to the parish centre, I learnt that the priest had a brilliant idea. He had a budget to plant fifty early yielding fruit trees so that within six months, each of those families would have at least fifty fruit trees giving them sufficient fruits for consumption and surplus for markets. We succeeded in securing the funds from both foreign and local donors for the project. But who was going to dig the tree planting holes for the old grandmothers and grandfathers? The Parish Priest had plans to mobilise the parish youth to do so.*

## **Ushering in positive change in institutions**

This experience was an eye-opener to me. It reminded me of the parable of the rich man and Lazarus which was not necessarily meant to pit the rich against the poor. Neither was it meant to suggest that the rich are headed to hell because they are rich and the poor to heaven. The truth of the matter is that Abraham himself, who was in dialogue with the rich man, was already in heaven. Yet, he was one of the richest men in Israel when he was alive.

The parable from Jesus was not meant to condemn the rich and glorify the poor but to instill morality in the rich not to neglect the fate of the poor amongst them. Thus, we should be our brother's keeper. The rich man ignored Lazarus and that is the only reason he found himself in hell. Not because he was rich: "...it is the Lord your God...who gives you the ability to produce wealth" (Deuteronomy 8:18).

Religion, belief systems and cultural traditions are meant to create value systems that justify our human existence in the name of politics and economics of survival. It is those cultural and religious values we create that guide the society in organising their (political) leadership structures. It is those chosen into power in society, whether in political structures, or in religious and traditional institutions who shape policies that determine who gets what and who benefit with what in the community and who is deprived.

Much of what great men and women of history have attained begins with a dream, an imagination of possibility of a new world order where lives can be transformed for the better. New world order yearns for economic justice with full respect for human dignity, true political democracy, universal suffrage and total emancipation of human race from all forms of dehumanizing life conditions and relationships. This way of thinking can be extremely terrifying to the custodians of power in society. In other words, those of us privileged with education and relatively good jobs must sacrifice to reach down to the poor and become partners in their struggle to restore their dignity.

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

Why do I call it sacrifice to work in poor locations? Some years ago, I was commissioned by ActionAid, an NGO working in the slums of Korokocho in Nairobi, to carry out an evaluation of a programme they were funding. Little did I know the dressing code there was totally different from the city center. I had to replace my smart-casual shirt with a borrowed ordinary shirt befitting the slum. My briefcase became totally irrelevant. I had to carry my writing materials and questionnaires in a paper-bag. By then, this could easily pass as the poorest slum in the city, with sprawling shanties of mud walls and paper cartons, roofed with old rusted iron sheets.

There we were walking through the slum, from village to village. In the process, there emerged an incident that I will never forget in my life. I had forgotten my writing pad in one of the shanties where we were interviewing a group. As I ran back to pick it, I saw two men running behind me. On arrival at the house, I was running to, they also arrived and ordered me to surrender by raising my hands in the air. They were armed with pistols. After searching me for weapons, they told me they thought I was armed with AK-47 rifle which criminals in the area usually dismantle to carry in paper bags just like the paper bag I was carrying. They told me they thought I was running for a hideout after identifying them as plain clothed policemen.

Usually, imaginations and dreams of greater future than today are spiced up by role models around us, by looking up to people who have gone ahead of us and have achieved their ambitious dreams. Presence of role models reinforces the conviction that we can make it. And remember, a dream that is not big enough to scare, is not good enough dream for you. A professor who dreams of influencing and impacting a society positively will have to sacrifice by burning midnight oil to write materials that will go far and wide to benefit fervent readers. That's how he or she chooses to become a role model. You are a potential role model where you serve and in what you do today. You don't have to hold big formal titles to become a role model. A young man who invests in a village

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

grocery shop, after ten years to grow into a thriving wholesaler in the area, is a perfect role model to the unemployed. Dreams are only attained by dreamers who don't give up, who don't listen to discouragements on the periphery, and these will be many you can be sure.

*“You don't have to hold a position in order to be a leader.” – Henry Ford, founder of the Ford Motor Company*

All the dynamics of relationships seek to organise the society under the widely acceptable systems we call socio-cultural structures, political structures and economic structures. These are essentially the themes that govern a society. While social and political systems are founded on solid values, the bottom line is economics of survival. Everything boils down to the strong desire for economic survival. That's why individuals and groups go to great lengths to attain sense of belonging which guarantees them socio-economic security.

Sense of belonging also guarantees one's recognition and significance in a community. All the dynamics of relationships seek to organise the society under the guise of 'politics' while the bottom line is actually economics of survival. The strong desire for individuals and groups alike, is to attain sense of belonging and significance. This assures one of the much desired social security.

A learner who dreams of a better and brighter future must determine to sacrifice one's comfort today by working hard for that future he or she aspires. They determine to model their study life in such a manner as to excel to join the best institutions of higher learning with the potential to catapult themselves to their noble dream careers.

The quality of interpersonal relationship will determine how much partners, friends or members of a group will be capable of galvanizing or motivating each other into action for a worthy cause, whether jointly or severally. According to Donald J. Kesler (1996), the author of Contemporary Interpersonal Theory Research, advances the theory that interpersonal relationships rest on the balance between power for control and

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

need to remain affiliated regardless. Each one of the parties involved will, at different times, flex their muscles for power and control within their given relationship.

Each of the parties is also seeking how they can affiliate in the relation well enough to attain the sense of belonging and sincere friendship. Hence, interpersonal relationships grow and mature in the extent that two major axes of motivation are effectively blended: Need for control (power, dominance), and need for affiliation (love, friendship). The process of cementing a relationship involves negotiations (whether overtly or covertly), on how friendly or hostile they will become towards each other. Such a process may take days, months or even years and may even never be complete. That is, a time may come when the relationship may stagnate, or on the contrary, flare-up and blossom depending on how well the parties involved are capable of navigating two factors mentioned above.

Leaders are key in enabling the process of solidifying relationships in groups and teams. They create conducive environment where members can freely express themselves with the ability to agree or disagree with members' opinions without feeling threatened by possibility of expulsion. Whatever we touch as leaders, we leave fingerprints. As we touch others' lives with our leadership, we leave our identity on their hearts. Don't wait to be praised or honoured.

Don't expect to be liked by everybody. While many may like you and appreciate you, that should not be your agenda for doing good in every opportunity. Many others may hate you for the good you do. You will always have friends and enemies. Yet, strangers can never be your detractors. Only people who are familiar with you may turn out to be your detractors, your enemies. For that matter, the more they know you, the deeper will be the friendship or enmity. Jesus was the most righteous person who ever lived in this world. Yet He had such fierce opponents that they killed Him.

*“You have enemies? Good. That means you’ve stood up for something, sometime in your life.” – Winston Churchill, former British Prime Minister*

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

Nonetheless, as noted earlier in this book, life is good when you are happy, but life is even better when others are happy because of your service as a just, inspiring and dynamic leader. Be faithful in touching other people's lives. Nothing is more honourable, more fulfilling and worth celebrating than being a channel of God's blessings to his people.

Let us source from Daniel M. Cable, Professor of Organisational Behaviour at London Business School. He argues that, it is a fact (not a myth), that institutions world over, whether family institutions or institutions in the society, are yearning for positive change in order to grow from good to better, and from better to excellence.

Competition for institutional success among neighbours has become real, not necessarily in the spirit of survival for the fittest, but more so in the spirit of healthy competition, not wanting to be left behind as others prosper. Basically, institutions are made up of people and driven by people. It therefore follows that for any institution to change and grow, it is imperative that the capacity of its workforce must continuously be enhanced in order to individually and collectively change its attitude and therefore better work patterns.

For this process of change to take effect there will have to be regular reviews to continuously identify gaps and plan for appropriate response actions. It is believed that behavioural change at individual level will not have much impact in causing institutional change until there is effective club leadership that motivates, models, inspires, informs, facilitates and guides the desired institutional change process.

However, leadership with relevant skills, but that lacks goodwill, not much should be expected from it. In other words, there will not be positive synergy for change where individual efforts largely remain isolated and therefore impoverished. Similarly, not much should be expected in a situation that lacks visionary institutional leadership. Visionary institutional leadership is reflected through strategic plans.

## **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

*“In their hearts humans plan their way, but it is the Lord who directs their steps and establishes them” Proverbs 16:9*

Visionary leadership knows what direction the institution is expected to move in the next three, five, eight or ten years. There exists both short term and long-term goals, preferably written down for wide sharing among key stake holders. In other cases, especially in privately owned business enterprises, the owners keep those strategic plans to themselves to avoid proliferation to competitors. However, in the absence of appropriate institutional leadership, there will not be coherent and substantial institutional goals and change that customers and key stakeholders like staff, can believe in.

### **Institutional change and leadership**

Today’s workforce is said to be different from that of the decades of the past. It is believed that today’s workforce is more skeptical and more questioning than ever before. Today’s workforce is said to be more enlightened by the internet and social media more than their leaders. They goggle any topic of interest and gain instant information even during trainings or staff meetings. They think ahead. What modern leaders should do is to encourage the workforce to think ahead and generate and share new ideas.

Leaders must provide their employees with hope, purpose, and encouragement to try new things. They should provide employees with a sense of common purpose, creating a scenario of the great future that will come with the change. Leaders should make it clear to the workforce that change does not come overnight and that the takeoff point will be the most trying moment before stabilising in gaining new altitudes with the change. Modern workforce is familiar with what happens in the competitor companies and want to compare their company status and practice with the rest. They would be proud to realise that their company leads the market.

In Kotter’s view (2009), institutional change should be initiated with a sense of urgency. This will mobilise immense energy in the workforce after they realise time is of the essence in the institutional success. This is followed by:

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

- Creation of well- articulated vision, mission and goals for the aspired change which is collectively discussed and appreciated.
- Establish a coordination committee for the change process, comprising of representatives of various stakeholders. This is comprising appointed individuals but who have interest in the desired institutional change.
- Ensure broad approval and support of the planned changes.
- Clearly spelt-out short-term and time-bound goals should remain the fueling stations where their attainment will energise and motivate stakeholders towards the long-term goals.
- Stakeholders are then mobilised for action.
- Create institutional structures that consolidate and sustain the institutional changes.

Paraphrasing Kotter's proposed eight stages of institutional change process, Professor Peter Lewa puts the same as follows (Kotter 2009):

1. Establish a sense of urgency. Discussing today's competitive realities, looking at potential future scenarios. Increasing the 'felt-need' for change (Kotter, 2009).
2. Form a powerful guiding coalition. Assembling a powerful group of people who can work well together.
3. Create a vision. Building a vision to guide the change effort together with strategies for achieving this.
4. Communicate the vision. Kotter emphasizes the need to communicate at least ten times the amount you expect to have to communicate. The vision and accompanying strategies and new behaviours need to be communicated in a variety of ways. The guiding coalition should be the first to role model new behaviours.
5. Empower others to act on the vision. This step includes getting rid of obstacles to change such as unhelpful structures or systems. Allow people to experiment.

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

6. Plan for and create short-term wins. Look for and advertise short-term visible improvements. Plan these in and reward people publicly for improvements.
7. Consolidate improvements and produce still more change. Promote and reward those able to promote and work towards the vision. Energize the process of change with new projects, resources, change agents.
8. Institutionalize new approaches. Ensure that everyone understands that the new behaviours lead to corporate success.

### **Levels at which change may take place**

The purpose of this exposition is to put heat under our seat of comfort and stir up the need for change at both personal and institutional levels. Without change, there cannot be progress in our lives. Change should begin with ourselves as individuals, our attitudes, the way we perceive ourselves, the way we perceive others and our world view as a whole. After changing ourselves at such spheres, only then can we be able to effectively change the way we respond to the challenges in our everyday life.

After we are able to initiate change at our personal level, that's when we can begin to influence and bring about positive change in our friends, our families, our groups, our neighbourhood communities and the society at large. In other words, change has and actually is supposed to bear a ripple effect wherever it is initiated. But alas, change can be threatening. Nobody enjoys change, even if they may like to change. Status quo is comfortable as it does not raise risks. We are often conditioned into resisting change until we begin to see the promised or expected benefits. Only then can we begin to appreciate it and flow with it without resistance.

Ethiopians have a saying that change is the spice of life. Change brings new hope, as people anticipate new and better life to come with it. Fr. Quinn (1999), admonishes us rather philosophically not to fear change as long as we want to live. He says to live is to change and to live long is to change often.

## **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

Let's now look at how to manage change in such a manner as to make it become less threatening in groups, institutions and in individuals.

### **Facilitating a non-threatening social change**

Generally, people fear change. We would rather remain comfortable with what we are familiar with no matter how inefficient and horrible it may look. We are more at home and comfortable with what we know. We would hate to delve into a change for the unknown with all its uncertainty. That's why even in a church, congregations have specific seats where they have sat for time immemorial until they develop sentiments of ownership. They don't expect anybody else to sit there even when they are absent from the church. They wouldn't want to change at all.

Nevertheless, let us open this discussion by stating that, there is nobody known in history who has ever stopped change. Rulers of the world and managers of corporate entities are known to have done whatever was within their powers to stop waves of change that appeared to sweep them away. However, change takes its own course eventually, for there is nothing as powerful as an idea whose time has come.

- Change is a dynamic force of transformation. It is a process that has no defined time factor, except the timeframe set by those causing it. Mutuku S. (2003) writing about change and change management observes that change is a movement away from where we are to an uncertain future. She goes on to say in her acclaimed seminar MBA paper that "Nobody knows what is in the future and what happened yesterday is gone, we only have today to shape it into what we want. The opportunity is there for vision to be actualized.
- For change to be successful not only must the 'change managers' know what they want to do in the future but they must have the right organizational structure to support the process. There also has to be a strategy that manages information, people and procedures and helps

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

us keep the goals in sight". Quoting Nickols, she further says that change management can be described as the tool that prepares us for the uncertain future by enabling us to create it and by empowering the organization to take responsibility for their future. Change is a reality that we must all be comfortable with because we have little or no control over it (Mutuku, S., 2003).

- Change is a dynamic force of transformation. It is a process that has no defined time factor, except the time frame set by those causing it. Change can either be positive or negative depending on who is defining it and under what circumstances. Change causes a stimulus to which those affected respond. Such a response can be positive reaction or resistance. Change can cause conflict. The conflict is generated by the shift created in the process of change. Both individuals and organisations respond to change in different ways. It is because of these factors that an institution or a group needs to be aware of effects of the planned change on itself as well as on other stakeholders.

They say the only sure thing that is truly constant in the world is change. Change is a constant factor in any living entity. Organisations and groups are living entities and therefore will always experience change, whether that change is planned or not, and whether it be desirable or not. Institutional leadership therefore needs to monitor, analyse, understand and manage change.

Any decisions and actions by the leadership have a potential to generate change. In all the situations of change, the leadership needs to continuously analyse the process of change to understand its cause and the effects it might bring about. Where the leadership does not understand and manage change, then it is left to 'management by crisis'. This affects the development of an organisation. The effect might be negative and if it is not corrected, then it might harm the organisation and its activities. This then interferes with the goals, strategies, and the mission of the organisation.

## **The greatest enemy of change is fear**

### **TEAM LEADER'S JOURNAL**

#### **Dealing with Fear: Hostile storm in the skies**

*It was in 1995 when a team of trainers from Premese Africa had to fly from Nairobi for an assignment in Mwanza Town, Tanzania. Mwanza is on the shores of Lake Victoria. We flew on a five-seater aircraft. It was quite a blustery, cloudy morning. Hence, the trip did not promise to be smooth. A few minutes after take-off, however, we stabilised after gaining altitude above the clouds. For two whole hours, we had a relatively calm flight. But on approaching Mwanza airport for landing, we had to plough through turbulent clouds. This time it was raining, and the clouds were very low. There was also flash of lightning occasionally.*

*The pilot announced that we were flying through a rather wild storm. That was pretty disturbing to hear, especially in such a small aircraft. The pilot tried to make a quick landing but hesitated when the runway itself was hardly visible. Still within the clouds, he decided to fly up again and find a new bearing. He announced to us that it was difficult to land as he could not see his way nor could he estimate how far we were from Lake Victoria.*

*He told us that we did not have enough fuel to opt to fly to another destination. We had to land. I imagine each one of us was praying silently as the pilot announced that he was going to make another attempt to land. Throughout this time, we were within a dark cloud, with occasional lightning, thunder, and rain. Being a light aircraft, we were tossed left and right and centre by strong winds. As can be imagined, everybody in the craft was in prayer.*

*Suddenly, we found ourselves below the storms with heavy dark cloud hanging above us. The pilot looked back at the passengers and smiled with a clear indication that we were finally safe to land. He aimed for the runway and landed as passengers applauded him with great sigh of relief.*

The moral of the story: As leaders, we should show courage to face challenging realities. Even when you can do little or nothing about a challenging situation, remain agile through prayer. Our pilot didn't panic and that gave us hope. But

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

actually, to say the truth, I decided never to fly again. But I did though!!

But why do people fear and resist change? This question reminds me of my reaction when banks changed queuing system for customers by introducing electronic clock-in system that gives customers numbers by time of arrival and department to visit. I remember my initial reaction against the new system which I imagined it was an excuse to keep 'ordinary' customers waiting while bank clerks call out rich personalities and their friends to be served first. Actually, I walked out in protest only to realise the next bank branch had adopted the same system. I went to a totally different bank and found the same system. I had no option but to give it a trial only to discover it was a more efficient and more objective system.

- People don't want to face uncertainty and the risks of the unknown
- Lack of trust in the initiators of change (suspicion)
- Fear of failure
- Unwillingness to disturb the comfort of long-established routines and work habits
- Risking to lose positions of privilege and power through change
- Risking displacements and being declared obsolete and therefore redundant as a result of change (e.g. introduction of new technology may risk retrenchments).
- Personal inconveniences, e.g. change that relocates one to new duty station
- Fear of coming under the power of a new structure or leadership people do not trust
- Change is resisted when people sense that they are being changed without their knowledge, involvement or consent. Change breeds uncertainty in people and this is threatening. Uncertainty makes people experience lack of control. Change also poses a threat especially

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

when it occurs at a time people have no alternative or have not had time to identify an appropriate option to help them cope with the change. This situation brings about fear. Change must be accompanied by clear safety valves that serve to calm down fears, for instance, transfers should be cushioned by salary increment, promotion or relocation allowance.

- The challenge, threat and uncertainty created by change might be slow or fast. Whatever its speed, it will also cause stress. Such a stress occurs due to resistance and it is part of the coping process. Excessive stress might cause conflict between people. If this is happening to an organisational board, it might lead to the break-up of the board or the organisation

The answer is: 'Not always, but it depends'. However, on a superficial level, we can say 'yes'. Resistance to change provokes deep creative and innovative thinking as well as thorough analysis of the need for proposed change. It acts as a feedback on the level of information available to those involved in the process of change. It is an indicator of the quality of information and communication supporting the change process.

When resistance to change occurs and is used wisely, it reveals unexpected consequences of the proposed change. Resistance is also an indicator of unmet needs. It helps clarify goals, objectives and activities. An effective leadership explores all the factors raised by the resistance to proposed change. It will use that information to implement change in a sensitive, effective manner, and with adequate information to those involved or affected by the change.

### **Planning, initiating and managing change**

*"If you want to make enemies, try to change something." Woodrow Wilson, former U.S. President*

To implement change effectively, institutional leadership has to plan for it. The following are other milestones for managing change as seen from a different perspective:

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

- The plan should set out to collect and analyse all the necessary information. This requires understanding the types of effect envisaged from the proposed change. It also includes analysing the type of resistance the change might generate and plan how to counteract it.
- The plan should pre-empt resistance and identify strategies for managing resistance.
- The plan should set out steps for information sharing and communication with all those affected and involved in the change process.
- The plan should identify and give opportunity to those affected and involved in the change process to participate fully.
- Take time to establish with stakeholders what change is required and why it is necessary.
- Harness new and creative ideas before initiating change as well as during the management of change process itself.
- Prepare a definite and clear plan for the change process and how it will be managed.
- Assess possible negative effects as compared to the positive effects of change before the final decision is made to initiate it. Identify all the disruptions, contradictions, and inconveniences that the proposed change is likely to cause in relation to its short term and long-term benefits.
- Recognise, respect, and acknowledge resistance to change wherever it exists. More importantly get to know the reasons advanced against the proposed change and assess their substance. Resistance provides opportunity for making necessary clarifications on the need for change (is it truly necessary?). Resistance to change acts as feedback on the level of information available to those involved in the process of managing the change.
- Identify the level and extent of resistance and factors promoting it and use it positively.

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

- Don't rush change. It can be threatening as people may not be sure how it will impact on their welfare. Hence, establish time required to introduce and manage change effectively until.
- Carefully assess and consider the negative effects of change before it is introduced.
- Encourage participation of all those to be affected by the proposed change and create opportunities for all to give feedback from time to time.
- Define the yardsticks (standard of performance) and the milestones (key stages of progress) on which basis stakeholders would monitor the change.

Build an environment of trust and openness among both those involved as well as those affected by the change.

#### ***More guidelines for managing change***

*Plan ahead.* Analyse all the necessary information before the change process starts. Do the same during the change process. Identify factors causing resistance. At times this requires consultation with experienced people before too many resources are invested in planning or responding to change. Determine the best time for initiating change. Involve those concerned by sharing information adequately. Give opportunity to those involved to participate actively and effectively. Change should not be introduced in a haste, as this tends to create more suspicion.

Collectively determine the purpose for the desired change. Is there justification for the change, or is it change for the sake of it? What difference is the change likely to make? Will that difference be appreciated by those affected?

*Determine clearly as to who gains and who loses from the change.* Those are the parties to be involved in the management of the change process.

*Establish a taskforce committee made-up of key stakeholders* to manage the change. Such committee will facilitate the pro-

## **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

cess of change on behalf of the interested parties, but in full consultation with those with ultimate responsibility.

*Solicit and discuss opinions, facts and suggestions from all those involved or affected.* Encourage formal and informal discussions about the anticipated change and its implications.

*Critically look at each of the available options for the desired change.* Consider the advantages (benefits) and the disadvantages (costs) for each option towards making the necessary choices. If necessary, modify original ideas, designs, options as per new input.

*Prioritise the available options* ready for collective choices. Explain why certain suggestions could not be prioritised or considered in the final priority list.

*Give a hearing to the warning of deviant voices;* they cannot be ignored. Deal with all questions and doubts to allay fears and solicit support towards the desired change. Openly deal with fear, hostility or areas of caution.

*Identify safety nets* for those affected such as staff training, retrenchment compensations, transport compensation for the costs of relocation or transfers.

*Indicate role divisions.* What will be done by who?

*Monitor and evaluate the unfolding change.* Assess and analyse the effect of change. Make corrections and adjustments as may be needed. Institutionalise change by formalising the operations in order to normalise the related activities. Management should follow up to ensure practical and moral support to the implementation team.

*Avoid unplanned surprises, which may compromise trust.* Avoid making crucial changes ‘mid-air’ through issuing directives from the top. That will erode teamwork and raise suspicions.

*“To lead people, walk beside them. As for the best leaders, the people do not notice their existence ... When the best leader’s work is done, the people say, ‘We did it ourselves!’” – Lao Tzu, Chinese philosopher*

**THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

**THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

## CHAPTER 8



### **Group Dynamics in Working Through Teams**

*People constitute groups and teams in the work environment. We must then be aware of the communication dynamics amongst the people that we lead (Prof. Peter Lewa)*

#### **Taming our ego as team leaders**

During COVID-19 lockdown season, many people took advantage of the idleness to update themselves through reading. Among the materials I read was a book with the title: ‘Ego Is the Enemy’ (Holiday, R. 2017). According to Holiday, ego refers to ‘I’ or ‘Self’ of any person, distinguishing itself from the ‘selves’ of others. It has more to do with the heightened feeling or thought of self-importance against other people. On the same concern, Prof. Peter Lewa in his academic discourse often says ego stands for “Energy Gone Out”. It is the wrong dispensation in the application of one’s brain power and energy.

Ego can be positive or negative. Positive ego is what has more to do with building and maintaining our self-esteem, believing and acting with equanimity. That is depicting an attitude that affirms you are neither greater nor lesser than others. Acting like you are just equal with other human beings and therefore you would have no reason to look down upon others neither upon yourself. None is more superior to others but equals.

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

Below are the nine signs that your ego has gone overboard and taken control of your life:

- A feeling that too much is never enough. Hence there is nothing like too much, doesn't make sense.
- Disliking people who succeed in life ahead of you.
- Making yourself the center of the party by redirecting the attention to yourself, even when it was not your party or your occasion.
- Constantly skewing discussions such as to compare yourself with others, with the intention to demean them as you elevate yourself.
- Craving for respect and recognition by finding fault in everybody else except yourself.
- Always being on the defensive about yourself and your mistakes.
- Rarely (if ever) helping others. You tend to rejoice when others fail.
- Repeatedly speaking about great plans you are planning to accomplish even when your past has nothing much to show.
- Repeatedly speaking about how important you are, your achievements, your greatness and particularly speaking about the places you have been in the world and the famous people you dine with.

Growing to greatness, and for that matter into a great leader, requires the highest level of humility. The prerequisite for this is for one to strive to conquer one's (blotted) personal ego, which is an inherent nature of human beings. A leader must strive to rise above the ordinary men and women. That's one thing that separates leaders from followers. That is a clarion call for leaders to deliberately commit to conquer personal ego. Remember Motto of Premese educational institutions: 'Character and Self-Discipline Wins'. Incidentally, all religions of the world endorse same virtues of moral character, self-discipline and love for your neighbour.

## **Teams and groups are power houses**

Teams and groups are power houses who achieve much more than one person can do. As the African proverb goes, “*one finger cannot kill a louse*”, groups enable synergy or symbiotic effect towards attaining group goals faster and better. Synergy is attained where the combined effort of all working in a coordinated manner produces a better result than when one works singly. Thus, metaphorically speaking, synergy translates to:  $1+1 = 3$  instead of 2. Yet, it is not an automatic process in coordinating a group or team to attain synergetic effect. Negotiations founded on trust plays a critical role in that process.

In sociology studies we believe that when individuals members of a community work together to dig and establish a village water well, the process is considered more important than the goal. The lessons learnt by the said group in the process of working together, resolving interpersonal conflicts and settling intra-group battles are considered more important than the completion of the well itself. The rationale is that it is assumed the lessons will play a crucial role in creating group cohesion and therefore reinforcing chances of project sustainability. When community groups are formed spontaneously without undue external influence, they begin to attract genuine membership and gradually expand their agenda. These are referred to as organic groups. They begin from initiative of neighbours or like-minded friends. Their purpose is rarely spelt out initially since it's both multipurpose and broad in nature, as broad as community life itself. They survive for a long period of time. They usually provide individual and group life ‘insurance’. They become source of inspiration and life-support for the group members as well as their family off-springs. They actually constitute the equivalent of social insurance for the group members and the families they represent.

There are also what we call make-shift community groups that are formed for a particular, often single purpose. These are usually externally initiated and funded. Their benevolent

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

sponsors would usually be government agencies, non-governmental organization or faith-based organization. Benefactors could as well be politicians, ostensibly seeking to build political relevance and efficacy for the next elections. Such groups become handy during electioneering.

Other more or less similar groups are those that are sponsored by local or foreign donors. These are groups which could as well be multipurpose but their agenda is developed jointly with the donor unlike organic or politically instigated groups. Donor sponsored groups are usually seasonal as they usually disband either after the external funding is discontinued or after they attain their supposedly goals short-term goals in nature.

## **What will turn a crowd into a ‘team-group’?**

### **TEAM LEADER’S JOURNAL**

#### **Getting lost in ocean created a ‘Team-Group’**

*Here is a memorable incidence we went through in Sierra Leone a few years ago. We had gone on a leadership training under Africa Development Education mission. To access Freetown City (the Capital City of Siera Leone in West Africa) from the airport, one has to board a ferry. The city is made up of a peninsula on the southern bank of Sierra Leone River whose water drains into Atlantic Ocean.*

*The significantly frightening experience involved our ferry getting lost in the Atlantic Ocean. We had sailed for about twenty minutes from the airport when suddenly the ferry stopped. It was a morning with thick fog. At this point the captain announced that he had lost direction to the shore. His directional compass had malfunctioned and therefore could neither indicate where exactly we were, nor which direction we were heading to.*

*A heated debate ensued among the terrified passengers. Majority of the passengers happened to be female traders carrying their wares to the city markets. This is when teamwork became handy as everyone with past experience on the route began to give their views, estimating where we are as the fog was still thick and therefore could*

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

*not see far. The female traders had frequented the route many times and therefore they authoritatively affirmed that by now we should be able to see the shore on the other side of the peninsula.*

*We kept sailing back and forth without the courage to go far, not knowing whether or not we would be going deeper into the ocean which would pose even greater danger. We had no option but to wait in a stationary position for about an hour before the fog cleared. Fortunately, we were now able to see the shore of our intended destination, not far from where were. That way we ended creating a 'group' spontaneously as we sought our way out the quagmire.*

The moral of this story is, as we are keen to form for teams and groups and promote through interaction, there will always be need to be cautious enough to keep reviewing where we are headed to as we persist on the pursuit of our individual goals and collective vision. Persistence in 'pressing on' should not negate the need for wisdom to stop from time to time and assess the direction we are heading to in view of our intended destination. We can also change our destination and therefore the route if need be.

A collection of individuals in a bus travelling to a particular destination may not necessarily be a group but a 'social category' of people. They will only begin to form a group the moment they start to interact amongst themselves, know one another, share their issues of concern, clarify their destinations and their purposes of travel, harmonise those interests. As people try to establish commonality in their circumstances as well as how to strategize towards meeting their needs, then they spontaneously form a group or team. For their newly emerging group to become a reality, there will have to be a formalised membership criteria, procedures for enrolment and some sort of leadership structure.

In other words, for a group to emerge under whatever circumstances, there will have to be a defined common bond, structures of leadership established by the group or recognised by the group. There will also have to be some governing norms or rules to follow. The management structures will have to be developed by the group itself to earn legitimacy and respect from the members.

Circumstances that would lead to group formation among strangers travelling in a bus can be accelerated by some critical incidences. Examples of such include mechani-

**THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

cal breakdown of the bus, banditry attack, road accident, a puncture, getting stuck in the mud on a wet road or any other similar incidences that would bring the passengers closer to each other as they solve a common problem. These are situations that trigger what we may call ‘double-trouble’ leading to some form of interactions among those affected with mutual concern for one another’s welfare.

**Five stages of ‘team-group’ life  
(Source: Tuckman, B. 1965)**

Just the same way a human child grows from infant to childhood, to teenage and adulthood, groups and organisations grow the same way from infancy to maturity. There are five such distinct stages as presented below. According to Tuckman, as group members climb the ladder of group life, they undergo the transformation from a random assembly of strangers into a highly performing team that can work towards a common goal.

<p><b>STAGES OF GROUP DEVELOPMENT; GROUP STRUCTURE; AND GROUP DYNAMICS</b></p>
<p><b>(1) FORMING STAGE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Limited participation (sniffing each other out)</li><li>• Polite facade; faking of feelings</li><li>• Uncertainty (not sure about anything); hence heavy dependence on founders of the group (leaders) for direction</li><li>• Roles and responsibilities apportioned by group or organizational leaders</li><li>• A collection of individuals, like strangers traveling in a bus, each with own agenda, expectations and destination</li><li>• Much energy and time is spent on building relationships</li><li>• Defining of tasks and roles is usually done by leaders (founders of the group / organisation)</li><li>• There is futile effort to develop group rules and norms; each trying to establish identity, find their space in the group and make an impression.</li></ul>

**(2) STORMING STAGE**

- Strong principles emerging and sober leadership required at this stage (the most challenging stage in the growth of a group or organization)
- Formation of sub-groups, cliques of alliances (intra-group conflict)
- Resistance against allocated roles by the leadership, unwillingness of some staff or group members to commit self to responsibility
- Revolt or rebellion against leadership (especially the founders) without good cause
- Mistrust and suspicion, against those not in a particular camp; rejection of those who are loyal to the (founder) leader by those who seek to challenge authority; Hostility directed at the performers, loyalists
- Voluntary resignations begin, or fall out as members withdraw from the group
- Sackings and expunging or expulsions of group members as a strategy for conflict resolution through separation when all else has failed
- Personal values and principles are challenged by the group even those which appeared attractive before
- In a one-week training workshop of a new group, storming stage begins in the second or third day, some workshops end prematurely at this stage
- Individual interests and agendas (though unspoken) tend to be the root cause of tension which are often in conflict with group or organizational goals/vision (personal and selfish ambitions e.g. need to control others the root cause of conflict)
- Leaders tend to bestow privileges on performers, and loyalists, e.g. formation of 'in-group', kitchen cabinet, promotions, bonuses, etc.
- Diminishing commitment to group tasks (by rebels)
- Frequent clash of opinions / marked by rivalry and conflicts
- Indifference in execution of tasks allocated by leaders
- Arguments are the order of the day and rules are easily broken

**(3) NORMING STAGE**

- Respect for each other grows now that we know each other better (we know the potential and limits of each)
- Overcoming group tensions, through open dialogue; Development of 'we' feeling starts; Group cohesion grows as people genuinely give feedback to each other; Norms and rules collectively developed and respected; Group effort to negotiate roles among members
- Conflicts are settled amicably; Members provide support to each other; Greater cohesion and sense of purpose emerge in the group
- People know each other better, no one can pretend anymore; Open exchange of opinions
- Members willing to facilitate greater achievements for the group; Shared vision, goals and values
- People begin to appreciate each other, help and support each other, and accept each other as they are.

**(4) PERFORMING STAGE**

- Group focuses on output/results/vision; Problem solving strategies reinforced or strengthened; Division of labour is respected and functional, that is, people share and exchange roles freely; There is genuine joy and happiness as people appreciate the contribution of each; People start monitoring themselves, they begin to find joy in meeting their work targets. People begin to enjoy working, as they find their true self and self-actualisation in their performance.
- Sometimes people divert attention from interpersonal squabbles to career development and work perfection; Clear commitment to tasks and goals; Members can take significant risks and use initiative as they try out new ideas (there is trust and room to experiment new ideas without fear of intimidation)
- Group members see themselves as colours of a rainbow, finding beauty in harmonizing their differences. Differences are seen as an asset of organizational strength

**(5) ADJOURNING STAGE**

- This is the stage at which a group may decide it's time to positively fold up and voluntarily disband itself after attaining its original goals and sharing accruing benefits (or losses if that be the case).
- It could also be a case in which a group decides to change its course, change its name, identity and perhaps even its dreams by adopting new vision that may require a wider or smaller scope of membership.
- The group may also decide to divest its energy and resources into new ventures completely different from what it is traditionally known to do thus giving itself a new lease of life, a new beginning.

**Hallmarks of a vibrant group or team**

These hallmarks have been identified both from experience with various community-based organisations as well as from review of case-studies from many parts of the world:

Small, Manageable Groups Affiliated to Associations or Federations

Effective groups are usually made up of (small), manageable units, which could network with other units to form a powerbase. For income generating groups, two and not exceeding eight members are recommended. For ordinary self-help village groups 10 to 25 members would be ideal. For the management of community-wide initiatives such as group ranches, savings and credit cooperatives, water projects, 30 to 50 members are recommended per unit (e.g per water point). Linkages among these units lead to the formation of associations, federations or societies in an area.

**Homogeneous Membership**

In the formation of an effective group, socio-economic differentiation should be considered in developing membership criteria. The narrower the socio-economic gap among members, the higher the chances of harmony and group cohesion. The greater the heterogeneity within the

## **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

membership of a group, the greater the potential for conflict arising out of the diversity and mismatch of interests.

### **Organic Groups as Opposed to Make-Shift Groups**

Organic self-help groups which emerge spontaneously tend to be more stable than 'make-shift' groups quickly formed to take advantage of handouts from donor agencies or from a politician. The former has a longer history of interaction and relationships, while the latter usually lack tolerance, patience and long-term goals and objectives.

### **High Levels of interaction**

Intensity of discussions among members, frequency and levels of attendance at group and committee meetings, and the quality of democratic deliberations and decision making in group meetings will all translate to unshakable group.

### **Clear Role Division**

This pertains to a clear internal group structure with clear role divisions. This forms the basis for effectively shared-leadership.

### **Sensitivity to Social Justice Based on Critical Analysis**

A vibrant group with the ability to critically analyse issues and their root causes as opposed to dealing with surface symptoms is a strong entity. This embraces the ability to ask 'why', the most powerful question in any discussion. An effective group abhors attitude of fatalism (pessimism, resignation to fate). Groups who will always assign life-challenges to the will of God instead of confronting the root causes are weak groups and cannot cause social transformation in a community. The will of God is for human-kind to live in victory and fulfilling life (John 10:10). Hence a community group, whether secular or church group, should have the ability to attack injustice anywhere and everywhere it exists, with the conviction that the world can be a better place for everybody and especially the poor, oppressed and the powerless.

### **Originality of Ideas**

Originality of ideas and plans is another sign of an authentic and empowered group. This refers to the ability of a group

## **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

to dream internally and draw out plans as opposed to always waiting for ideas and options from outside, from the so-called godfathers and godmothers who are 'supposed to know better'. A vibrant group will manifest a high degree of creativity and autonomy.

### **Assertion**

There will be a high level of assertion among members and the group as a whole. This is indicated by their ability to articulate issues which they don't approve and ability to speak about those issues eloquently and confidently especially in public.

### **Participatory Leadership**

Participatory decision making and democratic governance are practices that enhance the commitment and motivation of the group members. Democratic leadership will enhance a sense of ownership and widen the scope of ideas from the membership. Decisions made from open sharing of information are more realistic and have a wider membership support. Such decisions will have higher chances of success once implemented.

### **Respect for Dissenting Voices**

Empowered groups will recognize and appreciate the presence of deviant members. They will listen to dissenting views, guarding against the potential sabotage and the destruction these voices could cause, but at the same time allowing themselves to be enriched by the tremendous contribution they make. It is such dissenting voices that caution the group against short sightedness and to guard against promoting hidden agenda aimed at serving self-interests of some group leaders.

### **Promotion of Healthy Inter-Group Competition**

The existence of healthy inter-group competition is a good idea in strengthening groups. It is believed that much of what we call 'development' is learnt from what others are doing or have done. It includes an effort to create something new and better for our lives than the past. Intergroup competition leads

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

to gaining new lessons as we learn from others' experiences and realities. A group that does not compete against itself (intragroup completion), but strives to compete against others remains cohesive and competitively at its best. Inter-group comparisons help provide a basis to measure group success and unexploited group potential for future success. That's precisely the essence of supra-county and national exams where results are compared.

#### **Group Attractiveness to Neighbours**

The constant positive performance of a group makes it attractive to neighbours and boosts self-esteem among members. This enhances cohesiveness. One sure sign of such attractiveness is the number of people applying to be considered for membership, or in one way or another, wishing to be associated with the activities of the group.

#### **Great Scope of Self Sufficiency in Skills**

Self-sufficiency in technical and social skills within a group is a source of power. On the other hand, perpetual dependency on external professionals weakens group autonomy, making it dependent. An empowered group will seek to develop the skills frequently required by training its members in those skills. It will also seek to tap Indigenous Technical Knowledge (ITK), and make efforts to adapt and domesticate imported or exotic technology to the local context.

#### **Ability to relate with officers in positions of public service on equal basis**

An empowered group or group members will interact with government officials and other officers in positions of public service without inferiority complex and without feeling humiliated by the power imbalance. The group or individual group members of an empowered group will have the ability to summon extension workers and demand their accountability as may become necessary.

#### **Absence of Shadow Membership**

Groups whose members and leaders are regularly present and active have a better chance of cohesion and success than

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

those whose members and leadership work and live away. These are members and leaders who seldom or never attend group or committee meetings. They should be replaced no matter how important or influential they may be. However, this will depend on the nature and purpose of the group. For instance, if it is a burial association, a trade union, or a network, this could operate through the modern digital communication channels and remain a vibrant and effective group.

**THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

## CHAPTER 9



# Negotiation Skills That Break Barriers

### Scope of the art of negotiation

*Two cardinal rules to make you excel in negotiations anytime anywhere: If you tame your temper and develop a good measure of patience, then you are good to go.*

They say, with effective negotiation skills, you can almost always get what you want in life without necessarily having to step on other people's toes, lying or denying them their rights or interests. There are as many negotiation skills as there are negotiators. It may not be prudent, neither would it be a fact cast in stone to opine here that this or that is the most effective negotiation strategy. This is determined on the basis of the nature of agenda, personalities involved, circumstances at hand, and the cultural context within which a particular negotiation engagement takes place.

Negotiating with in-laws for dowry, for instance, will be different from negotiating for the price of a piece of land or a plot in the market place. In the first case, it is the kind of negotiation that involves delicate emotional jostling while in the market place it almost exclusively involves wits. In either case, negotiation requires advance background checks on the requisite information that would determine and shape the negotiation parameters.

The reader must have been involved in negotiations of one kind or another. What helped you win the day or what made

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

you lose the case? I am not sure I would be in agreement with the rather regular assertion, that in negotiations, you should never take 'no' for an answer. Such a stance outrightly defeats the essence of negotiation itself. That may not be an appropriate attitude carried into a negotiating room. It would appear rather selfish to walk onto a negotiating table with rigid attitude, with your mind already made up. It is only fair to leave room for the possibility of a 'win-win' negotiation outcome. Truth is often relative and therefore authentic dialogue is supposed to establish solutions more superior than one party's opinion. Beginning a negotiation without an open mind that would be prepared to accept a negotiated outcome is already defeating the purpose. Taking unhealthy position that 'the winner takes it all' is obviously undesirable. Our task at hand now is to interrogate different strategies of negotiation with a view to adopting what appears more efficacious under different circumstances.

I think we can all agree on the fact that amicable negotiation requires flexible approaches in a give and take spirit. But this should happen without necessarily over compromising the core interests of the parties involved. There is time to be stubbornly firm, but there is also time to be reasonably considerate on the interests of either party. I happened to train NGO staff in organisations sponsored by Irish Development Aid in the Lower Shabelle region of Southern Somalia.

In one of training sessions the writer conducted in Somalia some few years ago on conflict management and resolution, the participants disclosed that whenever negotiating for a peace deal within their cultural context, each negotiating party would have a 'trouble-shooter' in their midst. This person is purposely meant to create disharmony at different stages of negotiation. This becomes a threat to the other party with intention to cow them down to the benefit of the aggressor. However, it would often just end at that, only a 'fake threat'. If the victim stands his ground and refuses to be intimidated, negotiation among equals ensues.

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

It is a fact that people often tend to react more to the messenger than to the message. That's one more reason why a negotiator should be persuasive and tactful enough. Negotiator should have adequate personal credibility for the audience not only to accept and respect him as a negotiator, but also to believe and honour whatever comes from his mouth. To determine your chances of success at the negotiating table, it is advisable to identify as early as possible the tactful, experienced and informed negotiator amongst your opponents as opposed to amateurs. All said and done, an effective negotiator would be identified right away as reasonable (ability to consider logic), rational (ability to judge critically) and realistic (ability to see sense).

For instance, if your opponents seem to ignore your objections and rejections, do not get annoyed, do not assume they are deaf and dumb. It may be that you are dealing with very persistent negotiators who know, from experience, that by persevering, they can eventually turn your 'no' into a 'yes'. However, if your opponents talk too much, or show frequent signs of impatience, you can assume that they are neither experienced nor overly competent in negotiations. But if they seem to be constantly reading your mind or your non-verbal messages, then watch out, they are most likely great negotiators who know exactly what they want.

### **Common flaws among negotiators**

- Temptation to seek to please the opponent. This is said to be common flaw among many negotiators who choose to be liked by the opponent. Don't allow yourself into any negotiation if you are prone to this flaw.
- They say a naïve and over-trusting negotiator will be liable to be 'eaten alive'. Misrepresentations and deceit are elements of the negotiating process which are all too common, especially when negotiating with people who lack integrity and nobility. Mistrust creates unhealthy environment for healthy negotiations. That's why a healthy dose of skepticism and doubt is indispensable for a good negotiator who will avoid taking things for granted. When-

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

ever there exists doubt, verify before proceeding. Never ignore your intuition.

- Many negotiators may lack the flexibility necessary to take a fresh look at issues through the eyes of the opponent. Be reasonably flexible. *The bamboo that bends is stronger than the oak that resists – Japanese proverb*
- The way to be taken advantage of on negotiating table is to let loose your emotions. An emotional person with too much temperament should not be allowed to negotiate on behalf of others. Avoid being quarrelsome and argumentative. This invites opponents to disagree with you right away in their own self-defense. It forces people to 'fight you back'. They will enjoy playing at your emotions to destabilise you further.
- Avoid the tendency to act proud, lusting for self-promotion and preoccupation with the desire to score points continuously without self-criticism and lacking self-knowledge. That can be disastrous.
- A negotiator should not be uncomfortable with uncertainty. Negotiations often rely on exploration of possibilities, with lots of guesswork as nobody is sure of the outcome as you deal with variety of dilemmas. Some of the ablest and intelligent people are said to be extremely frightened by uncertainties and ambiguities. They happen to be strong in charting way out when things are clear and certain regardless of their complexity and how bad they look. Uncertainties tend to baffle them.
- In other words, 'the ideal negotiator has a quick mind, but unlimited patience; he knows how to be modest but assertive, how to mislead (I don't think I can buy that!) without being a liar; how to inspire trust without himself trusting others; how to charm others without succumbing to their charms' (Samfrits Le Poole, 1993).
- The process of negotiation will, in essence, involve listening, talking, winning trust, pushing and pulling, testing, advancing, retreating, cajoling (sweet talking), bluffing (lying discreetly?), waiting, massaging, synthesising, fail-

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

ing, compromising (splitting the difference), trying again and sometimes getting there or agreeing to disagree.

- Finally, it should always be remembered that skillful negotiators are not born, but made out of learning from their own experience and mistakes as well as from the mistakes and successes of other negotiators.

*“First they ignore you, then they laugh at you, then they fight you, then you win” (Mahatma Gandhi)*

## **Eight imperative qualities of a good negotiator**

### **1. Patience is a must for a good negotiator**

This is said to be an absolute necessity in a negotiation process. Resist the temptation of being in a hurry to close the deal before getting much of your expectations from the deal covered. Accept to bear with endless repetitions, digressions and irrelevancies without giving in to the urge to conclude the matter as soon as possible.

### **2. A good negotiator prepares prior to negotiation sessions**

It has been said that being educated is not necessarily possessing or acquiring all the information there is in any one particular area of focus, but rather knowing where to get what information when you need it.

Good negotiators will go out of their way to carry out background checks including gathering all the relevant information prior to the negotiations. That’s when they say, information is power. Prior to negotiating on the price of a property, you check the different prices in the vicinity, and carry out official search to establish authenticity of the ownership. This will also help establish any outstanding disputes and bills with the local government authorities and such like information regarding the property.

For instance, the value of a land with title deed is more than a land parcel in the same location but with only land adjudication allotment papers. Sometimes one may have to rely on the brokerage of sale agents to collect this in-

## **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

formation for you. They have the time and also the experience as they have repeatedly done such many times before. Hence, they know where to go and whom to talk to.

### **3. A good negotiator anticipates positive outcome**

Good negotiators think ahead of their opponents. They can anticipate questions to be raised at the negotiating table and goes ahead to seek for answers beforehand. Actually, that's one of the most effective 'tricks' in successful negotiations: thinking and anticipating situations in advance.

### **4. A good negotiator is open minded, flexible and able to put ones-self in the shoes of the opponent**

A good negotiator remains calm and collected, effectively taming the urge to let loose one's emotions. He is able to understand the emotions of the opponent, constantly putting one's self in his shoes. He is capable of empathising. You can only communicate effectively with somebody whom you understand, whether you agree with him or not. For this reason, it's more preferred you meet the person face to face as opposed to negotiating over the phone.

Don't trust a middle person or an agent to negotiate anything on your behalf. Their role ends with connecting you to the interested party. To create a deal that suits both parties and thus avoid deadlock, there has to be inventiveness of alternative solutions. Both parties should be willing to compromise or to let go some of their interests in order to accommodate some of the interests of the other.

### **5. Good negotiator is fairly ambitious in the sense that they set high standards and goals for what they want**

He or she must be a go-getter. His sense of ambition can be likened to aiming at the sun but remains willing to settle at the moon if the circumstances so warrant. In other words, he or she is considerate but also not afraid to 'agree to disagree' if that becomes the only possible option.

**6. A good negotiator is tolerant and resilient in the face of adversary**

A good negotiator is self-confident and robust in the face of contempt, abuse and mockery. He remains tolerant and resilient against contempt and abuse. His opponent will tell him how proud, unreasonable, devious (deceitful) and stupid he or she is. That should not deter the negotiator or cow him or her down. It is part of the cost of negotiation.

**7. A good negotiator is a good listener**

He or she listens keenly and actively, indicating to the opponent that he or she is hearing and understanding. He or she indicates this by sound or by nodding or by restating what he hears to affirm whether or not he has heard it correctly. He does not interrupt the contribution of the opponent when it is turn for the opponent to speak. A good negotiator not only listens but is also a keen observer of unspoken dynamics of body language. He is perceptive and skillful in reading cues, in picking up non-verbal messages. A negotiator cannot afford to be naïve of to take things for granted.

**8. A good negotiator reads quickly the power power shifts.**

A good negotiator will quickly realise when he is on the driving seat and take charge of the negotiations. That's the power shift we are talking about here. When the opponent is in the driving seat, you handle with caution and great understanding so that he doesn't rock the boat prematurely. Distinguish between major issues on which more time and effort should be spent, and minor details that can be worked out later by a smaller team of assistants once the major decisions are made.

**THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

# CHAPTER 10



## Managing Our Retirement Age

### **The mistaken notion of ‘retirement’**

We have heard many people say they are ‘retired’ but not ‘tired’. That is a common normative statement but whose meaning is deeply loaded. In actual fact, retirement doesn’t necessarily mean it’s time to ‘go home’, stay at home and ‘rot’ at home doing nothing other than to watch television, eat and sleep. This is assumed to be the pattern of life after attaining certain age bracket they call ‘retirement age’.

That should never be the case. Retirement simply connotes ‘change of jobs’ (if not continuation of the same job but repackaged into a consultancy or advisory service away from salaried employment. It may also imply change of work station from public to a private home. Meaning you can be self-employed and highly productive from home. Sixty years, which is the mandatory retirement age in Kenya, is fairly too early. It is possible to remain actively productive for thirty more years.

I recently listened to a motivational speaker challenging our notion of retirement. He provoked us against relaxing our body muscles and brain power under the guise of attaining retirement age. According to him, there is nothing like retirement in the real sense until one goes six feet down into their grave. What we call retirement is actually repackaging of our life to do something different. It was not until I heard this that I realised for once, that in my last 46 years of active work, I have ‘retired five times’. That is, I have change my type of work five times.

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

Initially, I worked as school teacher for two years. Later I got equipped with different (or should I say additional), skills which made me transit from a school teacher to a social development consultant. This I did for about twenty years before I transited again to become a University Lecturer. I lectured for ten years. Within this period, I invested in family educational institutions which I run to date. I am now thinking of ‘retiring’ into something else now that some members of my family have shown adequate interest and adequate competence to run the family institutions.

To drive home this new perspective better, on working beyond ‘retirement’ age, the motivational speaker said that most African freedom fighters became presidents at the age way beyond seventy years. Yet official retirement age in most Africa countries is sixty years. We are told that one of the richest businessmen in America, Colonel Harland David Sanders is the owner of global chain of restaurants by name Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC). He started this brand at the age of 65 after struggling with disparaging and frustrating jobs for many years of life.

The founder of Kenyan nation, Mzee Jomo Kenyatta, became president of the country at the age of seventy-five years. He reigned for fifteen years before he died at ninety years of age. Nelson Mandela was installed President of South Africa when he was above seventy years of age. Many presidents of the world are far above the official retirement age in Kenya of sixty years. Some are even above the official retirement age in Western countries.

As I reflect on this, Joe Biden has just been elected as the 46<sup>th</sup> President of the USA when he is just about to turn eighty years of age. This is what has commonly been referred to as living in the state of being “Retired, But Not Tired”. Moses of the Bible, who was born 1593 BC was commissioned by God at the age of 80 years to lead Israel out of Egypt in 1513 BC. He died at the age of 120 years (<https://www.quora.com>).

A study is alleged to have found that the most productive age in human life is between 60 to 70 years of age. The second

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

most productive age bracket of a human being is said to be from 70 to 80 years of age. The third most productive age is said to be from 50 to 60 years of age. The same research reported that the average age of Nobel Prize winners is 62 years old. The average age of the presidents of prominent companies in the world is 63 years. The average age of the pastors of the 100 largest churches in the USA is 71. The average age of the Popes is 76 years. This tells us that it has been determined that the best years of your life are between 60 and 80 years (New England Journal of Medicine, 70389, 2018).

Therefore, if you are between 60 -70 or 70-80 you are in the best and second-best level of your life. This is unbelievably most inspiring information to some of us in these age brackets who thought we were done with life! Come on, get fired-up! Rise up from your 'retirement' cocoon, dust yourself, get your boots strapped-up and run back 'to the field'.

Don't accept to go to your grave with untested dreams, don't mind if those dreams will not have been accomplished by then, but test them. May be somebody else will take it up from where you will have left and run with it to accomplish your dreams when you are long gone. As pointed out earlier, the most important goal in life should be self-manifestation through display of your gifts and talents. Go for what God created you to benefit this planet. If you are a painter, do it so well that you have little or no competition around you. If a carpenter, do it at your best, whether self-employed or salaried.

You should hate to imagine dying without accomplishing what you were born to accomplish on earth. Dissatisfaction with status quo carries with it the seed of change. When you are dissatisfied, you become restless until you initiate change and overcome that which causes the discontent. No wonder they say need is the mother of invention. You must loath doing what you don't like to do. It is wrong to do it with anger. Plan carefully to move on. Otherwise, if you tolerate what you don't like, you will never be at your best and enjoy living at the pinnacle of your life on this earth.

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

You came to this earth because there is something the earth needed which God carefully hid in you. Everything God created came packaged to deliver something precious required by its generation on earth. God created nothing without a gift hidden in it for the good of the earth. Maggots are created to clean up the mess we create in the world. Snakes are dreaded creatures which can cause instant death to human beings. However, they are a sight to behold in museums as unique creation of God. Their skin is used to make quite valuable ornaments while in some cultures snakes are a delicacy.

God will not call you 'home' prematurely before accomplishing your pre-designated purpose on earth. Before your retirement, be sure you would have established and accomplished that specific purpose for which you were sent here on earth. The tools for solving particular problems here on earth were already hidden inside of you. A gift is an inherent capacity that God has created inside us for his own purpose. It is inherent because it cannot be given to you by any human being but people can only help nurture it to grow. Neither can it be stolen or taken away by anybody from inside you. The choice on what to do with it is entirely yours. It is already packaged in you by your Creator for the good of your future and for the good of the present generation as well as for the good of the posterity.

You were not just dropped into this planet to go through education, get a good job and earn a living to meet your necessities. You are here basically to add value to what you found and thus to add value to the life of those you serve. The worst that can happen is to get too comfortable with your routine work such as to forget to add your creative input. Some people become so comfortable in their routine jobs that they only get awakened when the reality of retirement comes knocking. That time you will be sixty years old or more. What do you plan to do with the next thirty to forty years of your life after retirement?

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

According to our three Great Golden Gentlemen referred to earlier in this book, your dream happens to be the most important thing in your life, not your education, not even your career. These are only tools to facilitate the accomplishment of your dream, which is the purpose for which God placed you on this planet. It is time to take some well thought out risks in an effort to find out what more you could do with your capacity to innovate. According to the three gentlemen referred to above, there is nothing in the world that will turn out to be worthwhile unless you take a risk to manifest the stuff God put in you. Your gift is the source of your true value. The Bible tells us our gifts and talents will cause us to stand before great men and kings (Proverbs 18:16-17).

What you do with your inbuilt gift is what will manifest your true value. If unemployed, begin by volunteering your services to get the world to know what is packaged inside you, what you can do. You have to take chances in your life, take a leap of faith, and risk your comfort zone. You will never have much out of life if you always have to play it safe. Expert advice is that we need to work initially under mentors either as employees or as apprentices for a reasonable period of time long enough to gain practical lessons. That's before we are equipped adequately to pull out gracefully and risk our dreams. We have a lot to learn from the field before we can confidently get out of our comfort zones.

*Three categories of people who will not readily embrace advice: a rich person, a highly learned person and persons in love (Source: Casual Chat)*

### **Will colleagues miss you when you retire?**

One day in 2018, President Kenyatta asked school girls after a visit to their school whether anyone of them had any question to him. One student shot up and asked: 'Mr. President Sir, now that this is your last term as the President of our great country, what would you wish to be remembered for after your retirement? To which the President immediately responded:

## **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

‘Good question. Two things I would wish to be remembered for: As the President who decisively dealt a death blow to corruption in Kenya, and a President who handed over a united country’. The writer would add here, “Also as the president who invested heavily in transport infrastructure such as to boost economy by eliminating traffic jams”. Let’s now talk about leaving behind legacies at our different levels of leadership and our succession plan. What would you wish to be remembered for after your departure from this planet into eternity? Which of your initiatives will be likely to stand the test of time? What is your succession plan?

*“Some people want it to happen, others wish it would happen but only a handful few make it happen.” – Michael Jordan, Hall of Fame basketball superstar*

We all have a responsibility to leave this world a better place for the posterity. We have a responsibility to put in place policies, systems and standards of service to humanity that are worthy emulating and if possible, that would be sustainable enough to outlive us. The standards should leave a mark of excellence for best management practices despite the many hurdles posted on our way by detractors.

What will matter most when we depart for eternity is not what part of the city you lived in, not how big a mansion you built for yourself, not how big your bank accounts were (your family may never even benefit from those accounts after you are departed), not how fancy or how many cars you drove, not how famous you were or how big and important your job titles were, not even how big your business empires were (so big that you may not even have known some of your employees). What will matter then is not how many friends and enemies you had in this planet. What will most matter when you are long gone is what will remain in the hearts of many people you touched with your life.

What will really be remembered of us with fond memories is how we touched the lives of others to give them hope and a future. If you are a teacher, know that your influence on the child goes beyond your grave. Teacher’s influence never

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

stops. Actually, a teacher of goodwill wants the child to grow to be greater than him or her. Hence, what will matter most a hundred years after you are gone is what came of the lives of those students who had the privilege of sourcing from your knowledge, wisdom and role modelling.

If you are a medical doctor, people will go home from your send-off talking about how great and caring you were. If you are a social worker, they will go home with memories of a great man or woman who ever lived to sacrifice their lot to lessen pain and suffering of humanity. What would you like to be left in people's hearts as memories about you when you are long gone? Live it now.

### **Preparing for the season of old age**

Many senior citizens or elderly people are said to be completely unprepared as they approach their sixty's and beyond. Often old age ambushes them when their limbs begin to complain. They get surprised when they suddenly realise they can no longer walk as briskly as they used to, when they try to run they begin to pant heavily after few sprints and their sight and hearing begins to weaken. They begin to wonder why they cannot rise up from their chair or bed that quickly as before. They become prone to falls. Joints suddenly become painful for no apparent reason. They can no longer produce sufficient insulin to absorb nutrients into their bodies. However, despite all these pitfalls, they should have no apologies. Old age is a privilege denied to many.

As they approach old age, many elderlies speak as though they know everything, but soon those around them come to realise they are let down by their failing brain power. This reality sometimes pushes the elderlies down without their knowledge. They need constant brain stimulation to remain alert and abreast with what happens around them and beyond. It is important for the elderly to expect and prepare for the following as their years advance slowly. Below are reflections based on the novel 'The Sky Gets Dark, Slowly'. It's all about preparing for aging:

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

- As you grow old, the people by your side will continue to grow fewer. That should not get you by surprise. You will lose some old friends. As far as possible avoid becoming a liability to young people around you such as your children. After all they will be too busy with their lives to care for you. Others will have settled elsewhere with their young families. They will only visit you but seldom. Hence build relations that you can count upon to support you in your old age.
- Start to forge and reinforce networks of goodwill in your spiritual community in the neighbourhood. This will provide much needed social support at your old age. It has been suggested that there are three categories of people you cannot do without to fight off loneliness in your old age: your family; people in your place of worship; and childhood friends including your old school mates. Don't mind the social differences, the bond of old age amongst you will bring about your equanimity. Stop saying you are this or that. Start flowing into people's lives and they will flow into your life.
- As you grow old, you will realise that society may continue to respect you but not necessarily give you much of their attention. When this begins to happen, don't panic. That's natural.
- It is believed that as people grow older, especially from sixty and above, they develop tendencies of being envious of those who are stronger, younger and thinking clearer than you. Accept your reality since you had your time and made your contribution to the society already. That's manifested by strange behaviour of complaining about every kind service given to them.
- Try to remain humble no matter how well you are thriving in life. Wise people admonish that no condition is permanent. You may be doing great today, tomorrow the tide might change for worse. The same trunk you climbed up on will be the same trunk you climb down on.

*“Stop being afraid of what could go wrong, and start being excited of what could go right” Tony Robbins*

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

- Respect others, don't hurt their feelings but appreciate every kind deed extended to you. One of the subconscious sources of bitterness among the elderly is loss of close people they loved dearly such as parents, friends, may be even their own children and other close relatives. These have either moved on with their lives or have already passed on.
- Diseases associated with age will gradually come knocking. You will begin to realise quiet days without any trouble in your body are long gone. Hypertension, diabetes, arthritis and such like become your close friends with which you have to learn to co-exist.
- Keep reminding yourself to maintain positive attitude towards life and people under all circumstances. Find something exciting each day to do, such as cooking your most favourite dish, reading a leisurely material, watching comedies and such like easy life.
- Establish appropriate exercises that you can follow each day without straining yourself. They must be exercises you can enjoy.
- After life of struggle for many years, old age makes you slowdown and finally spend more of your time in your bed like a baby. This is the irony of life. Remember to save enough income to support you when this time comes.
- Remember, it is at your old age when you begin to meet 'conmen', people who seek to swindle you out of your hard-earned savings. These are skimmers who know you have good accounts and that they can take advantage of your frail condition to benefit unfairly.
- At old age, you may not have next of kin living close to you to give you physical support that you may need. Note that your marriage partner may as well be taken away from you by death and that is likely to devastate your life if you had not planned around such eventuality. You would need to think through how to contend with the likely emptiness created. Prepare yourself to cope with and enjoy the solitude that follows.

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

- Find out the possibility of living in estates with housing units developed to suit the needs of the elderly within a gated community created for them. For instance, Green Park Estate of Superior Homes on Mombasa Road, a Nairobi Metropolitan area, has such units specifically developed for the comfort of the elderly. They have cafeteria as well as medical and recreation facilities which are inbuilt.
- As far as possible, avoid being a burden to your kids. Try as much as possible to live an independent life. If possible, build or buy a retirement home before you retire from active life. Invest in what will feed you in old age. My careful assessment seems to point at rental houses as easier to manage as long as you make firm arrangements with rent collection agent(s).

### **The hard reality of empty-nest**

Empty nest has the connotation of old age when all your kids will have left home (the 'nest') and there you remain only two of you as a couple the way you started. This section is about what happens in managing the sun-set years as senior citizens. This is a challenging season especially for men for reasons discussed below.

Let us open with a rather perturbing observation shared by a friend on a growing phenomenon. There is this worrying phenomena affecting elderly men in Kenya today. I got this wake-up call from a friend in Catholic Men's Association (CMA). He observes that there is a phenomenon taking shape against aging parents, and especially men, which cannot be ignored. There are many elderly dads living in palatial homes especially in the countryside but also the Kenyan cities who happen to live alone. They experience painful ending of their otherwise flamboyant lifestyle in the cities during their younger years. They die in abject misery, not because they did anything wrong, not even because they never planned their lives well, but simply because they were never blessed with children, or because their children chose to be oblivious to their fate. This is made worse when their wives abandon them as they have often done.

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

It is sad that a man struggles over his years to cater for his young family in feeding them, catering for their education, both for kids and their mother, then finally building the family castle in the countryside where he hopes to retire to with his dear spouse. However, in some cases, his wife refuses to join him to retire in the village or wherever he would have prepared his retirement home.

His wife opts to remain in the city with her now grown up and working children or go abroad to stay with them. In actual fact, the wife chooses to become a burden to their grown up independent children, sometimes never to come back to Africa. The husband is among the men who planned for their retirement extremely well but got abandoned by their wives when they needed them most. The empty castles become lodging for bats as the man closes some wings of the mansion only to stay in one of the bedrooms all alone.

His best company becomes a houseboy on a secret payroll hired by the elderly man's wife to visit the man once a week for his laundry and to prepare his weekly food preserved in the fridge for him to warm when hungry. According to the story teller, the main purpose for this houseboy on secret payroll is not really to serve the aging man but to spy on him and keep close surveillance to ensure he truly lives alone.

Hardly anyone visits the old man. His kids only come around once in a while when there are funerals of close relatives. They don't even care much about those funerals. Only once in a while. Nowadays, many don't even come for Christmas holidays as that is when they go visiting beaches instead. Some children don't care for their fathers at all. They and their mother are only waiting for the man to die.

After burying him, they sell all his assets and live in the city or abroad for the rest of their lives. It is that sad. It is like you never gave birth. Or should we actually accept the reality of the new culture of the new generation that never spent time in the countryside and therefore attach no value to the assets there? That's why they can afford to sell the mansion at throw away price in a hurry to go back to the city or abroad.

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

We can't really entirely blame their mothers either on this turn of events. There could only be some rare cases where mothers have created an impression in the kids that they suffered in the hands of those aging dads and that the mothers educated the kids as their fathers ignored them. That's how parents sometimes play-off children against each other in power battles for influence and upper hand.

Over the years, the parents might have emotionally separated though they are still physically together. Woe unto our women who may have lied to our children in the same manner to sow seeds of discord and disaffection towards their dads. It is said to be really difficult to win being a dad as most children, and especially sons, gravitate towards their mums. The sons are said to play much of their later years ignoring dads. We need to let our kids know that what goes around usually comes around and therefore one day they will be treated by their own kids the same way they have treated their parents, especially their dads.

Now we know what could be going wrong in our lives vis-à-vis our preparation for a more honourable retirement. So, the ball is in our courts to either make the necessary amendments in our lifestyle before the tragedy strikes, or simply to wait for it as we pray for our fate. The more proactive we become in response to this scenario, the quicker we will lay down plan for better days ahead.

Let's try to be closer as well to our children and let them realise our efforts to remain close to them. For instance, even though we give money for school fees, it is the mothers who take them to school and the kids see the mother literally paying the school fees. We need to insist on giving the fees cash to the mother in the presence of the kids. That way, the ultimate source of the fees is meant known to the kids. Similarly, fathers should make an effort to visit their children in school otherwise they will grow under the impression that fathers don't really care about them and that's why only mothers and siblings visit them.

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

Men tend to be distanced from their children, both emotionally and physically. This is not a healthy state of affairs. Sometimes this happens as a cultural tradition since we were not that close to our own fathers either. We often communicated to our fathers through our mothers. But times have changed. We need to adjust as we work against the wrong assumptions. We need to change the mentality and attitude that as long as we can provide materially, the children's emotional needs can be adequately taken care of by their mothers. The consequences of such will be revealed negatively at our old age.

Let us also be careful how we interact as couples at home and especially in the presence of our children. Where conflicts flare-up, children and especially boys, will almost always sympathise and side with their mothers. There is that emotional attachment of children to their mother right from the gestation period in their mother's womb. Fathers must therefore make extra effort to be close and to be seen to be close enough to their children.

Where dad's nature of work demands him to be away from home for long hours both day and night, he should make appropriate arrangements to take leave and offs to enable him be with his family especially when children are at home during school holidays. Attend Sunday Church services together as often as possible. Take them out on trips and picnics, visit game parks and animal orphanages and other such like sites of interest where you can enjoy memorable moments together. You will be shocked so many years later in their adult life to hear them unwind and narrate the nice time they spent with you when they were children or teenagers. That will precisely bond you with your children, hopefully for life.

### **Death is still a taboo to talk about, yet a reality**

Our days are numbered: 25,550 days (70 years), with a possible additional bonus of 10 years (3,650) days! In other words, according to Psalms 90:10, lifespan of human beings

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

is 70 to 80 years. Then suddenly our time is up. We transition to our mansions prepared for us in heaven as promised by none other than Jesus Himself. For us as Christians, the earth is only but a transitory territory to our ultimate destination which is our eternity. By counting our days here on earth, we are reminded to live wisely. The problem is that there are some people who don't believe they will ever die. When they hear about the death of another person whether neighbor or a friend, they have that subconscious belief that death is not for them but for those who die. That's self-deception and living in denial. Once day it would be too late to prepare for your departure to the next life.

The only difference between those who went ahead of us and ourselves is a matter of time and then we follow them. It is therefore sheer foolishness to brag with wealth and affluence of this world. The truth is that after our time is up, we are sure to appear at the throne of judgment seat to account for what we did with our talents that were bestowed upon us to serve humanity. The Bible says God is pleased with the death of the righteous: "Devout men are taken away, and no one understands that the righteous are taken away to be spared from evil. Those who walk uprightly enter into peace; they find rest as they lie in death" (Isaiah 57:1).

Let's make the best out of the short time we are on this side of the universe. Remember, we don't die just because of old age, or because we are very ill. We die when our 'end times' come, whether young or old, sick or healthy, rich or poor, mighty or a weakling. Death is our levelling ground which no amount of fame or wealth or reputation or wisdom can forestall. That's where the supreme wisdom of God lies. That's when we are once again 'rudely' reminded that we don't live unto ourselves.

### **Major cause of memory lapses after sixty**

A story is told of an elderly lady who lived alone at her 60's. One day she woke up to her great shock when she went to her car in the garage only to find many of its essential parts missing. She could not see its steering wheel, accelerator pedal, clutch pedal and breaking pedal. She concluded that

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

it had been invaded and broken into by thieves the previous night. She called police immediately and gave directions to her location and house.

The police assured her they were on their way right away and therefore should remain where she was until they arrive. When the police arrived few minutes later, they found her seated at the back seat of the car instead of sitting in the driver's seat. Politely, they told her she was in the wrong chair and that's why all those items were missing. They realised it was her memory relapse that was setting in. They forbid her from ever driving herself again and consequently withdrew her driving license until her doctor certifies her to be fit to drive.

According to Emily Koech, an 89 years old prominent cardiologist in Kenya, a human being can live up to 120 years and even more by keeping one's blood vessels clean. Blood vessels are responsible for supplying blood to all parts of the body to give life in oxygen and nutrients. Blood circulation is also responsible for expulsion of carbon dioxide and waste products got from metabolism in the internal organs.

The function of all internal organs and systems is dependent on the quality of blood circulation. Just like old metallic water pipes get blocked with age because of rusting and deposition of dirt and waste substances such as lipid (fat, cholesterol) deposition, blood vessels also get clogged the same way. This is exacerbated by bad habits such as smoking, over drinking of alcohol, poor nutrition and living in polluted and unhealthy environments.

Where blood stream is kept clean, blood supply to all organs of the body remains optimal which leads to good health and longevity of life span. Symptoms of poor blood circulation include migraine, chronic fatigue, insomnia, poor memory, high blood pressure, dyspnea (palpitation) and angina (type of chest pain caused by reduced blood flow to the heart), and failing eye sight and hearing ability.

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

Dr. Arnaldo Liechtenstein, Physician (Source: Social Media, September, 2020), says that whenever he teaches clinical medicine to students in the fourth year of medicine, he asks the following question to his students: What are the causes of mental confusion in the elderly? Some offer: “Tumours in the head”. No! “Early symptoms of Alzheimer’s”. No!

With each rejection of their answers, their responses dry up. And they are even more open-mouthed when he lists the three most common causes:

- uncontrolled diabetes;
- urinary infection;
- dehydration

It may sound like a joke, but it isn't. People over 60 constantly stop feeling thirsty and consequently stop drinking fluids. When no one is around to remind them to drink fluids, they quickly dehydrate. Dehydration is severe and affects the entire body. It may cause abrupt mental confusion, a drop in blood pressure, increased heart palpitations, angina (chest pain), coma and even death.

This habit of forgetting to drink fluids begins at age 60, when we have just over 50% of the water we should have in our bodies. People over 60 have a lower water reserve. This is part of the natural aging process. But there are more complications. Although they are dehydrated, they don't feel like drinking water, because their internal balance mechanisms don't work very well.

People over 60 years old dehydrate easily, not only because they have a smaller water supply, but also because they do not feel the lack of water in the body. Although people over 60 may look healthy, the performance of reactions and chemical functions can damage their entire body.

### **Approach your eternity with no regrets**

This is exactly what I used to admonish my students both in the universities I lectured as well as in our family owned

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

educational institutions. I was convinced as much as I am convinced today that many young people tend to waste their time in many ways with the belief that they have plenty of time to catch up with any lost time. Feeling young and energetic can be deceiving with imaginations that a windfall of sorts will blow their way and suddenly find themselves flying high like an eagle.

Perhaps this will happen through their prosperous parents, through their political connections, through favours from their well to do relatives, or even through divine miracles. It is with such illusionary imaginations that some young people evade whatever they consider to be hard work and instead wait for their good luck. Actually, they forget that the true meaning of good luck is hard work.

What we are trying to emphasise here is to resolve to live in such a manner that you will look forward to your departure at your old age without fear. I believe Martin Luther King Jnr. had similar mind-set when he admonished that: *'Whatever your life's work is, do it well. A man should do his job so well that the living, the dead and the unborn could do it no better.'* If you will have accomplished your purpose here on earth to your contentment, then you will be ready to sleep in your eternity. That is, you will have no regrets about unaccomplished dreams that were within your reach, nor would you care about unforgiving humanity that you had hard time with. Consider your purpose here on earth as twofold: Rendering a sterling service to humanity and loving your family.

Whenever I read the above declarations, I think of people like, among others, Evangelist Billy Graham, Reinhard Bonnke, Preachers such as T.D. Jakes, gospel singers such as Rose Muhando and Mercy Masika, Motivational speakers such as Patrice L.O. Lumumba, Steve Harvey, Myles Monroe, Comedians such as Bill Cosby, Daniel Churchill Ndambuki and Eric Omondi among others. These are some of the individuals that I know who have given it all to the society in such a manner that it would be difficult if not impossible to match their standards of delivery.

## Conclusion

This book had intended to lay bare the fundamentals of steadfast leadership that is beyond rhetoric or reproach. We have belaboured to drive home the fact that authentic leadership of people will seek to empower them and enable them assume responsibility as the architects of their own lives. All what leaders should endeavour to do is to inspire into people confidence in themselves and the desire to jump on to the driving seat of their lives. That's how they will take control of their own future with determination as they become masters of their own destiny.

Researchers have come to the conclusion that communities and organisational staff alike are used to being led and being told what to do. Ordinary members of communities as well as organisational staff are more comfortable in doing what they know best: 'obeying directives from above'. They are more used to being led than taking initiatives. Accepting to be led is 'safer' or certainly 'less risky'. Somebody else takes the responsibility in case of failure, in case of an innovation that backfires. That's precisely the simple reason why people would be hesitant or reluctant when called upon to assume responsibility and make decisions.

Many people have the nasty experience of being unappreciated, and at worst, scolded whenever they took responsibility and performed exceedingly well but without attributing the success to the guidance and advice from their 'wise' leaders. This has also been the case historically whenever ordinary communities came under the autocratic rule of repressive political regime. In such cases, people have had to wait for instructions and direction from above.

Historically, the virtues of democratic decision making and shared leadership has been a pipedream. This has been the experience of many communities in Africa before, during and after colonial era. It was not until 1970's that political platforms began to be open to allow the participation of the ordinary people. This came with the advent of the wave of national independence from colonial rule and subsequent

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

on-set of participatory development practices in developing societies. Before then, public leadership was believed to be a preserve of a few demagogues who formed the leadership of dynasties. Impunity was widespread as political power and their power brokers on the ground were unassailable. They were only accountable to themselves as their power was derived from the 'Great Man Theory' discussed in this book.

This book recognises the fact that before we can transform the society as leaders, we must seek to transform ourselves first and particularly our attitudes. As mentioned earlier, we don't see ourselves just as catalysts of social change which increases the rate of 'chemical' reaction without itself being affected by the change. No. We must get changed ourselves by the process of transforming the society as leaders. We will no longer be able to hate others but to love them unconditionally, we will not be able to segregate and isolate others but to embrace all instead, we will no longer be able to discriminate anybody but will accept and accommodate all instead, we will no longer find pleasure in arrogance, but will love peace instead and we will not be able to tolerate injustice but promote equity and justice instead. Only then shall we be able to do, with a touch of perfection, what we are born to do and meant to attain with our life on earth.

We must get transformed first and get equipped with the right qualities and virtues before we can effectively claim to transform the world. That is what this book aims to achieve. In other words, we are called upon as front-line leaders to transform our own ways of thinking, our attitudes and our values in order to impact the same on others.

This book has sought to powerfully challenge the traditional leadership practices that, over the history, have seen concentration of power in few hands. The book seeks to appeal passionately to the hierarchies of power to pave way for the devolution of leadership and delegation of roles and responsibilities to newly emerging generations. Borrowing heavily from the Jethro's theory of delegation in the Bible, we have sought to conceptualise team-leadership as an effort to devolve power to team leaders on the ground.

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

This doesn't suggest we ignore the crucial part played by the vertical hierarchy as watchdogs guarding against violation of societal norms. Institutional hierarchy serves to maintain professional discipline amongst leaders at different levels. Team leaders are expected to respect and uphold constant consultations with the top management authorities as they continuously explore issues and make day to day operational decisions based on well researched institutional policies. In other words, team leaders at all levels are empowered to run the show but remain accountable to the hierarchy which is usually made up of the vision bearers.

This book is intended to benefit leaders at their various levels of operation in the society, and more so at the community and supra-regional leadership levels. The unlocking key to impactful leadership worthy of praise and emulation is the virtue of integrity. Leaders of integrity will not lie to their followers, they cannot be corrupted with money, neither can they tolerate self-imposed lethargy, but will do whatever it takes to pursue and attain laid down institutional and team goals. Such are the icons of leadership of transparency and accountability at all times. Credible leadership is consultative in nature and therefore seeks opinions from the diversity of its stakeholders. They are committed to enabling and enhancing capacities of their followers in order to enable them shape the future of the present generations and posterity.

Credible leaders of integrity will seek to uplift the sense of self-worth among their followers. Their mission is to collaborate and partner with other like-minded individuals and institutions within the society with view to transforming the society and the lives of its citizenry. In this process, they don't act in isolation but in solidarity.

Such leadership will be enabled through provision of holistic, competency-based training to nurture talents towards attaining people's full potential in ability to create wealth, alleviate poverty and promote social justice. Vision bearers seek to churn out responsible and astute leaders into the society. Their choices and actions are guided by specific values including the desire to attain rights for all,

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

indiscriminate service to all those who stand in need, promoting unity in diversity, respect for autonomy and co-existence with interdependence. We seek to promote gender equity, teamwork and sensitivity to environmental concerns.

In this book, we have explicitly advanced the idea that life is better when we prosper together. The quality of interpersonal relationship will determine how much partners, friends or members of a group will be capable to galvanise their differences as they motivate each other into action for a worthy cause. The worthy cause would either be for the good of all or for the welfare of the group members individually. Donald J. Kesler (1996), the author of Contemporary Interpersonal Theory Research, advances the theory that interpersonal relationships rest on the balance between craving for power to control others and the need to remain affiliated to them. The truth is that each member of the group will at different times try to flex their muscles for power and control within their given circles of relationships. Each of the parties is also seeking how they can affiliate and fit in the relationship well enough to attain their need for sense of belonging.

The process of cementing a relationship involves negotiations (whether overtly or covertly), on how 'friendly' or 'hostile' they will become towards each other. They may even decide to dwarf such relationship by maintaining the status quo at comfortable levels. The growth process of a relationship may take days, months or even years and may even never be complete. That is, a time may come when the relationship may stagnate, or blossom depending on how well the parties involved are capable of navigating the necessary factors that make a relationship grow.

Leaders are key in enabling the processes of solidifying relationships in groups and teams. They create conducive environment where members can freely express themselves with the ability to agree or disagree with members' opinions without feeling threatened by the possibility of expulsion or ostracism. Whatever we touch as leaders, we leave our imprint as a legacy. As we touch other people's lives with

### **THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

our leadership, we leave our identity mark on their hearts, usually for the rest of their lives. Don't wait to be praised or honoured. Don't expect to be liked by everybody. While many may like you and appreciate you, that should not be your agenda for doing good in every opportunity. Don't be surprised if some people turn out to be your haters for the good you do. You will always have friends and detractors in life. Strangers can never be your enemies. Only people who are familiar with you can turn out to be your friends or haters. For that matter, the more they know you, the deeper will be the friendship or enmity. Jesus was the most righteous person who ever lived in this world. Yet he had such fierce opponents that they killed him.

Nonetheless, as noted earlier in this book, life is good when you are happy because of you. Life is better when others are happy because of your service as a just, inspiring and role modelling leader. Be faithful in touching other people's lives. Nothing is more honourable, more fulfilling and worth celebrating than being a channel of God's blessings to his people. That's what King Solomon of the Bible chose to request from God. Of all things he could have asked God for, he chose to ask for wisdom to lead his people.

The most exciting part of Solomon's story, atleast in my view, is that he was not only given wisdom, but all others things he never asked for though God knew he needed them. They were added to him as part of the package of reward, including wealth and honour, true to God's promise thus: "Delight yourself in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart" (Psalm 37:4) and that: "The reward for humility and fear of the Lord is riches and honour and life" (Proverbs 22:4). Emphasising on the need to love people through service, Pope Francis has repeatedly said in his homilies, nothing in nature lives unto itself. Rivers do not drink their own water, sun does not shine unto itself and flowers do not spread their fragrance for themselves. Jesus did not shed his blood as a sacrifice for himself but for humanity. Living for others is a rule of nature. We were all born for each other. No matter how difficult the situation you may find yourself in, still do good to others.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

**Amazon** - <http://amzn.to/2s9cjOf>

**Amit, Eric** – Coady International Institute Diploma Class, 1980. St. Francis Xavier University, Nova Scotia, Canada.

**Bass, B.M. & Riggio, R.E (2006).** *Transformational leadership*. Mahwah, New Jersey 07430: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

**Brian, A. et.al.** A Manual for Group Facilitators Centre for Conflict Resolution. C.C.R. Madison, U.S.A. 1978.

**Bergdell, T.D.** Facilitators Handbook for Promoting Rural Participation. MAP Consultants LTD.1994

**BBC:** News, 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2017.

**BBC:** [News@BBC.com](mailto:News@BBC.com), 2020.

**Bible:** 1 Timothy 6:6-10; RSV (Paraphrased).

**Bible:** Joshua 24:15

**Bolden, R.,** Gosling J., Marturano, A., and Dennison, P.- 2003: A Review of Leadership Theory and Competency Frameworks. Centre for Leadership Studies, University of Exeter, UK.

**Carlyle, Thomas** – 1841: On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the Heroic in History. James Fraser Publishers, UK.

**Centre for International Climate Research** – 2020, Oslo.

**CITIZEN Prime News;** CITIZEN TV - Kenya, 21<sup>st</sup> June 2020.

**Citizen Digital Report:** Nairobiwire.com

**Daily Nation Newspaper** of April 25, 2020. Nairobi, Kenya. 'Fighting the Shadow Pandemic of Violence Against Women and Children during COVID-19'.

**Daily Nation Newspaper** of Saturday June 25<sup>th</sup> 2019, Nairobi

**Daily Nation Newspaper** of November 28 2019 page 8. Nairobi.

**Darkness to Light (2019):**

**Desjardins, J. 2020** – Mapped: Visualizing the True Size of Africa.

**D’Souza, A.** Leadership: A Trilogy on Leadership and Effective Management. Paulines Publications Africa. 1997

**Donald J. Kesler** - Contemporary Interpersonal Theory – Personality, Psychopathology, and Psychotherapy -1996.

**D’Souza A.,** Leadership: A Trilogy on Leadership and Effective Management, Pauline Publications Africa – 1994.

**Dunnigan Jack,** 2015 - <https://thepracticalleader.com>; <https://www.chieflearningofficer.com>).

**Eistein Albert** - German Physicist,1879-1955. One of The Greatest Physicist of All Time.

**Enfield S.** World University Service Directory of Training. WUS U.K. Oxfam Printing Service. 1994.

**F.A.O** - The Group Promoters Resource Book: A practical Guide to Building Rural Self-Help Groups.1994.

**Finley, S. (2012).** Servant Leadership: A Literature Review. *Review of Management Innovation and Creativity* , 14 (5), 135-144.

**Gandhi Mahatma** - In Good Reads – [www.goodreads.com](http://www.goodreads.com) - ‘There goes my people. I must follow them, for I am their leader’. 2020.

**Gilson, R.J. and Milhaupt, C.J. (2011):** Economically Benevolent Dictators: Lessons for Developing Democracies. The American Journal of Comparative Law. Vol. 59, No.1. Oxford University Press.

**Gray, John (2014):** The Silence of Animals. Farrar, Straus and Giroux Publishers.

**THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

**Greenleaf, R. K. (1977).** *Servant Leadership: A journey into the nature of legitimate power and greatness.* Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press.

**Greenleaf, R. K. (2002).** Essentials of servant-leadership in L. C. Spears &

M. Lawrence (Eds.), *Focus of leadership: Servant leadership for the 21<sup>st</sup>*

*century* (pp. 19–25). New York, NY: Wiley.

**Haggai, J. Edmund (2013):** 13 Profound Principles That Will Change Your Life. Harvest House Publishers, USA.

**Haggai, J.E (1986).** See this image Lead on: Leadership That Endures in a Changing World. Word books, N/A

**Herman (Br.) E.Z.** Training Managers to Train. A Practical Guide to Improving Employee Performance. Crisp Publications, Inc. Los Altos, California.

**Hope, A. and Timmel, S.** Training for Transformation: A Handbook for Community Development Workers Bks. 1-3 Gweru Press, 1996.

**Hope, A. and Timmel, S. 1995** -Training for Transformation (Books 1 to 3). A Handbook for Community Workers. Mambo Press. Gweru.

**Hope Anne, and Timmel Sally** - Training for Transformation, A Handbook for Community Workers; 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition – Practical Action Publishers, 1996.

**Holiday, Ryan** - Ego is the Enemy: The Fight to Master Our Greatest Opponent. Profile Books Ltd. London, 2017.

**Holy Bible** - Exodus 18:13-27 **ILO (1986)** - Effective Vocational Training Design. Lockwood International Labour Office (ILO). Geneva, Switzerland 1986.

**IPIS - Clusters R, & Matthysen (2009)** – Africa’s Natural Resources In a Global Context.

**THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

**Khuloud Al Omian** – (Ed). Middle East Forbes Social Media, Arab Publisher House. <https://www.forbesmiddleeast.com> – 2020.

**Kim Chan W. and Mauborgne Reene A. (1992)** - Parables of Leadership. Harvard Business Review, Harvard Business School, Harvard Business Publishing.

**Kotter, John P.** – Four Ways to Increase the Urgency Needed for Change. Harvard Business Press, 2009.

**Kotter, John P.** (2009). Leading Change: Why Transformation Efforts Fail. *The Principles and Practice of Change*, 113-123. doi: 10.1007/978-1-137-16511-4-7

**Kumekucha Amua Newsletter:** November/December, 2001, p. 12 – Catholic Justice and Peace Commission/NCCCK, Nairobi.

**Lahaye, T.** - ‘Why You Act The Way You Do’ – Living Books; Tyndale House Publishers, Inc. Wheaton, Illinois, 1984.

**Lewa, P.M. (2018)** - Student Notes, MBA 2018, USIU-Africa.

**Lewa, P.M & Lewa, S.K (2018).** Leading from the heart: Lessons from Christian Leadership in Marques J. and Dhiman S. (2018, Eds.). *Engaged Leadership: Transforming Through Future-Oriented Design Thinking*. Springer Publications, Gewerbestrasse 11, 6330, Cham, Switzerland.

**Lewa, S. K (2010).** Talent Management and Forecasting in Kenya’s Higher Education Sector: The case of public universities. *Journal of the KIM School of Management*, II, 150-155.

**Linda A. Hill,** *Leading from Behind* – Harvard Business Review. Ed. 2010.

**Littauer, F.** - *Personality Plus: How to Understand Others by Understanding Yourself*, Living Books; Tyndale House Publishers, Inc. Wheaton, Illinois. 2004.

**THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

**Lumumba P.L.O** – Sermon of 30<sup>th</sup> July 2017 at All Saints Cathedral, Nairobi.

**Lumumba P.L.O -2017** - 'African Renaissance: Leaders and Mis-leaders'. A speech delivered in a conference organised by the Association of Africa Universities (AAU) in December 2019, at the University of Cape Coast (UCC).

**Luther, Martin (1527)** – Pastoral Letter on Pandemic

**Maxwell J.C (2007)**. The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership: Follow Them and People Will Follow You. Amazon Books

**Maxwell J.C** – The 21 Indispensable Qualities of a Leader: Becoming the Person Others Will Want to Follow, Thomas Nelson Inc. 2007. Amazon Books.

Mills, H.R. - Teaching and Training. A handbook for Instructors John Willey & Sons, York, 1977

**Mulwa, F.W (2018)**. Dare Chase That Dream - If You Can Dream It, You Can Make It. Paulines Publications, Nairobi, 2015.

**Mulwa, F. W. (2010)** - Demystifying Participatory Community Development: Beginning from the People, Ending at the People. Paulines Publications Africa. Daughters of St. Paul. Nairobi.

**Mulwa, F. W. (2009)** - Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation of Community Projects: Community Based Project Monitoring; Qualitative Impact Assessment; and People Friendly Evaluation Methods. Paulines Publications Africa. Daughters of St. Paul. Nairobi.

**Mulwa F. W. (2012)**. The Practice of Community Development in Kenya: *A Contribution to a Debate on the Challenges and Issues for Professionalization of Community Development in South Africa*. Africanus Journal of Development Studies; University of South Africa (UNISA). Vol. 42/2. 2012

**Mutuku Sarah (2003)**. Fall Term Paper on 'Change Management (BUS 6900), Alliant International University. Best Term

**THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

Project paper supervised by Professor Louis Kelly. Quoted severally by authors in Springer Publishers educational Book Series (USA), and Routledge Publishers (USA).

**Nader, R. 2017:** <https://themindsetjourney.com>.

**Nader, R. (2017):** - [envision.engage.enliven. \(exced.sph.harvard.edu/nader.org/](https://envision.engage.enliven.exced.sph.harvard.edu/nader.org/) <https://thmindsetjourney.com>. 2017.

**National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System** Report, 2020 (<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/research-data-technology/statistics-research>)

**Nebraska Extension in Lancaster County.** Nebraska Extension NuFacts. 'Being a Role Model for Your Child'. @UNL\_LancasterCo. Nebraska Extension in Lancaster County. 22<sup>nd</sup> July, 2020.

**New England Journal of Medicine,** 70389, 2018.

**Oxford English Dictionary.** <https://www.oed.com>.

**Pope Francis** - Mary Mount Chaplaincy, Machakos Diocese 2020.

**Pragyan Deb.,** Davide Furceri, Jonathan D. Ostry and Nour Tawk. 2020.

**Premese Module (2014)** - Premese Africa Development Institute – Community Development Diploma Module

**Quinn, R.J** – Key Note Speaker, Dublin Development Conference, 1999.

**Stanko John W. (2012).** So Many Leaders, So Little Leadership: Beyond the Power of Position Lies the Price of Leadership. World Alive Publishers, Nairobi, Kenya.

**Samfrits Le Poole** - Never Take No for An Answer: A guide to successful negotiation, 1993. Universal Book Stall, New Delhi.

**THE AUDACITY IN GROWING CONSCIENTIOUS LEADERS**

**Smith M.M (2017)** – 7 Secrets of the Powerful & Influential.

**Socrates: 470 BC:** (2019) [www.granthamjournal.co.uk](http://www.granthamjournal.co.uk);  
[www.goodreads.com](http://www.goodreads.com)

**Standard Media News Paper**, Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> November, 2018.  
Nairobi

**Star News Paper** of Wednesday April 29<sup>th</sup> 2020 page 10.

**St. F. X. University.** Training for The Trainer. Diploma in Adult Education. St. Francis Xavier University. Antigonish, N.S. 1990.

**Time Magazine (Ed.Felsenthal, 2021)** - Bimonthly Magazine, USA.

**Tuckman Bruce (1965; Revised Edition 1970):** Tuckman's Model of Group Development-[www.mindtools.com](http://www.mindtools.com)

**United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)** – In Standard Media News Paper, Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> November, 2018. Nairobi, Kenya.

**Weiwei, Z. (2021):** The Economist Newspaper Ltd.

**World Health Organisation (WHO) Report** - From Consultation on Child Abuse Prevention - 1999

**World Health Organisation** - WHO – 2020.

**World Vision International** - COVID-19 After-Shocks: A Perfect Storm - 2020.

## **ABOUT THIS BOOK**

We all have the potential to rise above our circumstances and attain great achievements. But that is only possible with those who are dedicated to and passionate about the work they do. It is Vision Bearers who aspire to attain ripple effect with their talents who will leave a legacy of significant impact. To this end, Vision Bearers will have the impetus and motivation to create more leaders, with less emphasis on more followers. They will seek to identify emerging, conscientious frontline teams who will have positive attitude and deep desire to serve and positively transform lives of communities. That's also how they will attain exponential growth in the institutions they serve. It is such gallant frontline leaders with altruistic goodwill and appropriate values who will be given opportunities to enlarge their competencies through relevant training for capacity building. These are frontline teams with deep desire for a great, just and noble society, who will be expected to become the architects for a corruption-free society.

The role of Vision Bearers will likewise change from routine day-to-day management functions to that of consultants, coaches, counsellors, advisors and mentors as they share their invaluable experiences and wisdom. That's how they begin to lead from the back. With new scope of knowledge and skills emerging every other day, it's only wise and advisable to continuously create opportunities for up-coming leaders to take the center stage. These should only be those who pass the hard test of trustworthiness. They should have passion for learning and adopting newly emerging technologies too. Soon, when the job is done, everybody will come to realise they were all along being led from the back by the 'shepherd'. It doesn't matter in the long run who gets the credit, as long as institutional vision and team goals are attained.

## **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Prof. Francis Wambua Mulwa (PhD), was born in 1953. Despite learning in the then little-known village schools, he managed to attain Division One (Grade A-) in his EACE (KCSE) in 1972, at Mumbuni High School in Machakos County. He initially trained as a teacher, before proceeding to the University of Nairobi; St. Francis Xavier University in Canada; Institute of Social Studies at The Hague, Netherlands, and the the University of Reading in UK. He acquired his PhD in Development Studies from the University of South Africa (UNISA) in 2004. He also holds a Teacher's Certificate, Two University Diplomas and Two Masters Degrees in Development Studies.



Prof. Mulwa served in 15 African countries as a Social Development Consultant and Trainer. Initially he served in the Ministry of Education in Kenya as a TSC teacher for two years, then in Caritas Development Services in Machakos for fifteen years, before he was hired as the CEO of Africa Development Education Network (ADEN), based in Harare, Zimbabwe where he served for three years. In 1992, Prof. Mulwa founded Prime Education & Mentorship Service (PREMSE) Schools and Colleges. He later lectured for a total period of ten years in Tangaza College of Catholic University of Eastern Africa; St. Paul's University and Africa International University. He authored numerous motivational and academic books and journals. In 2012, he was awarded a meritorious Professorial accolade by a University in Spain, conferred at Kigali in Rwanda. This was in recognition of his academic and professional contribution in Africa. In numerous occasions he was awarded accolades by the Ministry of Education among the best School Managers in Eastern Province of Kenya as well as in Makueni County.