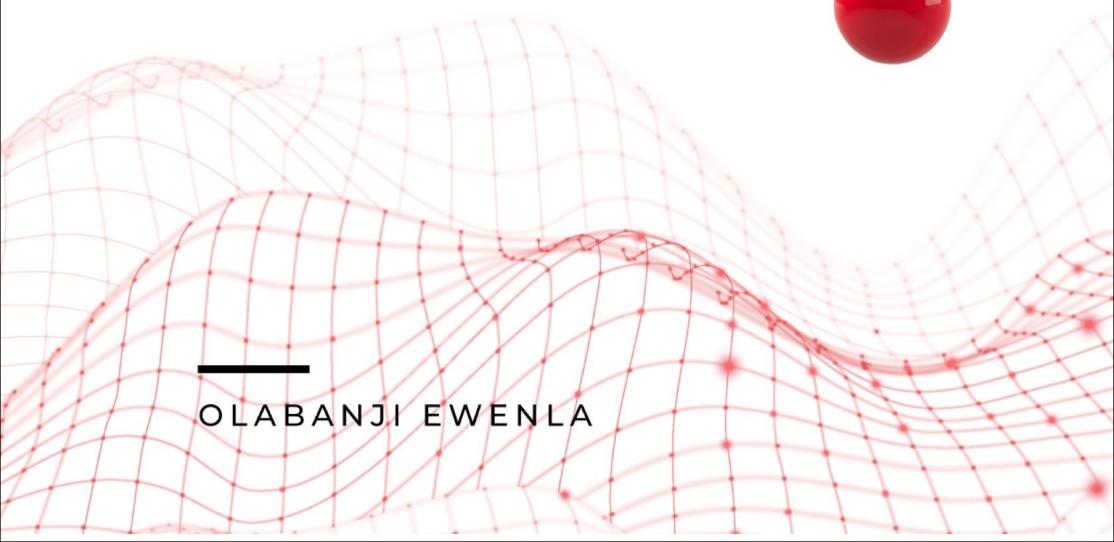


THE BLOOD MONEY IN TECH



Discover the MOST IMPORTANT insights
you need to thrive in the tech industry.

OLABANJI EWENLA



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DEDICATION

To my fiance who believed in me, challenged me, made me come out of my comfort zone, encouraged me and supported me to bring out the best in myself; thank you very much. This book would not have been possible without you.

To everyone who contributed to this book by personally sharing their knowledge, experience and story with me, which helped validate the insights in this book, thank you very much. Your contribution was vital in the creation of this work.

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TABLE OF CONTENT

- Introduction
- Where are you currently? - where do you want to be?
- The tech industry: What you need to know
- Why do you need to learn skills valuable in tech today?
- The "**Blood Money**" in Tech
- The **7 MOST IMPORTANT** insights you need to thrive in the tech industry
- Define the space you want to play in and start playing there
- Learn the required skills for the space you want to play in
- Know how to apply your skills effectively by getting your hands dirty
- Personal Branding - Let the world know you for something
- Intentionally connect and network with quality people
- Be part of a community ... or build one if there is none available
- Prepare for the common challenges you will most likely face as someone just starting out in tech
- At the end of the day, it's not about the money, it's the freedom and fulfillment that matters most
- **Bonus Chapter:** How to get foreign remote jobs anywhere in the world

INTRODUCTION

The foundation of everything you will get from this book starts from here

"The Blood Money in Tech" isn't a book for you to just read, be excited and then move on to the next thing that gets your attention - it is written to expose you to the bigger potential, incredible possibilities and vast opportunities in the tech industry.

If you act upon the knowledge in this book consistently over the next 3 - 6 months, you will become more valuable with your skills, fast track your career growth in tech, earn as much money as you want and enjoy the intense freedom and fulfillment to do more good to yourself and others. This is my deepest desire for you after reading this book.

Making money is not a result of what you do, it's a result of who you are.

Who you are attracts money to you. The more you grow as a person, the more money you will earn.

The tech industry is just a means to an end and not the end in itself. The skills you will build in the process of aligning yourself to the industry is what is most important; it is the skills that will give you the freedom and fulfillment that come with becoming a better person.

So am going to move forward with a money wisdom that dropped on my heart one fateful evening:

"To scale fast and make it big financially, you need to invest your time, energy and resources in an industry, market, field or niche where there is high demand or potential of high demand for a product/service with low competition."

INTRODUCTION

The day these words dropped on my heart was a mind shifting one; I remember writing it down as the words came into my mind. I really didn't understand it immediately. I just had a strong feeling within me that there was more to it than just the sentence - It was during subsequent meditation that the meaning became clearer.

Every word in that statement has been intentionally placed there to make the meaning easy to understand, so I am going to share it again so you can pay attention to it better.

"To scale fast and make it big financially, you need to invest your time, energy and resources in an industry, market, field or niche where there is high demand or potential of high demand for a product/service with low competition."

As you read this book further, the deeper understanding of this statement will be revealed to you. However, you must be open to understanding it for yourself.

Why is the insight in this book so important today?

About 5 - 10 years ago in Nigeria, the average working-class individual always had this strong assumption that if one gets a job in any oil company like Shell and Chevron, you have made it in life. That assumption is popular because Shell and Chevron staff used to be one of the most highly paid in Nigeria.

However, things have changed today. People who work in the tech industry or any field related to tech, with just a few years of experience and skill, earn well and work more flexibly compared to people in the oil sector.

INTRODUCTION

Product people in tech with 2 - 3 years experience earn averagely N200,000 - N400,000 monthly, that's between \$450 - \$900.

Senior product people with 5 years experience and above earn averagely N400,000 - N700,000 monthly, which is between \$900 - \$1,700.

These amounts are a conservative average. A lot of tech talents earn more doing side gigs, contract work and freelance jobs, while others who work remotely for foreign companies earn 7 figure salaries on a monthly basis.

Skilled talents in Nigeria who work remotely for foreign companies earn far more than their counterparts who work for Nigerian-based companies.

For example, the average monthly salary for a UIUX designer who works remotely from Nigeria can range between \$3000 - \$10,000 depending on the designer's skill level, experience, and the country the company is located.

(Source: <https://uxdesignersalaries.com/>)

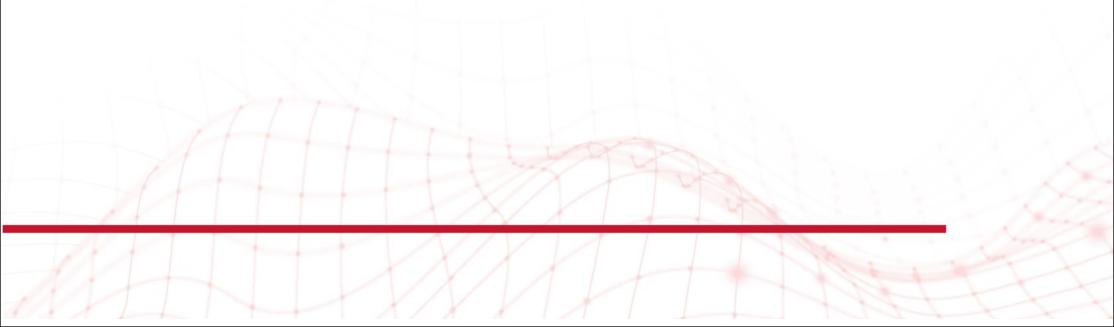
\$3000 as of writing this book is N1,500,000 and \$10,000 is N5,000,000 in naira.

What makes these figures a lot more interesting is that the average age of the people earning this money are young people between the ages of 21 - 26.

If you are a Nigerian, wouldn't you pause for a second if you heard a 21-year-old in Nigeria makes over N1,000,000 (\$2,000) a month legitimately in a country where the average 40-year-olds are earning less than N100,000 (\$200) monthly?

You will either be shocked or may not even believe this, but that is the essence of this book - to expose you to the "Blood Money" in tech and show how to position yourself to get your own share in the lot and be able to do more good for yourself and others.

CHAPTER 1



CHAPTER 1

WHERE ARE YOU RIGHT NOW? - WHERE DO YOU WANT TO BE?

Let me take you a bit into my career path before coming fully into tech.

I have been a freelance content writer who wrote articles and content for clients who needed that service. I had a good client in the US that paid me N50,000 (\$100) every other month whenever he needed to create content for his company's website. The gig was great, but it was not consistent.

I was a network marketer. I partnered with one of the top network marketing companies in the world. For four years, I was recommending nutritional supplements to help people improve their health while also trying to build the network marketing business model of recruiting other people to do the business.

Being so good at giving health recommendations, people started calling me doctor, but about 90% never bought a supplement from me. Every sale I made was practically squeezing my 6.5ft tall self through a 4.5ft door - from sharing hand flyers with my best friend to cold prospects (people who didn't know us) to invite them for business meetings; running Facebook ADs to Ghana and South Africa which actually brought me a lot of potential buyers (some are my good friends today); paying marketers to invite other marketers to help me sell my products - I practically did anything I could to scale the business but it didn't work. On an average, I earned between N15,000 - N30,000 (\$30 - \$60) commissions monthly

Was it a bad business?

No! Maybe It didn't just work for me or I didn't work it well enough, but I moved on forward.

I have been a telemarketer (a telemarketer is someone who markets or sells something via the phone) for a South African vacations company that sells holiday packages where I earned, on average, between N40,000 - N70,000 (\$90 - \$160) as commissions monthly.

I actually had a quite good time and learnt some money lessons during the months I spent here.

Finally, the one thing I have done for the longest time and I still do today is MUSIC. Myself and music are inseparable. Those who know me very well probably know me via music than even in tech. I have been doing music since childhood - I broke my mum's buckets while using it to play drums, sang with the children and teenagers choir, learnt how to play the piano keyboard and tried learning how to play the guitar. However, from a financial standpoint, the highest money I have earned as a keyboard player is N50,000 (\$100) monthly.

I would say I was earning a fair income while working through all of these jobs I shared above individually over the last 10 years, and I am very much grateful to have worked through them when I had them.

As you however already know, responsibility increases as one grows older, and the need to earn more money to meet those responsibilities becomes a necessity. However, this wasn't my major driving force to earn more money; I began to seek for more when I fell in love with the most amazing lady who is to be my wife today. She challenged me and literally made me do everything I can do to become more valuable as a person and go after my goals with everything in me.

I will share with you my love story later, but this is not the time for it.

No one can go to any place without first knowing where they currently are.

I shared with you this brief detail in my life to show you how my income has been over the years - where I am coming from financially. Before coming fully into tech, the last source of income I had was being a paid keyboard player at a church. The income was far from meeting my needs and I got to a point where I was frustrated. It was a critical point in my life, and I had to stop for a while to assess myself.

During the critical phases of my life, I have had to do many self assessments which I believe have been pivotal in bringing me to this phase of my life where I am today.

I believe the first step in making an improvement in anyone's life is critically assessing where they currently are.

Though from my understanding of human nature, it seems like most of us don't do a self assessment until we experience something that affects us sharply; like a life threatening accident or going through an embarrassment or making a costly mistake.

Most of us seem to think deeply about our lives only when we have an experience that shocks us or we have been pushed to the wall where we cannot literally breathe anymore.

I have personally come to learn the power of self assessment in helping one stay aligned to a course to drive focus towards any specific goal.

Self Assessment

Self assessment is basically asking yourself some questions and answering them truthfully.

By assessing yourself objectively, you can get to the root of any problem and be able to find a solution for it

This was one thing that helped me see where I was and helped me decide faster where I wanted to go.

Here are some questions I asked myself regarding my finances which I think you should also ask yourself;

- How reliable are my sources of income right now?
- Would what I am doing now be able to earn me extra money to meet my growing needs in 2-3 years?
- How relevant is what I am doing to people - do people value my skill, job or business highly?
- Is there a demand for what I do?
- What is the future of what I do - are there opportunities to scale big over the next few years to come?
- What are my strengths and weaknesses, how do they influence my current skill set?
- Is my passion and the things I love doing at this stage, can they really improve the quality of my life financially in the future?

These are some questions I had to ask myself.

I want you to stop for a moment, look through these questions again, and think through each of them individually for about 2 - 3 minutes.

Truthfully, you won't get all the answers immediately, but by thinking through the questions, you will start to get an understanding of where you currently are and that can help you chart a course towards where you want to be.

Different thoughts would come to your mind, and the answers may be in those thoughts.

If you let yourself go through this process by answering the questions critically and truthfully, it would help you clarify where you are, making it easier for you to define where you want to go financially.

If you don't have a strong reason; a driving force, a why that gets you up in the middle of the night, a challenge, a pain or a deep hunger to become better in some way before coming into tech, you will probably not have a desire to succeed and thrive in the industry.

And this is fine if that is what you want - we are all entitled to our own decisions.

However, if you really want to thrive in the tech industry, then you must have a compelling personal reason. One of the major places you will find a reason is in the place of self assessment.

No one can go to any place without first knowing where they currently are and defining where they want to go.

Decide to dive in 110%

After doing a self assessment, the natural step is to decide. Everything in life begins with a decision.

You decide you want to do it and lock up your mind on that decision.

No matter where you are, what you do, where you stay, how you make money today; you can get started in tech right now; It all starts with a simple decision.

Not dreaming or imagining an ideal goal you want to achieve; not wanting to be like someone else just because the person is doing well in tech; it should be a decision you choose yourself because you deeply desire it for reasons best known to you.

You don't have to be passionate about coming into tech

Let me drop this statement, which might be controversial to you on first thought - **You don't have to be passionate about coming into tech in the first place, you just want to have a strong desire to learn and grow first.**

If there is one mistake I see a lot of young people make is this focus on doing only their passion - what they naturally love and enjoy doing.

The belief that if you simply do what you are passionate about, you will succeed financially is far from the truth.

Financial success is not primarily a function of doing only what you love or what you are passionate about - financial success is a function of understanding and applying certain principles correctly.

What I believe is the No-1 principle of making money which you may probably already know is; Money is earned by solving problems for people - you are paid according to the value of the problem you solve in the marketplace; the more people you can solve problems for, the more money you can earn; the bigger the problems you can solve, the more money you can earn.

Look at this principle and look at the richest people in the world that you know, you won't need to think too much before understanding how they are making their money - they are solving problems and delivering value to millions of people.

It's not primarily about the passion they have for what they do, it's more about the problems they solve, who they solve the problems for, and how many people use the solutions they provide.

However, if you are passionate about doing something or solving specific problems that are valuable to people in the marketplace, you have struck gold - you will be well paid doing what you love.

If your passion is not solving any specific or major problem for people, you won't be paid much.

People may love you and admire what you do, but they would only pay little because it's not solving any specific problem or delivering any major value to them.

"Not everything that you are passionate about or skilled in is interesting to the rest of the world, and not everything is marketable."

Chris Guillebeau, Author, The \$100 Startup

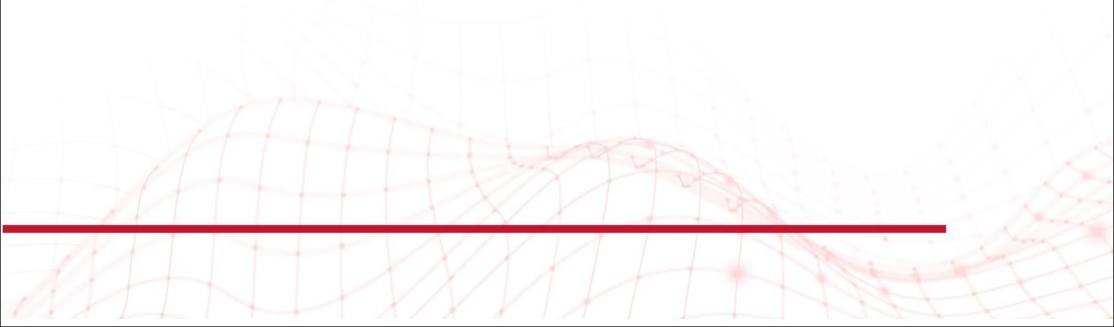
How helpful your skills are to people will go a long way in determining the value they place on it and are willing to pay for it.

Going back to where we started from - **make a decision!**

Without a firm decision to get started in tech, you are only going to sojourn the industry for a while and probably drop off within the first few months.

Everything starts with a decision. When the decision is made from deep within and you are willing to put yourself through the work consistently, you are ready to get started.

CHAPTER 2



CHAPTER 2

THE TECH INDUSTRY: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW?

“In 2021, the global information technology (IT) industry is valued at approximately 5 trillion U.S. dollars.”

(Source: Statista)

“Nigeria’s ICT (information and communication technologies) sector has grown from less than 1 percent of GDP in 2001 to almost 10 percent of GDP today (by OC&C Consulting, 2018). Nigeria has also surpassed South Africa to emerge as a premier investment destination with 55 active tech hubs raising a total of US\$ 94.9 million, while South Africa raised US\$60.0 million with 59 active start-ups (Usman, Choi, & Dutz, 2019). The country is also Africa’s biggest technology market and accounts for 23 percent of internet users in Africa with 122 million people online in December 2018 (Internet World Stats, 2019). It also has the largest number of telecommunications subscribers, with a teledensity figure of almost 90 percent (Nigerian Communications Commission, 2019). The growth of the tech sector offers new possibilities for Nigeria’s growing labor force, in terms of employment and entrepreneurship.”

(Source: Center for Global Development)

"Flutterwave, Africa's leading payments technology company, today announces it has secured USD \$170 million from a leading group of international investors as part of a successful Series C round. The round was led by growth-equity firms Avenir Growth Capital ("Avenir") and Tiger Global Management LLC ("Tiger Global") with participation from new and existing investors.

Founded by entrepreneur Olugbenga Agboola in 2016, the company's valuation is considered to be valued at more than USD \$1 billion. The fundraise brings the total investment in Flutterwave to USD \$225 million and is one of only a very small number of African fintech companies to have raised significant funds in a period of widespread disruption and economic uncertainty."

(Source: Flutterwave Blog)

I shared these defined statistics from credible sources to show you one thing - a glimpse into the value of the technology industry in monetary terms. This is just a little out of the millions of dollars moving inside the tech industry. Hundreds of millions of dollars transactions are happening every day thanks to technology.

Where do you think a good percentage of this money goes?

Hiring and paying skilled hands who can deliver value!

Note the last five words above "**skilled hands who can deliver value**"

Let me show you what makes up the tech industry

According to the Investopedia, "The technology sector is the category of stocks relating to the research, development, or distribution of technologically based goods and services. This sector contains businesses revolving around the manufacturing of electronics, creation of software, computers, or products and services relating to information technology.

The technology sector offers a wide range of products and services for both customers and other businesses. Consumer goods like personal computers, mobile devices, wearable technology, home appliances, televisions, and so on are continually being improved and sold to consumers with new features.

On the business side, companies are dependent on innovations coming out of the technology sector to create their enterprise software, manage their logistics systems, protect their databases, and generally provide the critical information and services that allow companies to make strategic business decisions."

The average young tech savvy person thinks technology is all about softwares, social media, mobile applications, digital products, mobile devices and gadgets.

People who are not tech savvy think technology is just about computers and probably anything that works like a computer.

Even though both thoughts are not far-fetched from the truth, the industry is far way bigger than that; today, companies using technology are practically involved in everything that revolves around human existence - from pregnancy to childbirth, child birth to early years, early years to teen, teen to adult, adult to death.

There is a technological tool designed to help make life easy and better in every phase of life and these tools need someone to build them, maintain them, expand them and make them better.

To give you a structured definition of tech skills, read this below;

“Tech skills are hard skills that are necessary to perform specific job-related tasks. Technical skills involve specialized knowledge and expertise in information technology, computers, engineering, research, analytics, programming, marketing, design, security and computer science. These practical skills help you achieve in technology careers and careers that value technology-related knowledge and often include training in mechanics, mathematics, science and IT.”

(Source: Indeed)

Any skill that can solve specific problems in all the listed fields above is a skill that is valuable in tech.

Below are some of the popular fields in the tech industry which you can learn their skills;

UIUX Design	Content Management	Cloud Computing
Graphics Design	Social Media Management	Digital security
Product Design	Motion Design	Robotics
Product Management	Videography	Game design
Product Marketing	Animation	Virtual Assistant
Website Development	Digital Marketing	Customer Success
Software engineering	Artificial Intelligence	Sound and Audio Technology
Software Development	Virtual Reality	E-learning/virtual learning
Data Analysis	Machine learning	
Business Development	Cybersecurity	
Copywriting	Blockchain technology	

A lot of times, people interpret tech fields with tech skills, and they are definitely not the same. There are fields in tech which require specific skill sets to work in those fields.

To learn digital marketing, you need to get some specific skills. In learning copywriting, you need another set of specific skills. To be a social media manager, you need another set of skills.

Sometimes, two or more fields can require a very similar skill set.

For example, a product designer and a product manager would require almost the same skill set as they are closely related. A digital marketer and a social media manager would require almost the same skill set as they are also closely related.

This brings us onto something, If you have an array of closely related skills, you can work in closely related fields in tech.

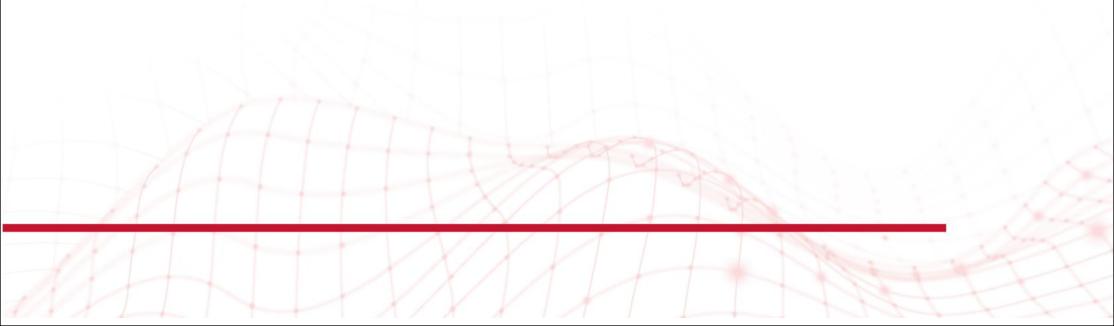
Furthermore, each individual field can be broken down into niches (a niche is a specialized segment of a market or field) and this is one of the major advantages of the tech industry - you have access to specialize down into niche segments in any field of your choice.

For example, in digital marketing, you can be a Facebook AD expert or a Google AD specialist, or a YouTube AD professional. These are all niches within the digital marketing field.

These niches provide an opportunity for you to position yourself for success in specialized segments where there is a high demand with little competition, therefore giving you the opportunity to scale fast, make it big and build relevance.

The tech industry is the fastest growing industry in the world today and has some of the most incredible job, work and business opportunities available for anyone who is willing to continually learn and improve themselves.

CHAPTER 3



CHAPTER 3

WHY DO YOU NEED TO LEARN SKILLS VALUABLE IN TECH TODAY?

Technology is at the heart of everything we do today.

Look at the simple things around you objectively. You will see the impact of technology on it, whether directly or indirectly.

Gone are the days when it's been said that tech is the future. The reality today is that tech is the norm. Anything that is not technologically driven does not seem normal.

Every day, the impact and effect of technology on all of our lives is getting bigger and bigger and bigger, especially after post covid. It is far beyond the internet and social media apps as some people think; we can see the impact of technology tremendously in the banking sector, health sector, financial industry, education, aviation, transportation, telecommunications, engineering even in music - music today sounds better thanks to applications that can create realistic sounds and mix them together to give that soul touching, waist twisting, leg moving music.

This is just a glimpse into the general impact of technology on our lives.

Here is why you need to invest yourself into tech immediately

As a Product Manager, I would use a simple analogy relating to product life-cycle (am taking you a bit into my world of product management) to show you where the tech industry is today and why you need to invest yourself in immediately.

The tech industry is in the growth phase.

In product management, the growth phase is one of the four phases of a product life cycle. The phases are; introduction, growth, maturity and decline.

The growth phase is when a product has achieved product market fit and is getting traction in the market, leading to more user acquisition and an increase in revenue coming into the company who runs the product.

A product that has achieved market fit is one that has gained a specific share of the market and has consistent sales coming in.

Now that you know what the growth phase means, let me ask you a simple question.
“What is currently getting everyone’s attention all over the world today?”

technology and anything that relates or comes out of technology.

With this, you will agree with me that the tech industry is currently in the growth phase. The industry is scaling fast and anyone involved in any aspect of tech has an opportunity to get into that growth with it.

If you have at least a basic idea of investing, you will know that the best time to invest in any business is when it's in the growth phase, because at that level, it is predictable and has potential to scale up.

Let me share with you some money investment tips using the product life-cycle concept I explained earlier and then relate it to why you need to learn skills valuable in tech today.

If you invest in a company in the introduction phase where it is new to the market, it's a high-risk investment. You are investing in a product that is just coming into the market, it will take some time for the product to get acceptance and validation from the market. This means there is no specific guarantee of returns for your investment because the market can reject the product and it fails.

If you invest in a company in the growth phase where it is accepted by a share of the market with consistent sales, things are more predictable; you have a high chance of getting viable returns for your investment.

Consistent sales means there are people who love the product and are getting value from it. This is a solid foundation that can be built upon if the management of the company improves the product or their processes. They can make incredible sales, increase revenue and drive exponential growth for the company, which will result in more return on investment for investors.

If you invest in a company in the maturity phase where it already has a significant market share with big revenue, it's a low-risk investment; however, the potential for scalability is low compared to in the growth phase because the company is matured and the tendency for plateau or even decline in sales and growth is high.

I can't go deeper into the reason for that right here so as not to deviate from what we are talking about.

Finally, investing in the last stage of the product life-cycle which is the decline phase will most likely result in a failure because the decline phase signifies a time when the company sales is gradually coming down and it's only a matter of time before the company comes to a halt in its operations, except something radical is been done to revive it.

Now going back to what I said earlier about the tech industry being in the growth phase - can you now see how I came about that with the investment analysis using the product life-cycle concept explained above?

If you don't understand this, read the investment analysis in the previous page again.

Moving forward, you will agree with me that the best time to invest in any form of investment is when it's in the growth phase where it is more predictable with potential to scale when properly managed.

Let's go back to where we started from. Why do you need to learn skills valuable in tech today?

The tech industry is in the growth phase and will go through the growth phase to maturity phase before decline. Personally, I believe the growth to maturity phase will span across the next 5 - 10 years from writing this book.

There is potential for tremendous growth because of the continuous investment in research and development all over the world to improve technology and make it better for all.

So where does that leave you who is thinking of learning a tech skill?

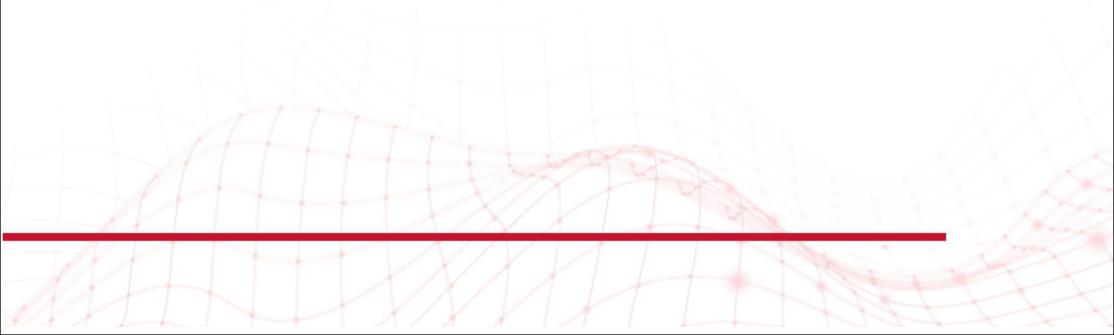
Today - right now, is the best time to get started. Don't overthink it, make a decision and start following through by learning the required skill set you need for the field you want to work in.

If you are already into tech and working in any tech field, be dedicated to a specific learning process - don't get tired of learning and improving yourself because if there is one thing constant in tech, it is change, change and more change. The industry is driven by innovation and creativity, so this makes it susceptible to change - things can change in a twinkle of an eye. Therefore it is important you are always open to learning; learning is a non-negotiable if you want to remain relevant for a long time in the tech industry.

By getting into tech now that it's in the growth phase, you will invest yourself in an industry that will scale over the next 10 years, thereby giving you an opportunity to grow along with it if you are willing to grow. And with the kind of "Blood Money" flowing in tech aside from the potential for growth, it is not one to be ignored.

Don't you think it is smart to position yourself to have your own share of the tech treasure chest in this time, especially because the opportunity won't always be there like the way it is today?

CHAPTER 4



CHAPTER 4

THE "BLOOD MONEY" IN TECH

What would it mean to have just an extra 0 added to your current income?

Let's say you are earning N50,000 today and suddenly an extra 0 is added to your salary and you start to earn N500,000, how would you feel?

If you are earning N100,000 today and an extra 0 is added to your salary to make it N1,000,000, what would you do?

But let's go a step higher and add double 00's to your current income, what would it be?

The difference is just an extra 0 behind the figures, but I am very sure the way you feel about the potential of earning that amount is great. This is the advantage of earning more money, the feeling and the experience is different; earning extra money can help you take care of yourself better, take care of your family better, do the things you want to do, go anywhere you want to, be whoever you want to be, have any experience you want to have and live life from a place of freedom instead of struggle.

I can tell you from personal experience earning extra money is sweet!

In Nigeria, when you hear the term "Blood Money", it simply means money that was gotten from diabolical means, which involves taking the life of an animal or human being as a sacrifice to get money in return from a sacred god.

This kind of money always comes in stupendous amounts, making the beneficiary mysteriously very rich overnight - the money comes to the beneficiary from the weirdest source regularly.

Of course, all of this always has a very negative effect on the beneficiary over time because of the entire diabolical process involved in taking a life; I definitely would not advise anyone to take that path no matter how appealing it might seem.

However, what I want to show you in this chapter is the kind of stupendous amount of money you can earn working in any field in tech in the shortest possible time by using your skills.

As I was writing this chapter, a friend of mine, Joseph, informed me he had done more than ₦2,000,000 (\$4,000) in sales throughout the month as an Affiliate Marketer. This is a young guy in his 20s who started affiliate marketing 7 months earlier.

To make this even more interesting, he didn't spend a single naira as capital to earn that money - he made that primarily using a combination of social media apps to skillfully market affiliate products online using his smartphone. Not a dime was spent on paid ADs. His profit was over a millionaire (\$2,000) and he earns that steadily every month barely leaving the comfort of his bedroom.

As a Nigerian, wouldn't you probably call this "Blood Money" for someone in his 20s if you don't know what he does for a living?

I am going to be sharing with you the story of real people in Nigeria who are earning "The Blood Money in Tech".

I interviewed quite a number of people to gather more information for the purpose of getting validation for the insights in this book. All of the stories you will be reading will help you see the possibilities, the potentials and the opportunities available for you too in the tech industry today.

\$60,000 (₦33,000,000) a year income working from home

Let me start with Adekunle who is a software developer for a company in the US that earns \$5,000, which is about ₦2,750,000 monthly. He works remotely here in Nigeria. His annual income is exactly ₦33,000,000 (\$60,000) a year. He is under 30 years of age and drives a Lexus RX 350 jeep.

Adekunle started out learning frontend development 5 years ago online, he struggled to learn all by himself. Coming out of university, he had a passion for creating websites and he started finding out how to go about it while also hunting for jobs to put food on the table. He was squatting with four friends in a "face me I slap you" apartment to manage himself and get his life going.

As he started to expand on his website design knowledge, he had little support back then because there were very few people in the field willing to train people like him with the skills. As the months passed, he became better with frontend development solely with online resources and moved on to learn backend development via an online foreign bootcamp. Learning this way was much easier and faster, he was able to build up his skills really fast compared to when he learnt frontend development alone.

While learning frontend development, a friend introduced him to Fiverr and Upwork (a freelancing platform for freelancers) where he started providing his skills as a freelancer to clients outside Nigeria who needed a web designer.

In the initial phase of freelancing, it was really a struggle - he would get a small gig that paid him \$50 one month and not get another gig in 3 months, but he kept on going. He had to get a teaching job with a secondary school to earn a steady N30,000 salary to meet his daily needs.

One fortunate day, he stumbled upon an ad that offered training on how to get better gigs on Fiverr and Upwork, the training cost him N20,000 back then which was more than half of his teaching job salary. He was reluctant to make the payment but he eventually did. The information he got during that training was what literally changed his life.

Today, he is a full stack mobile and web developer working remotely in Nigeria and earning \$5,000 monthly alongside other company benefits.

He was telling me recently that he has heard some people call him a “yahoo boy” (a term associated with internet fraudsters in Nigeria) because he is single, always indoors and lives in a rich neighborhood where you will hardly find people of his age.

From sitting on a bucket to earning six figures in one year

This is the story of John who started learning UIUX design sitting on a bucket in a room where he was staying with his friends.

His journey into UIUX design started in late 2020, he had a friend who was a UIUX designer and a digital marketer, his friend had a Youtube channel where he shares content regularly. One day at the office, John's friend was trying to upload a video on his Youtube channel, so he asked him what UIUX design entails and his friend explained it to him. John knew he had seen something similar somewhere on LinkedIn where people designed web and mobile applications.

At that time, he was already considering coming into tech because everyone had been talking about tech. He had started learning HTML and CSS in coding. He was however inspired to push forward towards UIUX design because he had some background knowledge in using corel draw, animation and photoshop prior to this time.

He made a decision to come into UIUX design fully after doing some research on the skills. He was someone who is very curious and so started consuming every information on UIUX design; he opened a medium account to access articles on UIUX design, he literally watched a trailer load of YouTube videos on UIUX design.

He created a daily ritual of reading medium articles and YouTube videos every morning before going to work and every evening after work. The data he spent in a few months on getting design knowledge online could probably be used by 100 people in that same time. Many sleepless nights spent in the process of learning. He left his day job at a particular time to really pay attention to building his skills as a product designer and a lot of times while he was learning, he would be on a chair for an entire day practising his design skills.

As time went on, he came across the popular Google UX course for UX designers, applied for financial aid to take the course because it was a paid course and he was selected. Going through the course really expanded his knowledge which gave him more confidence to even pursue the skills even further.

After the course, he thought he needed to get practical experience on how UIUX design plays out in real life and also upscale his skills.

While browsing on LinkedIn, he stumbled upon Abidoun Fiwa (Founder and CEO of Perxels) LinkedIn page and there he came across Perxels Design School. He eventually applied to be a student at Perxels through a scholarship offer and was admitted. The practicality of the training at Perxels really helped him expand his design knowledge and skill further.

He got his first job as a UIUX designer with an E-commerce company two weeks after completing his training at Perxels. From there, he got another job with a well funded Indian startup. His experience with the Indian startup was way above his head; the way he even got the job, he never saw it coming. He had sent numerous applications with no response. He suddenly got an email response from the company and he himself couldn't really track when he sent the mail until later in the process. He went through three interview processes and eventually got the job.

He moved on from there few months later to gather more experience in a work environment where he could expand his skills further and now currently works with one of the growing edtech startups in Nigeria "e-limu" a Kenyan edtech company that was acquired by CcHub (Co-creation Hub) in 2020 and now well paid in six figures monthly.

Despite working in three companies under one year, John's job search was not smooth, he applied for literally a thousand jobs within a few weeks - he was sending his CV and portfolio everyday during the intense job search period. A lot of the companies which he applied to never gave him a response. The few he got responses from took him through their interview processes but didn't select him, but he kept applying regardless - he didn't get discouraged, he didn't give up.

His persistence and his strong desire for growth kept him going in the hard times in the early stage of his career.

Launched his career with a N400,000 contract gig

Micheal was a civil engineering student back when he was in university. While in the university, he started out learning graphics design due to his natural inclination for design, creative arts and colours. He expanded his knowledge in graphics design and was into it for three years till he graduated from the university.

Even though Micheal was a graphics designer at that time, his passion for always wanting to see how his designs made users feel caught the interest of one of the clients he worked for.

The client recommended him to go learn product design so he could express himself much more in the user experience aspect of design which he loved doing - this was how Micheal came into UIUX design.

As time went on, Micheal started expanding his UIUX design skills while still being a graphics designer. He came across Perxels and enrolled to learn UIUX design professionally and get the real-life experience he needed.

Two weeks after rounding up his training at Perxels, one of his friends and co-learner at Perxels got a very juicy contract gig from a client based in Canada to design 100 screen pages for their product. However, the friend couldn't take up the project and recommended Micheal to take up the job.

Micheal was excited but also afraid; this was going to be his first UIUX design project after the training at Perxels. To put more pressure on him, the client wasn't based in Nigeria, this means he had to deliver a great job that would meet international standards. He thought of not taking up the job a number of times, imposter syndrome wanted to get a better part of him but he eventually took the job and delivered it excellently. Micheal was paid N400,000 for the contract.

Today, Micheal works for an agency in the heart of Lagos and also earns a sweet six figure salary.

The Biggest Opportunity In the Tech Industry

There are so many opportunities available in tech today; from having multiple fields to choose from, to focusing your skills in a specific niche, to having a more vibrant work environment and culture, to working remotely, etc. The opportunities in tech are vast and interesting; however, there is one that I consider the biggest opportunity ever - can you guess what it is?

The opportunity to work for clients, businesses, companies and organisations outside of your home country and get paid in dollars.

This is the biggest opportunity in tech - you are a global talent.

Like you already know, the internet has made the world a small place; no one is restricted to any physical location anymore. Talent acquisition is now global, customer acquisition is now global. The days of limited working opportunities are gradually passing by post-covid. Companies now hire talents millions of miles away from their physical location with ease, no borders holding them back.

This means that if you know your game well and know how to play it right, you can position yourself as a global talent instead of a local one.

Today, if you are a skilled person who is only looking for opportunities within your geographical location; you are limiting yourself - you want to think bigger than that; except you don't want to.

I always tell people who come to me for advice on transitioning to tech, "you can choose to spread your wings and fly outside of the country from inside your bedroom with the tap of a button on your smartphone."

This opportunity to work for foreign clients, businesses, companies and organisations means you would be paid in their currency or the accepted international currency worldwide, which is dollars.

For those of us who live in this part of the world, Nigeria, we know the power of the dollar in relation to the naira. As of writing this book, \$1 is ₦500. So if you earn \$1000, that is ₦500,000 - that is a whopping half a millionaire.

The moment you can understand this and key yourself into it, you will look at things from a broader perspective which goes beyond your home country, because the opportunities are unlimited out there - the only limitation is the one you create for yourself.

From University of Lagos to Mountain View, California, USA

Let me share with you the story of how a University of Lagos student got a job with a growing startup in Mountain View, California, USA.

Ibrahim is a product designer who came into design in 2018.

Being a 200 level civil and environmental engineering student at University of Lagos, he did a course called engineering design. From that course, he became aware of design and fell in love with design. Moving forward later that 2018, he came across a design bootcamp to learn various courses relating to design which he applied for and joined.

He ended up becoming the best student of his class during the one week bootcamp.

After the bootcamp, he was intrigued about design and wanted to learn more. He started doing research, reading more, asking questions just to understand the different aspects of design so he could specialise himself in a niche that could help him stand out.

He discovered UIUX design during this process and started learning how to create UIUX design with Adobe Photoshop. From here, he moved on to replicating people's designs on dribble and shared it with his network via WhatsApp status. Over time, he expanded his skills from using Adobe Photoshop to Adobe XD, which was a better software for creating UIUX design.

In 2019, he got his first contract UIUX design job that paid him ₦200,000 (\$400). He was really excited about the opportunity, did the job well and the client loved it. From there onward, he kept getting referrals and working independently.

In late 2020, his friend recommended him to Perxels Design School to learn UIUX design and get a certificate. He was admitted into the intermediate class at Perxels where he expanded his knowledge and skills further.

In February 2021, he got a call from a friend who asked him, "Ibrahim, how would you like to work in the US?"

It sounded crazy to him and he asked her, "Are you serious or kidding me? Why wouldn't I love to work in the US?"

She replied to him, "Send me your portfolio and email address immediately"

He sent his details to her, and that was it. He was called for an interview which was an intensive one but he eventually scaled through and got the job as a Product Designer for EldonLabs in Mountain View, California, USA.

This was him in Nigeria, working with a growing startup in the US.

Ibrahim has gone forward from there to travel to the US via his company; he has the opportunity to travel twice a year courtesy of his company. He works remotely from Lagos, Nigeria, earns a great income in dollars, enjoys interesting side benefits like a free one year Netflix subscription paid by his company, company swags etc.

More importantly for Ibrahim is that he has expanded his skills beyond product design at his company; now, he also does product management and a little bit of front-end development.

Ibrahim attributes his fast growth to his soft skills like communication, people management, work ethic, time management etc.

In Ibrahim's words, "Beyond having your skill, you need other things to give you sweet job security and keep you where you are - it's beyond knowing how to design and being a good designer if you want to grow in your career."

Tech companies can afford to pay you higher than you think

Even though we know tech companies pay a lot more than average companies in other industries, I believe that most tech companies can afford to pay even much more.

A good number of tech companies will pay more for a talent that has a track record and knack for improving products to deliver increasing value to their users and drive business growth for organisations. There is a big focus today on growth more than ever before because most companies are in the early stage of their lifecycle.

This is why job roles like Growth Marketer, Growth Product Manager, Head of Growth etc are becoming more popular unlike 3-5 years ago.

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Regardless of your skills, if you position yourself as someone who can help a company grow, a premium value would be placed on you, and you can be paid way much more.

The responsibility is on you to position yourself in line with what companies are looking for and build yourself to have exactly that. This way you increase your perceived value, which would influence how you will be paid.

A good number of talents don't believe in themselves and so settle for less during salary negotiation and compensation. Now I understand that you may not want to show out as money driven and all, however, the tendency that you will get paid lower than your peers in the industry will be very high.

This is why you have to do your research; know the company's entire worth, understand the deeper responsibility of the work you will do and how important it is to the company, know how your skills will influence the company's growth, speak to other people in your field and find out what the average salary range is - use all of this to understand your ideal salary range and then ask for 10 - 20% more.

For example, if you discover that your salary range is between ₦200,000 - ₦250,000, ask for ₦300,000.

It is not greedy to ask; it is your right to ask.

If you understand your value as a person, the value of your skills, the value of your previous experience to the company, the role you are coming into, what you can help the company achieve - don't be afraid to ask for more.

Ask for more with confidence. If it's a good company, whether or not they are a startup, they will find a way around it if they see your value and how it will affect their growth.

If you work on yourself well over a period of time and push for bigger job opportunities in any of the FAANG (Facebook, Apple, Amazon, Netflix, Google) companies, you can land a job in any of them and start earning 6 figures in dollars.

I came across the story of Esco Obong, Senior Software Engineer at Airbnb and I was really inspired. This is a Nigerian by descent who works for Airbnb and earns \$500,000 yearly, that is ₦205,260,000 (₦200,000,000+ plus a year; monthly would be around ₦16,000,000+).

I wish I could add emojis to express how crazy yet exciting this sounds. Just one person earning that amount of money seems unimaginable.

This is the potential that is available to anybody who has the skills and knows how to position themselves properly for success.

I have shared with you these stories above to help you catch a glimpse into the opportunity that is available to you despite the reality of the economic situation right now, especially for us in Nigeria. It's the same Nigeria where countless government workers are fighting for ₦30,000 (\$60) minimum wage; thousands of corporate staff are navigating Lagos crazy traffic from Monday - Friday on a ₦80,000 - ₦120,000 (\$160 - \$240) monthly salary; aged family men and women are running helter-skelter to feed a family of five with a business that is just turning over their capital.

Now I am not showing all of this to say these young people earning more are better than the people not earning as much. I am showing this to give you a glimpse into the "Blood Money" in tech.

There are people in tech that earn way much more than these guys I have shared with you. On the other hand, there are also many people working in tech that are not earning as much, however, one thing I know for sure is that **"if you have the skill set required for any specific field in tech and you know how to apply this skill set correctly to solve problems, add increasing value and drive business growth - you will be valuable to any business, company or organisation and you can command the "Blood Money" you want for the value that you bring to the table."**

CHAPTER 5



CHAPTER 5

THE 7 MOST IMPORTANT INSIGHTS YOU NEED TO THRIVE IN THE TECH INDUSTRY

Right now, I am sure I have been able to convince you and not confuse you, that there are many opportunities available in tech and there is "Blood Money" flowing around the tech industry.

All I want to do in this chapter is "cut beta soap for you" like we say in Nigeria when referring to giving people beneficial information.

The information in this chapter has been carefully put together to focus on the most important things you need to do to grow and thrive in the tech industry, despite increasing competition.

Building a career in tech is simple, but the process can be daunting.

In the tech industry, you don't need to go to a university, spend 4 years studying to get a certificate to get started. Neither do you need a Masters' degree or PhD to launch your career.

However, learning the required skills can be challenging, especially because most people are trying to learn the new skills while still trying to do their daily jobs and businesses, make a living, take care of a family, handle singlehood if they are not married, live a life, and generally just trying to find their footing in other aspects of their life too.

After learning the required skills, the next step of actually getting a job, freelance gigs or contract opportunities can be another hassle after learning.

The reality is that if you don't have the right knowledge and guidance through the process, your growth would be slow; hence the importance of mentorship. I won't talk about mentorship right here, but I would definitely come back to it.

Everything in life involves a process. Anyone who understands the process would be able to use it to their advantage .

Many people think they can bypass processes required to grow and scale their careers or businesses - people are disillusioned into thinking that they can shortcut their growth path and everything will work out just fine.

If you are that kind of person, I am here to bust your bubbles - it can never happen!

Any process that you bypass will eventually affect you later in the future. If you don't learn a skill well, it will affect you.

If you don't build your soft and people skills, it will affect you in the long run.

Anything you don't do well today will affect you tomorrow

The seven insights I am going to break down are going to make it easier for you to get started, break even, grow your career in tech and make "Blood Money" as quickly as you can work hard for.

If you act upon these insights consistently over the next 3 - 6 months, you will become more valuable with your skills, fast track your career growth in tech, earn as much money as you want and enjoy the freedom and fulfillment to do more good to yourself and others.

Insight 1

Define the space you want to play in and start playing there

I am sure you must have heard or seen the term "Jack of all trades, master of none".

Most people understand this statement as knowing something about many things but not being an expert in one thing.

Some other people understand the statement from the standpoint of not being an expert in at least one thing, which they feel is a disadvantage.

While another group of people see the statement from a different standpoint of being someone that knows something about many things, which they feel it's an advantage.

However, I am not here to support any of the standpoint independently. I believe each standpoint is relative and contextual to specific situations, that is, a standpoint would make sense in a situation and not make sense in another situation.

So for this situation of working in the tech industry, it is better to be "sweet in the middle" - be an expert at one thing, know something about many other things.

In today's world, if you are not an expert at what you do or at least perceived as an expert even if you are not there yet, people won't believe you, customers won't trust you; the required recognition you deserve or need to grow would not be given to you. Especially in the tech ecosystem where your track record wants to be seen..

What does this mean for you who want to build a career in tech?

You want to be an expert at one thing; be an expert in a niche, field, market, or industry.

By being an expert, you define the space you want to play in and start playing there.

If you want to become a social media manager, define a niche within the social media space and build skills for that niche.

For example, you can be an Instagram expert by studying Instagram, understanding the platform, how things work there, who the primary users are, why they are there, what kind of content they engage with, how to monetize the platform, running ADs on the platform - there is so many things you can learn about Instagram to become an expert in such a way that your knowledge and skills on maximizing the platform would be so valuable that companies and businesses would be willing to pay you a lot of money for it.

How to determine the best space to play in

Remember this statement from the first page of this book - "To scale fast and make it big financially, you need to invest your time, energy and resources in an industry, market, field or niche where there is high demand or potential of high demand for a product/service with low competition."

In determining the best space to play in, this statement above says it all.

Choose a niche, field, market or Industry where there is high demand or potential of high demand for a product or service with low competition.

This is the smart thing to do.

In marketing, if there is one lesson I have learnt from my personal experience is that no matter how much potential a market has, if there is too much competition in that market, it will be hard to break even and scale as a new product.

Let me take you a bit into my life, I am a musician - I sing and I play the piano. I love music so much that I can't help myself but to do music. In my earlier days of playing the piano, I would rehearse with my best friend for hours non-stop. There was a particular time in life when I'd rehearse for 12-15 hours a day with some minutes break in between - the only thing I did aside from rehearsing was eating, sleeping, doing home chores and watching movies.

This is how passionate I was about music.

However, the reality of life sets in, just being passionate would not pay my bills; money was needed.

I am the firstborn of an average family with four siblings. My dad was late and my mother was having to take care of 5 children all by herself. So I had to earn money to support myself and reduce the burden on my mom. I left home and moved to my aunt's place in the heart of Lagos from Ogun state. I got exposed to playing for churches to earn a monthly salary. My first salary as a keyboard player was N15,000 (\$30).

This was how I started making money with my musical skills.

As the months and years rolled by, my responsibilities increased but my income as a musician did not - I got stuck at N30,000 (\$60) monthly salary after three years.

My best friend (who is also a pianist) and I started talking about business and what we could do extra. This was when I bought the book "Midas Touch" by Robert Kiyosaki and Donald Trump.

This book exposed us to business concepts in a new way.

However, the major takeaway from the book was that the music space which we played in (gospel music) was too competitive - there are so many great gospel pianists in Lagos state alone, we didn't even need to look too far. The competition in Lagos alone is more than enough for us to deal with.

This means for us to break even, earn well and build relevance in the gospel music industry, we are going to literally struggle and fight for it for a long time with other equally great musicians who also want to do well. That is just too much competition; exponential growth would take time to attain except some brilliant luck falls upon us, especially as young players in the industry.

This is the reality for every competitive industry; the more people are delivering value in an industry, the more competitive it will be, the tougher it is to thrive in that industry - not just for new players, but also established players too.

Some people say that "the sky is big enough for everybody to fly in", however, in the marketplace, it doesn't work that way.

Imagine you are the only one selling a product in a market where 1000 people come to buy every month, how much profit would you make?

Now imagine another scenario where you and 99 other people are selling the same product in the same market that 1000 people come to buy, how much profit would you make?

In the first illustration, you will earn tremendous profit and scale fast even with little experience and skill, because obviously, there is no competition.

In the second illustration, you will have less profit and little opportunity to scale fast even with plenty of experience and skill.

Of-course, there are things that can be done in the second illustration to make you more viable than the competition, but it does not remove the fact there are 99 other competitors that the 1000 customers can buy from.

This is the reality of the marketplace.

So the wise thing to do is to define a space - choose a niche, field, market or Industry where there is high demand or potential of high demand for a product/service with low competition. This gives you an edge to earn well and scale fast even with little experience and skill.

Here are some practical examples to help you define the space you should play in

If you are a UIUX designer, instead of pursuing a career in popular spaces that are highly demanded and competitive like fintech, health tech, e-commerce, logistics and delivery etc you could go for less competitive spaces like blockchain technology, sports industry, computer games, aviation, entertainment and media, music etc.

The companies in these fields that are less competitive are also looking for UIUX designers, and you can position yourself as someone who can deliver value unique to that field.

The interesting thing is that because demand for talents is high and supply is low, only few talents are applying to those industries. They may only have few options to choose from alongside you during the hiring process.

As of writing this book, most talents are not paying attention to a lot of the industries that I shared above

You can be a tech talent for automobile companies like Ford, Toyota, Benz, BMW, Tesla, etc

You can be a talent for phone manufacturing companies like Apple, Samsung, Huawei, Tecno, Infinix, etc

You can be a talent for electronic companies like LG, Nexus, OX, etc

You can be a talent for computer manufacturing companies like Dell, HP, Lenovo, Asus, etc

All of these companies need tech talents like you and me to improve their products.

Am sure with these examples you can see that being in tech is definitely not about working for the FAANG companies (Facebook, Apple, Amazon, Netflix and Google) which are known globally.

In Nigeria, it's not just about working for only financial technology companies like Paystack, Piggyvest, Cowrywise, Flutterwave, Kuda bank, etc.

There are many companies playing in the Fintech space in Nigeria. The result of this is a high demand for talents in Fintech, which is why it seems like the most popular job opportunities available for tech talents in Nigeria are only within Fintech.

There are opportunities in other sectors that are not so popularly advertised. Jobs in these unpopular sectors are less competitive, less stressful, less demanding, more flexible, give room for growth, accommodate talents with little or no experience and still pay talents very well.

The opportunities available for you as a tech talent today are unlimited, it just depends on what you choose to see and where you choose to look at.

Insight 2

Learn the required skills for the space you want to play in

Every field in tech has its unique knowledge and skill which is expected that a talent should have to function effectively. It's a no-brainer that if you want to thrive in any field, you have to get the field's knowledge and skill.

What I have seen from some people coming into tech is that they try to bypass learning the core fundamentals they need and are majorly looking for specific hacks, ideas, programs, tools, and anything they can do to speed up the process without really understanding the why behind them or how to use them effectively.

Learning anything is not easy. Learning requires patience, sacrifice, perseverance, hours of study, humility to learn, money (plenty of money) and very importantly, time - time is our most expensive commodity.

People who are not avid learners think learning is easy, and because the results of learning are not immediate, they are disillusioned into thinking it's not a worthy immediate investment - a lot of people think the time they would spend learning, they would use that same time to work and earn.

To a certain level, I will agree with the point of working and earning; on a higher level however, I would push for being "sweet in the middle" like I did in the last chapter.

Find a way to learn, work and earn, instead of doing just one without the others.

Finding a way to learn, work and earn gives you the opportunity to build your capacity in more interesting ways than you can imagine. You will only see the significant results after months of consistency. It definitely doesn't happen overnight.

Coming from the last chapter, after you have defined the space you want to play in, you want to dive deep into learning everything about that space; the big things, the small things and everything you can get information on. You want to understand the industry, the market, the field or the niche so well that you are obsessed with it.

In reality, you can't possibly learn everything - there will always be something you won't know; nevertheless, you want to know as many things as possible.

The goal of learning is to become an expert.

If you are not considered as an expert in your space, whatever you know may not be valued or appreciated.

Some people know a lot of things, but they are not considered experts in their space. Being considered as an expert is a deal breaker especially in today's world. It is something you want to intentionally position yourself for.

To be considered as an expert in your space in today's world, there are major factors that will push up your perceived value like personal branding, the quality of your network, the community that you are in, and how well you contribute to the community; regardless of all that, the knowledge that you have about your space is super-duper important. It is the foundation on which the other factors above will build on.

Your hard or technical skills will get you STARTED, your soft skills will get you GROWING

There are hard and soft skills required to work effectively in any work or business environment. People majorly focus on their hard skills, which can be seen as technical or external skills. Hard skills are the specific work-related skills a person needs to learn to work in an industry.

For example, to become a software developer, you have to learn coding, coding languages like CSS, Java, React JS, etc. frontend development and backend development.

These are the primary technical knowledge you need as a software developer.

"Soft skills are the essential interpersonal skills that make or break our ability to get things done. We think of them as foundational and every professional should be working to build them."

LinkedIn Learning

10 soft skills every person who wants to thrive in tech must continually develop

- Communication
- Teamwork and Collaboration
- Problem Solving and Creativity
- Decisiveness
- Emotional Intelligence
- Time Management
- Ability to work under pressure
- Negotiation
- Conflict Resolution
- Responsibility and Accountability

By continually expanding your soft skills, you make yourself more appealing to organisations looking for more value.

A lot of companies now pay attention to people's soft skills like never before. Even if you are very good technically, but your communication is not smooth, it may affect the value that will be placed on you.

A person who knows how to communicate their ideas effectively with less technical skill can be chosen over a person who cannot communicate effectively with better technical skill in a hiring process.

If you learn the required technical skills for your space, make sure you build the major soft skills also.

You will be able to get started in any job or company with your technical skills, however, your ability to last and grow from there will be dependent on your soft skills.

Again, like I have been saying, the goal is to be "sweet in the middle" - that is, know your technical and soft skills well.

You cannot learn effectively alone

In today's world where every information you need is just a click of a button away, the impression that you can learn everything online via Google and YouTube seems natural and accepted. However, even though it is partly correct, I have discovered that it is not effective.

Been a product manager who has been involved with building products in the education space for about 2 years, if there is a trend that I have seen from close interaction with talents seeking tech education is that, more people find learning from an instructor or facilitator in a class, either physical or virtual, more impactful than learning on their own on Google, YouTube or pre-recorded video lessons.

Out of 200 people in my research, 145 people say that the experience of learning in a class with an instructor was more impactful to them compared to learning on their own.

Learning alone is great if you already have a foundation for you to build up from; that is, you have gone through a training program that has given you the basics. By already having the basics, any knowledge or information you get from Google expands your horizon and makes you better.

However, on the other hand if you just started with learning from Google without a training program, you would have plenty of information in your head with no practicality to the information - you would not be able to use the information correctly.

Training and mentorship programs are the most effective way to learn any tech skill today.

You cannot go wrong with the right training and mentorship program with a great instructor and a closed class group; you will scale much faster if you put in the work in this environment compared to someone who doesn't have access to such a program.

After a training program, you can then build upon your knowledge from information on any other source online.

Be open-minded to continuously learning

The tech industry is very dynamic. Things are always changing in short times. If there is one thing constant with the tech industry is change, and as a tech talent you want to be up-to-date with the happenings in your field or space.

Know the latest trends, study what other people are doing, look at what foreign companies are doing - make sure you are paying attention to the latest things happening in your field. It will give you an edge as you cannot be side tracked because you are up to date.

Don't bury your head in the sand - don't be too busy working that you forget you are not alone in the world and a lot of things are happening around you.

But also, don't fall into the trap of learning more and getting more certificates that you forget that it's the ability to use your skills in real-life that matters the most.

Insight 3

Know how to apply your skills effectively by getting your hands dirty

No matter the knowledge that you have, if you don't know how to apply it correctly, it's only a waste.

This is the aspect a lot of people miss. Just because you've gone through training and you've learnt some skills doesn't mean you will be able to deliver value. In Bolanle Afuye's words "All you have is textbook knowledge and it is not dependable."

You have to know how to apply your skills effectively.

Correct application of knowledge is more important than acquiring knowledge.

The ability to apply one's knowledge correctly is what some people call wisdom.

One mistake I see a lot of people who transition into tech doing is learning all the skills they can learn. I know a young guy that has learnt UIUX design, frontend development, backend development, digital marketing, and product management - he has taken courses in each of these fields.

Doing this is not bad in itself, but it has a major disadvantage - LACK OF FOCUS!

This young guy is talented with a brilliant mind but he lacks focus, so he is not able to break even and scale his knowledge and skills to the next level despite his brilliance.

All you need to learn the required foundational skills for any field you desire to work in can be as little as 4 - 6 weeks (This is dependent on the skill you are learning)

However, learning the skill is not the most important thing, implementing the skills CORRECTLY is.

Note: I am intentionally adding correctly because some people implement their skills incorrectly, do take note.

Get practical experience and be involved as quickly as you can

For you to know how to implement your skills correctly, you have to get your hands dirty by being involved and doing as much as you can.

You have to start doing things with the skills that you have; create personal projects and work on them, volunteer to work for a friend's start-up or business, be involved in group projects, join an hackathon, apply for competitions, find problems in major products and create a solution for those products, join social media challenges that has to do with using your skill or create a challenge and get others involved - anything you can do to get your hands practically involved in using your skills will give you real-life experience which would help you discover how to implement your knowledge and skills better.

You will make plenty of mistakes here, discover better ways to approach different situations, improve your problem thinking and problem solving skills, and you might even discover something that has never been done before.

Ultimately, doing all of these will increase your self-confidence which is super important when trying to get a job. This is because you have real-life experience to talk from during any hiring process.

The tech industry is an industry that thrives on what a talent can deliver over what the talent knows.

It's not an industry that really needs your theoretical knowledge. Big focus is being placed on how you think, how you approach problem solving and how you can implement solutions quickly.

This is not limited to any skill at all - it doesn't matter if you are a software engineer, project manager, game designer, visual artist, copywriter, digital marketer etc.

The most important thing for hiring managers is how you think, how you approach problem solving with your skills and how you implement solutions even beyond your skills.

You don't want to be focused on just doing the technical aspect of your skill, you want to try a lot of things with your skills and outside of your skill as quickly as possible.

The faster you get your hands trying things, the faster you will make mistakes, the faster you will learn, the faster you will grow, the more valuable you will become.

The Importance of Mentorship

Mentorship will help you apply your skills effectively for better results.

There is a popular saying which is, "if you work with five rich people, you will become the sixth rich person."

I believe this saying is apt and true in the context of mentorship.

Let me tell you why with this story below.

I have a friend Dami who is part of my music band GracedWorshippers. When we were a lot younger, he really wanted to sing and play the keyboard. He was always asking me to teach him what I know on the keyboard. He tried to sing songs at the studio but that didn't work out.

After many attempts, Dami decided to learn music production because he really loved music and didn't want to give it up.

He started learning music production from another friend Timi-Jay (if you listen to a lot of Nigerian hip-hop music, you will hear his tagline "Timi Jay on the track".)

Dami was always with Timi Jay day and night, working with him, learning from him; practically, his life revolved around Timi Jay.

Back then, I even thought it didn't make sense.

Today, only just a few years later, Dami is now a mid-level music producer producing songs for artists that are fast coming up in the industry. He is most referred to as Poppil in the music production space. Timi Jay is now one of the most sought after sound engineers in the hip-hop music industry in Nigeria with a number of major hit songs under his belt.

Morale of the story: Dami was mentored by Timi Jay, and as Timi Jay grew, Dami grew.

This is the power of mentorship.

Let's imagine Dami had tried to just learn everything by himself and think he can grow on his own, he won't have attained the level which he has attained today - he may probably still be struggling.

Mentors not only save you time and energy, they also speed up your growth.

What should take you 5 years to achieve can take you only 2 years if you have a great mentor.

I am a product of great mentorship. I have been privileged to have had great mentors at different stages of my life and for different purposes.

I have music mentors, business mentors, relationship mentors; I have mentors in my field of product management.

These are the people I always reach out to for advice, support and information.

I am very much grateful for their tremendous influence in my life.

As you build your skills, get yourself a mentor. Attach yourself to someone who has more knowledge and experience than you in the field you are playing in, especially someone with a track record of success; connect with them, go everywhere they go, say what they say, do what they do and you will be able to achieve what they have achieved or even much more.

If you have no mentor, your growth will be slow - it may take you longer to achieve your goals.

If you have a good mentor, you will 2x your growth - you will double your result in the shortest possible time.

If you have a great mentor, you will 10x your growth - you will multiply your result in the shortest time.

This is the power of the right people in your life.

NOTE: MENTOR MENTEE RELATIONSHIP IS A GIVE AND TAKE RELATIONSHIP. YOU CANNOT EXPECT YOUR MENTOR TO CONTINUALLY SUPPORT YOU IF YOU ARE NOT PROVIDING SOME FORM OF VALUE TO HIM OR HER.

There is nothing like something for nothing. Be wise and make sure you are being useful to your mentor in any way possible as you learn from them.

Mentors will help you know how to apply your skills effectively. Never undermine the value of a mentor in your quest for success in anything that you do. If you want to thrive in the tech industry, get yourself a good mentor and be useful to your mentor.

Insight 4

Personal Branding - Let the world know you for something

"Personal branding is the conscious and intentional effort to create and influence public perception of an individual by positioning them as an authority in their industry, elevating their credibility, and differentiating themselves from the competition, to ultimately advance their career, increase their circle of influence, and have a larger impact.

The process of personal branding involves finding your uniqueness, building a reputation on the things you want to be known for, and then allowing yourself to be known for them. Ultimately, the goal is to create something that conveys a message and that can be monetized."

(Source: Wikipedia)

I particularly like this description of personal branding by Wikipedia, it encompasses everything you need to know. I would however break it down further with practical examples for you to understand better.

Personal branding basically is just putting yourself out intentionally. It is sharing some aspects of your life, your likes, your dislikes, your drive, your fears etc based on who you are and what you would like to be known for to help people better connect with you online.

When people hear personal branding, different people have different beliefs about it which are misconceptions. Here are some of the popular misconceptions about personal branding that are not true;

- Personal branding is only for companies and businesses, individuals don't need it.
- Personal branding involves having to always create posts on social media, share pictures, like and comment on other people's posts every day.
- Personal branding is exposing your life on social media
- I am not a social media person so I don't need it
- You have to be an extrovert to have a personal brand

All of these above are not the right perspective to personal branding. I will share why right here;

- Personal branding is definitely not only for companies or businesses; it is called PERSONAL branding for a reason, this means it's meant to be for a single individual.
- Personal branding is not just about posting on social media, sharing content and pictures, liking and commenting on other people's posts; it's about intentionally sharing valuable information for the purpose of teaching, entertaining or inspiring people with whatever you post to help people become better.
- Personal branding definitely is not exposing your life on social media. It's more about being intentional about what you share, and you only share what is relevant to your audience.
- You don't have to be a social media person to brand yourself personally, nor do you have to be an extrovert to create a personal brand online, you just have to be passionate about what you do and share that with the world via social media.

"Whether you know it or not, you have a personal brand. When you Google yourself, what pops up? These results are the first impression people will have of you. Is it a good one? Is the information you are sharing across LinkedIn, Facebook, and other social media sites consistent? Whether you have a date or a job interview, chances are someone is going to Google you to learn more about who you are. The question is, do you want to allow your online reputation to take on a life of its own or control the narrative? With the proliferation of social media and the gig economy, it has become essential for everyone to embrace personal branding."

(Source: Forbes)

How people perceive you online influences the decision they make about you. This is why you want to be intentional as a tech talent to share content to position you in the best light in line with your skills or what you want to be known for.

These days recruiters or hiring managers can easily just type your name into LinkedIn to see the track record of what you've been sharing, and definitely, what you are sharing can become the deal breaker.

You don't have to like posting on social media and you don't have to post everyday, you just have to do it as often as you can - at least two to three times a week is a good place to start from or work with if that's what you can afford.

"Researchers have pointed to a phenomenon called "participation inequality" to explain the importance of online engagement. For every person actively engaging with your content (i.e. liking, commenting, reposting), there are likely to be 9 others who are engaging intermittently and 90 more who are just lurking. Yes, the world is watching indeed."

(Source: Nielsen Norman Group)

What you share online can give you an edge when opportunities show up and you don't want to leave it to chance.

Blow your trumpet, let your light shine

So I am going to be sharing with you the story of Oluwakemi, an amazing Product Designer. You might probably know her on Twitter if you regularly interact with product design folks on Twitter.

Kemi was a customer service representative before coming into tech. In 2019, Kemi reached a peak point where she got tired of how things were happening in her life; aside from the fact that she wasn't making much money, she felt she wasn't doing anything meaningful.

In Kemi word's, "I wasn't satisfied with my life. I did not like the way life was going for me. I asked myself, do I really want to do this? Do I really want to do this forever? The answer was NO!"

Kemi realised that she wanted more out of life and made a decision to make a career change.

Interestingly enough, she didn't know anything about tech at that time, but she just had a nudge to ask questions regarding it. She only had this one friend who was a developer at Andela. She spoke with him about how she wanted to transition careers and he advised her to learn frontend development; he gave her direction and resources to help her get started. He also guided her through understanding the basics of frontend development and she started to work on her projects herself.

Along the line while interacting with designs she had to code, she fell in love with design. She got into an internship role where she was involved in creating UI designs and frontend development. The internship role really stretched her capacity to handle multiple tasks at the same time. It was a learning phase for Kemi and she scaled through it despite the intensity of the work.

After the internship, she decided to narrow down her focus to product design and this was how her journey into product design started.

Kemi went ahead to continue expanding her skills by creating personal projects and working alongside other senior designers. She built up her portfolio and started applying for jobs on LinkedIn.

The job application phase was not easy, plenty of rejection emails but she kept on working on herself.

During the process of searching for jobs, Kemi was actively engaging on LinkedIn; she was always sharing her work, talking about her designs, her approach to solving problems, connecting with other designers and contributing to the design community.

This was the defining moment for Kemi, a founder of a startup company based in the US suddenly reached out to her - he had been seeing her work and following what she had been doing on her LinkedIn page. He informed her that he would like to talk about her taking up a design role in their company and they started talking.

Everything happened really fast, before she could even think much of it, she had been employed by the company.

Her first full time job as a designer was a remote job with a foreign company in the US.

Kemi saw the power of sharing what she does on social media and became more intentional with it. She built her personal brand on LinkedIn and Twitter which has been instrumental to her growth in the industry.

All through Kemi's career as a product designer, she has never worked full time with a Nigerian company despite living in Nigeria, all the companies she has worked full time for are companies outside Nigeria.

Today, Kemi has relocated to the US and is expanding herself further in her career. This is the power of building a personal brand using social media.

In Kemi's words, "Blow your trumpet to the world. Let your light shine. Nobody will blow your trumpet for you like you will do for yourself."

Build your own personal brand by simply sharing what you do on social media, engage with others professionals in your field, connect with the seniors in your industry and network with people all over the world. Your next job might be coming from that person in your network whom you should have sent a DM but you haven't.

The more intentional you are with what you do with your social media, the more you expose yourself to unlimited opportunities beyond your wildest imagination.

Don't get sucked into social media while trying to use social media

There is a tendency that when you are trying to use social media to build your brand, you can get sucked into a loop of spending unproductivity hours on the platforms - the platforms have been designed to get your attention and hold your attention as long as possible, so this means you have to consciously train yourself to be in control of them and not the other way round.

You have to create a content calendar and have simple strategies around your activities on social media.

Most likely only about 20% of the things you do on social media really matters to your personal brand, so discover what those 20% activities are and focus majorly on them.

If I am to narrow down the 20% activities that really matter to building a personal brand from a general standpoint, it will be;

- Creating valuable content based on what you want to be known for and what the people who follow you would find educative, inspiring, fun and human
- Connecting and networking with bright minds on the platform via direct message

I personally believe these two things above are the most important things you want to dedicate your most time on social media to.

As you can see, I didn't add posting, liking, commenting etc.

They are good activities but I have discovered that they are not the most important things for growth on the platforms.

Paying much more attention to creating valuable content and networking is the most important activity you can do on social media today, every other activity can follow thereafter.

You have to be really intentional with your social media platforms so you can take advantage of them instead of them taking advantage of you, because they can take advantage of you if you are not careful and strategic with their usage.

Insight 5

Intentionally connect and network with quality people

"Those closest to you will determine the outcome of your life - the single most important factor defining your future is the relationships you embrace."

-Dr Robb D. Thompson

Who you know is just as important as what you know. You are as valuable as the quality of people you have in your network.

Am sure you must have heard the quote, "Show me your friends and I will predict your future."

I believe this is so true - the quality of friends you have has a lot to play with the opportunities you get today, tomorrow, and the future.

I have seen people who have tremendous potential with their skills and experience, but because they are not in the right network of people who are doing very well and challenging themselves to be better, these people are not able to harness their brilliance and potential to help them scale their careers; neither are they able to get the kind of life-changing opportunities that can change the trajectory of their lives because they don't have key people who can speak on their behalf or recommend them to the places where they can soar.

To be more precise, this is my definition of quality people;

- Any person who is more experienced and knowledgeable than you
- Any person who is doing very well in your field or any other field
- Any person or group of people whom you work together and are constantly pushing yourself to be better at your craft
- Your mentor or mentors

You want to intentionally build relationships with these people by connecting with them at a personal level and be valuable to them.

Most of the people who I know who are at some of the best workplaces today got the jobs thanks to recommendations and referrals from someone in their network.

The reality is that just as word of mouth is the best form of marketing for businesses, word of mouth is also the best form of getting the really juicy opportunities out there.

When a company is in need of a talent and have an inside person who is trusted give them a recommendation or referral, there is a high tendency the person recommended would get the job because there is going to be a level of bias, especially if the person who recommended the talent is a valuable and trusted individual within the company. This is why you want to be in a network of quality people or at least some form of relationship with quality people.

Remember Ibrahim whom I shared his story earlier in chapter 4 of this book, he got the job in the US via a recommendation from a friend.

Micheal got his N400,000 gig from a friend's recommendation.

I can begin to go on and on about people that have gotten great jobs based on recommendations via someone in their network or a friend of a friend.

Even though relying on this is not trackable or measurable, it definitely does work.

4 recruiters reached out to me in 2 weeks thanks to recommendations

I myself got four different recommendations to four different companies looking to hire a Product Manager on LinkedIn. I never saw it coming.

Two of the companies were Nigerian companies and the other two were companies outside of Nigeria.

When I saw the message from the first recruiter, I was surprised. It was the least thing I was expecting that fateful day. I have always heard about how recruiters reach out to quality talents they have been tracking via their LinkedIn for weeks, but I have never heard anyone close to me to have had the experience, not to talk of myself.

As I interacted with the recruiter and saw the flow of the conversation, I knew I was going to get some level of preference and I was super excited. The recruiter shared with me that I was recommended by a new friend who happened to be someone I had just met a few days before in a product management community.

Isn't that interesting?

Someone I just met recommended me for a job that probably hundreds of other Product Managers applied for. Here I am, the company reached out to me despite having multiple applications to handle.

The second recruiter was a Bahamian start-up co-founder also looking to hire a Growth Product Manager for their product. He was very direct. He informed me about who they were looking for and what they expected. I knew I may not fit into what they want because I don't have a Blockchain and Cryptocurrency experience based on the product they were building.

PS: There are crazy opportunities in blockchain and cryptocurrency today but only very few talents are building themselves for that field in tech. I know a young tech talent who has really built himself for the blockchain industry and he is cashing out big in that space. If you have interest in blockchain and cryptocurrency, you understand how it works, and you are ready to work - please expand your knowledge and skill there. Thereafter, start positioning yourself as someone who can deliver value in that space. There are a lot of companies looking for talents to help them build blockchain and cryptocurrency related products.

The third recruiter was from a Kenyan start-up and the last recruiter was from a Nigerian e-commerce company.

Here I was, not actively looking for a job, but jobs were looking for me. A few people in my network had been seeing what I was doing and because I had connected with them properly, they recommended me easily.

This period in my life felt like I was handed an open check to choose which company I want; I can tell you for a fact that it was an exciting feeling. For you to be in a place where you are not the one applying to jobs and the jobs are the one coming to you is sweet; there is no pressure to impress, I was getting preferential treatment, I was not asked too many questions, I became more bolder during interviews because I knew I had options and most importantly for me, I used the opportunity to learn, unlearn and relearn.

This experience helped me see the power of intentionally using social media to share valuable content and connect with quality people.

I also learnt that the more you add value to yourself and share it with the world, the more you expose yourself to opportunities that you may never imagine were possible.

Despite not having a university degree, she was given a chance by someone ... and that made all the difference

Aderinsola is popularly known on Twitter as Atarah the figmama. If you relate with design folks on Twitter you would have come across Aderinsola.

She got into design officially in 2019. She was a photographer before coming into design. She had a basic knowledge of graphic design due to what she does as a photographer but not something serious to launch a career with. She met a designer who was really good and that inspired her to pursue the craft further and become better in it.

As time went ahead, Aderinsola was privileged to join a closed community of amazing designers which was where she came across a very good UIUX designer and started liking the idea of UIUX design. She decided to change her focus from logo design to UIUX design.

Over time, as she continued to develop her skills, she thought about getting a job. Getting the first job was hard. There were not many opportunities for beginners like herself. To make things further complicated, she didn't have a degree - she did not go to a university. When she started looking for a job, most openings either required a degree or two years experience or both—for junior roles!

It was a really tough time for her. There was a major fintech company she applied to back then that raised her hopes - she thought she was going to get the job due to their first feedback to her. However, after requesting her CV, they never got back to her.

As at then, she had also started building her personal brand and sharing what she did on Twitter, so she shared to the world that she was looking for a job and that's how one of her mentors referred her to a design agency looking for a UI/UX designer. The interview process was an intense one and she didn't know she was going to get the job. There were great designers who also applied for the job. Eventually she was employed by the agency.

While speaking with her boss months later, she asked him why he gave her a chance and employed her despite having only a few months of experience and no university degree. He told her that he believed in her and trusted that she was going to deliver and do well.

In Aderinsola's words, "If I didn't get that first job at that time, I don't know what I would be doing with my life today."

This is the power of a network of quality people. They can recommend or refer you to places that you may not be able to enter on your own. Be more intentional about connecting with quality people and you can change the trajectory of your life even beyond your career.

Insight 6

Be part of a community ... or build one if there is none available

Today's world is driven by community. If you don't already know this, then most likely you shouldn't be doing anything in tech.

How wouldn't you know that community is now everything today?

Everywhere on social media you will come across different communities for different reasons and purposes.

All of us humans have a deep desire to feel among and feel loved by a group of people. It is an innate nature that we all have.

"Being part of an engaging community gives us a sense of belonging. It enables us to share personal relatedness and support perpetual growth of each other, ourselves and our environment."

(Source: Wellbeingpeople)

There is a tendency for the average person to join a community that aligns with the person's interest, values, spiritual belief, career, passion etc.

If you are reading this book right now, you are probably in a community where you get information, connect with likeminds, learn, play, have fun and just be yourself without any pressure to impress.

Be active in communities that matter

With social media, joining communities is now much easier. The major problem I see with most people is that they are not active in the communities they are in.

A lot of people are ghosts in communities. They don't talk, they don't engage, they don't connect, they don't network - all they do is occupy space. This is not the best approach.

If you don't talk, how will people know you?

If you don't connect, how will they like and trust you?

If you don't network, how would you expand your potential beyond your current circle?

Engaging in communities, especially key communities with senior people or people of influence in your field is very important. It can give you the needed exposure to get more opportunities.

The more you engage, the more you can get support; the more you engage, the more you can build influence which is important for exposing your personal brand; the more you engage, the more you can provide value to people and be of service to people; the more you engage, the more you learn; the more you engage, the more money you can make; the more you engage, the faster you will succeed in the industry.

You want to thrive in tech?

Engagement in key communities is not an option, it is a game changer. Do it intentionally and you will fast track your career growth in the shortest possible time.

Insight 7

Prepare for the common challenges you will most likely face as someone just starting out in tech

Abraham Lincoln once said, "Give me six hours to chop down a tree, and I will spend the first four sharpening the axe."

What this quote basically means is that, if you have six hours to take an action, spend the first four hours preparing for how you will go about taking that action. To put it simply in a popular saying you probably already know, "If you fail to plan, you plan to fail."

The tremendous growth in the tech industry is high and so is the demand for people with the right skills, however, you are not the only one out there, you are competing with hundreds if not thousands of other talents in the same space. This means that you want to be prepared - you want to be ready.

As you come into the industry or think of taking your career to the next level, you want to spend hours literally preparing for the job or likely jobs you want to get.

Here are specific activities you want to do before applying for any job;

- Draft out a plan: write out your career plan
- Define the industries you want to work in, list out specific companies in those industries

Create a simple roadmap on how you want to approach your career from where you are starting from - start small, build up. Take the smallest role and/or company you can start with and then move up progressively.

Bola Afuye advised, "As a young person just starting out, get a broad range of experience across multiple different companies and industries to expand your horizon and help you scale up faster."

- Prepare your cover letter, CV and portfolio accordingly

PRO TIP: NEVER SEND THE SAME CV TO ALL COMPANIES YOU APPLY TO, ALWAYS TWEAK YOUR CV TO MATCH THE ROLES YOU APPLY FOR AND THE COMPANIES YOU APPLY TO BASED ON THEIR NEED.

- Optimise your LinkedIn profile for success
- Get all the necessary certifications that can give you an edge based on your field
- Gather as much experience as you can as an entry level talent in the industry by volunteering, participating in a competition, creating a solution to a problem with your skills etc. Don't just expect jobs to be handed to you on a platter of gold.

When you have prepared well by doing all of the activities above, your job search would be a lot easier and the chances that you will get a great job quickly is high.

This is the importance of preparation - by spending hours and days setting yourself up for success prior to even searching for a job, you will spend less time eventually searching for a job and finally getting one that works well for you.

The biggest challenge you will have getting a job and growing your career in the tech industry as an entry level talent is lack of experience

The tech industry is an industry that is driven by results and innovation. Companies in the industry are seeking to get results as fast as they can and scale their growth as much as they can.

Every company would prefer to have someone with a track record over someone without a track record - priority will be placed on talents with vast experience doing successful projects over those with less experience. Even talents with experience in failed projects are sometimes considered more than those without any experience at all.

Not having an experience means the employer is taking a risk on you when they are not sure that the risk will pay off, so it is normal that you will face this challenge, especially in the early stage of your career in tech.

In Nigeria and Africa as a whole, we have more startup companies (companies less than 5 years old) in the tech industry, and the larger percentage of them are under 3 years. A lot of these startup companies are looking to achieve product market fit and scale their solutions, hence the importance of experienced and skilled hands to help them achieve their goals.

As a tech talent when you understand this, you will know that it is your responsibility to position yourself if you want to get jobs and gigs faster. It is up to you to understand what it takes and have what it takes to help these companies achieve what they want.

Focus on getting as much experience as you can in the early stages of your career. So if you have to work for a low pay in the initial stage at a company where you will get plenty of experience, please do just that

Be ready for the normal feeling of uncertainty that comes with starting in a new career path

Most times, people are coming into the industry from an entirely different career path and so lack relevant work experience for the tech industry.

Pivoting from one job to another is not easy because you will be letting go of your comfort zone to go into unknown waters. Aside from that, you may also lose the benefit you enjoy in your current work which may include a good paying job, leadership role etc

All of this can be really scary. You should also prepare your mind for this. You may have that normal feeling of uncertainty about changing your career path especially if you are coming into tech from an entirely different career.

If you don't keep that feeling in check early enough, you will start to doubt yourself in the process or start having imposter syndrome where you feel you are not good enough or may not be good enough or may not be able to match up with what others are doing etc.

This can greatly affect your vibe, your confidence and your overall outlook.

Count the cost before jumping right in. Understand mentally that it's a new career path and you have to give yourself time. Don't expect too high so early, give yourself time.

Don't be too stuck with getting a job at any dream tech company.

I hear people just coming into the industry saying things like "I must work at Google." "I must work at Facebook or Apple."

Even though this is a great ambition or desire, if you focus too much on that but eventually get rejected (which you will definitely get), you may end up so disappointed and this may break you emotionally and mentally.

Don't put yourself into that situation at all, spread your net wide and apply broadly to as many great companies you can apply to.

You have to accept that you may get rejected a lot, so don't be too emotionally attached to any company or process.

Prepare very well, pay attention to the little things, give your best, learn as much as you can in the entire process and move ahead fast to the next one if one doesn't work out.

The more you apply, the more you understand how to apply.

-Peace Itimi

The best jobs you will probably get will come without plenty of stress.

I am saying this from both personal and shared experiences. It may come from a referral or recommendation or even via social media based on the content you've been sharing (this is why you don't want to ignore your personal branding and sharing what you do on social media regularly).

So don't beat yourself up if you don't get a job in a company you really want to work at, it might just be that you are not ready or it's not the right fit for you yet or you need more years of experience first.

Be open-minded to other companies and learn as much as you can at the same time.

Get ready for a lot of rejections

Just because I have given you all of these insights does not mean you will just breeze through the industry with everything working fine for you. Let me burst your bubbles if you have this thought above - YOU WILL GET REJECTED A LOT!

Please don't be disillusioned into thinking you will be invisible to rejection ... It's a big NO!

You will be rejected ... a lot of times or just a few times.

Be ready for that. Not because you expect failure, but because that is the reality of things.

However, when you accept and understand that you may be rejected a lot during job search and interviews, you will face them more intentionally by applying strategically while focusing more on learning through the experience.

Remember the statement from Peace Itimi, "The more you apply, the more you understand how to apply."

This increases your chances of success when you understand better how the processes work.

You may have a waiting period while job hunting and getting rejections

Take advantage of the waiting period; the worst thing you can do is sit idle.

There are many options you can do; you can get an idea together like a startup and build a product to solve a problem to get real-life experience; you can also intern at a company or offer your services for free to someone or a company that will let you learn. Just get yourself involved as much as you can.

The most important thing at the end of the day is to gain real-life experience that can come in handy during any interview process to show proof of what you have done and the value that you can bring to an organisation.

Also, see every interview process as an opportunity to gain experience, don't be too overly emotional or attached to it. Do your very best, follow up and if it doesn't work, move on to the next.

If you have to pay to get trained or pay to get certified, don't hesitate to do so

You can learn a lot for free online and there is no one that doesn't appreciate that - we all love free things; however, I have come to learn that this;

If you want to gain an unfair advantage in today's world, you have to transcend the freebies and be willing to invest money into your career and whatever you do.

Invest by paying an expert to train you, paying for a bootcamp or mentorship program, paying to have access to special closed communities or groups of people, paying to get an industry standard certificate; be open and willing to pay for anything that will give you an edge in the marketplace.

One piece of information can change your life.

That one information might be in a paid training program, a paid bootcamp, a paid closed community of people or with an industry certification exam. If you don't pay for it, you may never access it.

A lot of times, these payments can be very expensive and beyond your current financial capacity, nevertheless, you don't want to side track it. Instead, make plans to pay for the program whatever it may be. The truth is that when you commit yourself financially to something, you tend to pay attention to it better, especially when it costs you a lot more money than you would normally spend. Moreso, you will get more fulfillment from knowing that you paid for something valuable when you start to see the results in your life months or years later.

The relevance of doing these things doesn't show immediately, but I can tell you for free that they are the little things that can make all the difference in the long run.

Imposter Syndrome; what it is and how to deal with it

Imposter syndrome is a feeling of self doubt regarding your abilities. When one has imposter syndrome, you feel like you are not good enough, other people are better than you, you cannot do well like others, you are just starting out and your input may not be valuable, you feel like a fraud; imposter syndrome makes you practically feel less of yourself.

"Imposter feelings represent a conflict between your own self-perception and the way others perceive you.

To counter these feelings, you might end up working harder and holding yourself to ever higher standards. This pressure can eventually take a toll on your emotional well-being and your performance."

(Source: Healthline)

If you stay in that Imposter feeling for a while, it will eventually lead to a cycle of anxiety, depression, and guilt which would affect your overall output and productivity.

Everyone would probably have that feeling of imposter syndrome at one time or another in their lives, however, how they deal with it is what is most important.

How do you deal with Imposter Syndrome

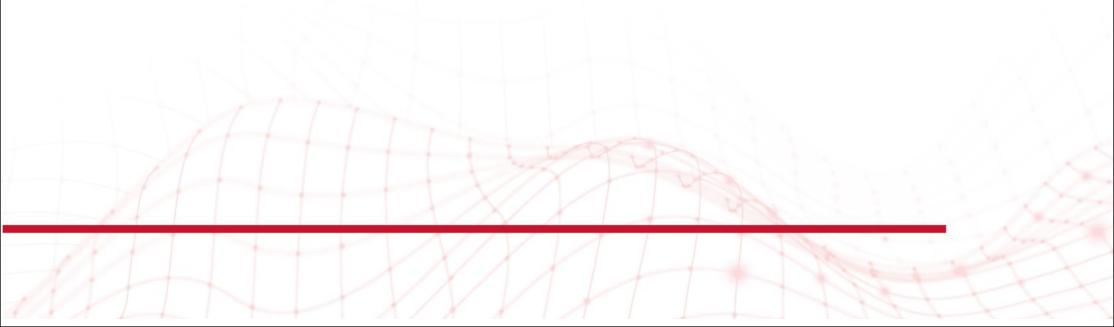
1. Know the signs when you start to have the feelings and embrace it for the purpose of managing it better
2. Accept that you can't change some things about your life and that is fine. You can fail at something, things may not work as planned and that doesn't make you a bad or incompetent person.
3. When things do work out, allow yourself to enjoy your success the way you feel most comfortable with. It is our win and you deserve it one hundred percent.

1. Don't keep your thoughts to yourself. Always share with people close to you, let them know how you feel.
2. Whenever you have the feeling, talk about it. Whenever you feel held back, talk about it.
3. Know that you are amazing just the way you are and that is your unique strength
4. Don't compare yourself to anyone. You can never be exactly like anyone no matter how much you try, no one can be exactly like you no matter how much they try. So there is no point comparing yourself, it's fruitless.

At the end of the day, you can manage imposter syndrome by managing your emotions and how you feel. The more you control your emotions and thoughts, the better you will become as a person.

The world needs what you have no matter how little it may seem. All of us humans need ourselves to survive. We are interdependent on each other for survival - I need you to survive one way or the other, you need me to survive one way or the other. Never forget this.

CHAPTER 6



CHAPTER 6

AT THE END OF THE DAY, IT'S NOT ABOUT THE MONEY, IT'S THE FREEDOM AND FULFILLMENT THAT MATTERS MOST

If you act upon the knowledge and insights I have shared with you in this book consistently over the next 3 - 6 months, you will become more valuable with your skills, fast track your career growth in tech, earn as much money as you want and enjoy the freedom and fulfillment to do more good to yourself and others.

You see, what I have come to learn from my personal experience developing myself is that; when you achieve a goal, the object of the goal is not what is important. It is who you become, the feeling of fulfillment and freedom that comes with the process that is most important.

Most young people don't understand this. They are so focused on the object of their goal - make N1,000,000 monthly, become a senior software engineer in three years, work at Google, travel the world etc.

All these above are just objects that will eventually pass in time. When you achieve them you will find out that they are just there. It is the feeling of being a winner, going the extra mile, pushing yourself, earning what you never thought possible, going where you never thought you could, gaining certain kinds of experiences - these are the things that will matter most at the end of the day.

The feelings are inexpressible with words until you feel them yourselves.

I urge you to take action on these insights I have given to you; do them as often as you can, run with them like your life depends on it, follow through on them and grow with them.

I want you to experience that feeling of freedom and fulfillment yourself. That feeling of self confidence in yourself, your skills, your abilities, your potentials and everything that you are.

I want you to feel like a king or a queen that you are in your space and be proud of yourself and who you are becoming. I want you to be happy, to feel like your life has a meaning and be excited about living this life and sharing it with others.

I want you to feel fulfilled being able to pay your bills and do extra for yourself, your family, your friends and anyone you want to take care of.

These are the things that really matter at the end of the day and that is what I want you to have and enjoy.

BONUS CHAPTER

HOW TO GET FOREIGN REMOTE JOBS ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD

The biggest opportunity for anyone in tech today is the opportunity to work for clients, businesses, companies and organisations outside of your home country and get paid in dollars. I am guessing you might want to understand how it works and how you can go about,

The most important factor in getting remote jobs is the source, that is, where would you get these remote jobs from. If you can get the source, the rest is on you to know how to apply, actually apply and follow up till you get the job.

If you type on Google questions like, "where can I get remote jobs as a Nigerian?" You will probably come across hundreds of suggestions. However, I have vetted some credible sources for remote jobs and I would leave you with their information below.

Here are some of the credible websites where you can get remote jobs anywhere in the world

- [Remote.io](#)
- [Targe.io](#)
- [Remoteafrica.io](#)
- [joinrise.co](#)
- [Angel.co](#)
- [Indeed.com](#)
- [Glassdoor.com](#)
- [Mediabistro.com](#)
- [Remotive.io](#)
- [Outsourcely.com](#)
- [Workingnomads.co](#)
- [GitHub.com](#)
- [Receptix.com](#)
- [FlexJobs.com](#)
- [WeWorkremotely.com](#)
- [skipthedrive.com](#)

Click any of the links above and explore the world of remote jobs. Most of the platforms are free while a few are paid.

It may not be a ride in the park - you won't just apply today and get a job tomorrow. It will definitely take you some time, but if you are determined and you do your best to quickly learn and understand what the companies are looking for and what it takes to get those jobs, you will get a knack for it. It's only a matter of time before you get yourself a remote job with a foreign company.

You should also check out this resource on the top 100 remote companies hiring today according to We Work Remotely here:

<https://weworkremotely.com/top-remote-companies>

More opportunities, less competition; the higher your chances of getting a great job that pays you well quickly.

There are literally thousands of companies out there looking for talents, you just need to know where to look, prepare yourself and shoot your shot.

Be strategic with Remote Job applications

Please don't go about the links I just gave you by sending CV's out to every job opening you see - you will be wasting your time with this approach.

Instead be more strategic and do the following;

- Define the kind of companies you want work at first
- Know why you want to work with those companies
- Learn about what those companies are looking for in an employee (you do this by researching more on each company independently)
- Find out what these companies currently pay their employees
- Try to find out as much as you can about their hiring processes
- Know these companies mission and vision; know what they are doing, the solutions they are providing and who they are providing those solutions to.

The more you know about a company before applying, the better.

What this means is that if you have done your homework, then you deserve the job; if you take the time to know a company and understand what they do, you definitely deserve a space in that company.

Even if things don't work out with the company, you will learn lessons through the process that will help you on how to approach the next job and better position yourself for success.

Don't go through the process alone, ask for help

Just because you have access to uncountable remote jobs and you can do everything by yourself doesn't mean you should do it alone.

"Two heads are better than one." You will do much more with a friend, a mentor or with a community than you will ever do by yourself. The place of working with someone else towards a goal can never be replaced.

So get a friend who has gotten remote jobs before; get into a community of remote workers, contract workers and freelancers. Build relationships with anyone in this category so you can learn from them, ask them questions, and do whatever they ask you to do.

You will make your remote job search easier and faster with an experienced friend than you will do on your own. Always ask for help, especially from experienced hands.

CONCLUSION

Remember one of the first statement I shared at the beginning of this book; "To scale fast and make it big financially, you need to invest your time, energy and resources in an industry, market, field or niche where there is high demand or potential of high demand for a product/service with low competition."

I am sure by now you would have understood the meaning of this statement. Take action with the understanding of this statement and pay attention to the areas that would really give leverage regardless of your knowledge, skills and years of experience. This is the fastest way to succeed and thrive in any industry. It's beyond even the tech industry.

Bringing it all to a wrap, If you are following through with the tech industry closely, you will have come across numerous startups and companies sharing that they have received funding from investors to help scale their products or business.

For me personally, this is the major sign of the opportunities sitting pretty on the table for you and I as tech talents.

The millions of dollars investment happening all across the globe is a great sign of how much people who control the money of the world want technology to advance further and solve more human problems.

For anyone who wants to work in a technology driven company today, herein lies the opportunity for you to be the kind of person that can help these companies solve problems, deliver increasing value and drive business growth beyond just your skills.

I added beyond your skills because the tech industry is driven by value - the more value you bring to the table beyond just your skills, the more valuable you will become, the more companies won't have a choice but to respect you and what you do.

The result of this is that you can earn as much as you are willing to work for and as much as you want - there really is no cap to what you can earn the more valuable you make yourself; "Blood Money" will be dripping into your account in stupendous amounts the more valuable you become and you will definitely thrive in the tech industry.

Understand this and continually work on making yourself more valuable, that is all.

Cheers to your continuous growth.

I wish you all the best

Olabanji Ewenla

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