



Career Development for the Total Woman

by Ibukun Adebayo

As a woman, despite the God-given ability to multi-skill, and juggle with equally conflicting priorities, the most important career goal we should aim to achieve is to be a 'homemaker' or 'homebuilder' Proverbs 14.1. However the reality of today, means many women now choose to endeavour to build a career outside of the home, combined with being a 'homebuilder'?

Once the choice has been made, we are equipped by God, to excel in both roles. This article, however, focuses on career-development outside the home.

Jeremiah 1:5 indicates quite clearly that each of us were in God's heartbeat before he'd even spent time crafting, moulding, and polishing us; whilst Deut 8:18 assures us that, during the time He was crafting us, he also invested in us the power i.e. vision, abilities, talents, strength, and wisdom to make wealth and build a successful career in the process.

As Total Women, the ability to juggle multiple tasks simultaneously, combined with the investment God made in us before placing us in our mother's womb, makes us prime candidates to succeed in our careers at home and in the marketplace once we choose to venture out there.

I often hear the question, how do I choose a career? I often reply, what peculiar talents and skills did God invest in you when He was preparing you for your mother's womb? Are you great at maths, yet not so skilled in art; are you a fluent orator or even a great cook? All these skills have been invested in you to give you the opportunity to excel in the marketplace.

Once you've identified your strengths and weaknesses, and identified a suitable career around these; the next step is to get a pen and paper and write a plan on how you're going to get there, Hab. 2:2, i.e. a plan on who you need, what you need, the places you're going to need to go to, and how you're going to get there e.g. tutors, a mentor, money, books, college, university, targets and milestones – an endless list with a clear finishing post, i.e. your career goal. There's nothing as self-motivating as writing a plan, and ticking off each target as you achieve this.

Okay, the plan is clear on a piece of paper, stuck on visible places around the house to remind you of your career goals, now who is your mentor? Achievers never fail to seek counsel – James 1:5 clearly states what we should do if we need counsel in an area, i.e. ask God, ask that God-given mentor for advice, help, mentorship, i.e. don't be mute on your vision.

Now the hard work begins, it's time to go out there and deliver the plan, i.e. acquire the necessary skills and qualifications to get you to fulfil your goals. Over to you now for the hard work!

Once done, you're nearly there, but what story does your CV tell about you. Alas, recruiters short-listing for a Project manager vacancy aren't interested in the fact you've done copious amounts of filing in your previous roles, they're looking for evidence you will be able to carry out a Project Manager's role if they were to appoint you; so your CV should only contain bullet points of experience relevant to the role you are applying for. Returning to the UK in 1985, after 10 years out of the country, my first role was both an early morning, and full-time cleaner, trust me – this was never on my CV!

Once your CV has been reviewed by your mentor or friends in the industry you'd like to work in, 'practice interviews' is next. If you can't attend an Interview Skills workshop, sit in front of your mirror and practice posture, diction, and looking yourself in the eye when talking – a pet hate of interviewers is having a candidate looking down at their shoes for the duration of an interview!

Final tip. If you're not getting interviews, your CV is an issue; if you're getting interviews but no job offers, you need help with your interview techniques. However, if you're in the industry, and being headhunted frequently, thank God, you're there and it's time to be a Mentor to others !

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