



Which 'CAR...' for christmas and the new year?

by Ibukun Adebayo

Having been on the receiving end of presents which were too small, too short, too big, or just 'not my style', I've realised the best person to get you a Christmas present is YOU! You know your shoe size can't be found in London – or even America as I recently found out; you know your shirt size, favourite perfume or aftershave and, more importantly, you know your specific 'NEEDS' and desires better than anyone else.

With the ongoing credit crunch, a question on my mind recently has been what's the best Christmas gift for a season like this i.e. a 'CAR', 'CAReer coaching' or even 'CARpentry lessons'?

The majority of people I know would choose a car. My car has groaned up quite a few hills, and cost me a few anxious moments when changing gears, yet a car would be my last choice as a gift as it's a gift with no long-term benefits. The minute the car leaves the garage, depreciation kicks in and the value heads in one direction only, i.e. downwards.

So, let's take the gift of a 'career'. If asked to personally invest in the gift of a session with a career counsellor, how many of us would consider this to be a gift rather than a waste of an hour or two spent talking to a counsellor that could have been better spent earning a meagre hourly wage in a job with no long-term prospects?

On the other hand one could argue that having a career counselling session for an hour or two might enable you to determine what career choices you need to make for the New Year and the medium-term but, in this new era where there's no 'job for life' anymore, the benefits might not last a lifetime.

Growing up, the resounding words of my parents were 'you shall be a doctor!' – despite me hating and failing every single science subject; just thank God I'm not a doctor or should I say 'YOUR' doctor today!

The four chapters of my career so far have read – 'what my parents wanted me to be', 'what I wanted to be', 'what I was forced to study for as



I didn't get the right grades for what I wanted to be', 'and what I eventually ended up being' i.e. four totally different careers! There's another chapter on the way though, i.e. 'what I will do with my hands to make wealth during this credit crunch?'

So, having weighed up the arguments provided and considered the question above, instead of a car or career counselling, might carpentry lessons [or re-skilling] be just the gift we all need this Christmas?

Yep, I can almost feel the sense of outrage as you ponder 'who's she calling a carpenter?' Here's a sweetener – 'there was once a famous carpenter, born on Christmas day...'

The fact remains that people with 'skills of the hand' earn a decent income e.g. good plumbers, carpenters, electricians and mechanics are never out of business. Those with the God-given 'gift' to use their hands to provide critical services are the ones who never experience a downturn in times of economic drought.

As you choose your personal Christmas gift this year what's it going to be, i.e. a CAR, CAR-eer counselling, CARpentry lessons or the one option I haven't aforementioned – a business 'CAR-d' and invoice from a skilled plumber or carpenter who has charged you a hefty sum to do a job in your home you could have invested in a few lessons to learn to do yourself?