

Career Seasons



TOPIC: Career Seasons: Understanding When to Build, Bloom, or Pause

Most of us have used public transport at some point, right?

In Kenya, we call them *matatus*. In Nigeria, they're *danfos*, and in Tanzania, *dala dalas*. What's the public minibus called where you live?

If you've ever ridden in one, you know how it goes: you board at the stage, wait for the seats to fill, and then the journey begins.

Some days/times it's smooth sailing - fewer stops, no traffic. Other days? You're stuck in traffic, it's raining, and that one window just won't close properly.

That rhythm - unpredictable yet familiar - mirrors our careers more than we realise.

Every career has seasons: **moments to build, bloom, or pause.**

While 'matatu' routes may look similar, no two journeys are ever the same.

- Some passengers alight early, some go the full route
- Some pay less, some more
- Others change vehicles along the way.

Likewise, your career journey is yours alone.

Recognising which season you're in helps you **move with wisdom, not pressure.**

And the first step? Understanding what each season means - and the work it calls for.

The Build Season: Boarding and Starting the Journey

This is the season of **beginnings** and **preparation**.

You are or have already identified your destination. You are ready to pay the fare and find your seat. You are prepared to be on your way.

In career terms, the build season is when you're learning, networking and planting seeds. For some, it's the first job; for others, it's the start of a new role or pivot.

You're building skills, nurturing relationships, and gaining experience. It's often uncomfortable because growth demands patience, hard work and humility.

You might feel:

- Eager but anxious - "Am I in the right seat?"
- Tired from long routes with little recognition.
- Overwhelmed by detours - maybe even wondering if you boarded the right bus.

Still, this is where **your foundation forms**. The best thing you can do in this season is to be teachable, stay consistent, and pay attention to the road signs - mentors, feedback, and opportunities to stretch.

In this season, you want to:

- Get a short certification or micro-course that directly strengthens your role.
- Find two peers or mentors in your field and have a 20-minute coffee (or call) this month.
- Volunteer for one project that slightly scares you — it's where the best learning happens.
- Create a simple 12-week plan: three learning goals, two networking goals, one portfolio/result to show.

It's important to choose the right bus, the right route and the right seat because the journey is just about to begin. But always watch out for common pitfalls: overcommitting to busywork, chasing every shiny course, or forgetting to rest.

Build deliberately.

The Bloom Season: Smooth Highway and Open Windows

Picture this. You are in a *matatu* on a smooth highway at noon. The road is clear, the music's right, and the wind through the open window feels like freedom. For a moment, it's almost like you hired a private chauffeur. 😊

This is your **bloom season**. The time in your career when your effort & late nights or early mornings start to pay off.

- Opportunities find you,
- Your work gains recognition,
- You start feeling confident in your lane.
- Rewards arrive, a promotion, a new client, or recognition..

You might feel energised and inspired, grateful for progress, filled with a sense of clarity about your direction.

"Finally, this is what I have been working for"

This is the time to **enjoy the ride - responsibly**. Keep refining your skills, mentoring others, and saving for your next refuel. Don't get so caught up in the music that you miss your next turn.

In the bloom season

- Document wins: keep a one-page "achievement log" to use in reviews or applications.
- Mentor one person - teaching strengthens mastery

- Routinely pause to think and prepare for your next level.

Watch out: Don't get too comfortable. The bloom season can hide gaps, legacy skills that need refreshing or relationships that need tending. Enjoy the moment, but stay intentionally prepared for the next turn.

The Pause Season: Traffic, Stops, and Reflection

Then comes the unexpected – **traffic, stop signs, breakdowns, accidents, you name it!**

The driver is forced to slow down. Everyone's restless, checking their watches, wondering what's taking so long.

In your career, this is the **pause season** - moments when progress feels slow, uncertain, or even stuck. You might be between jobs, on a career break, or simply feeling unmotivated.

It's uncomfortable, especially when others seem to be cruising ahead while you're stuck watching raindrops race down the window.

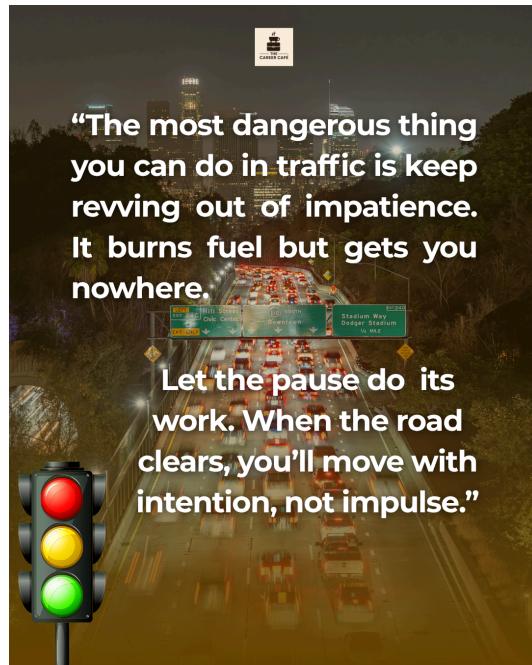
It's important to recognise that **traffic isn't the end of the journey - it's part of it.**

Most people panic or try to “push harder,” but sometimes the wiser move is to pause - to refuel, realign, and rediscover purpose.

Instead of panicking and forcing movement, use the pause to:

- Actually pause and carve out time to think.
- Reflect on what's working and what's not.
- Learn new skills that prepare you for what's next - maybe how AI or digital tools apply in your field.
- Explore a side project or hobby that rekindles creativity.
- Switch matatus entirely - a new role, a new mindset, even a new industry.

If you ignore this season, you might miss the lesson it brings.



Every step of the way, know that your journey is different

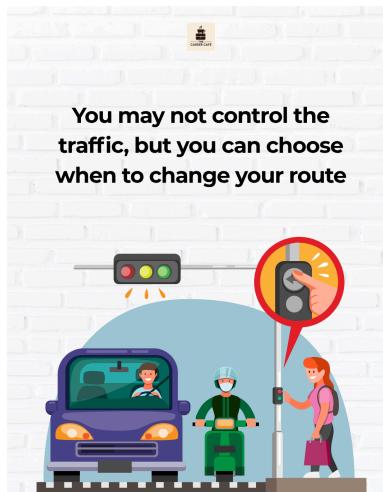
We could be seated in the same bus, at the same time, even in the same seat. But **our seasons are never the same**. Why? Because while your destination might be the city, mine could be a small town past it. You may be in a hurry; I might not mind the traffic.

So focus on your journey. Recognise your season. **Work in it, on it, and learn from it.**

Ignoring your season could mean missing your lesson.

- If you keep pushing in traffic when you should be reflecting, you'll burn out.
- If you relax too long at one stage, you might miss your next opportunity.

Each season has its own wisdom.



Preparing for the Next Season

Even passengers prepare ahead - they save for fare, map alternative routes, and carry an extra coin, *just in case*.

The same applies to you as a professional. You might be building, but you need to prepare for another season.

Here's how to prepare for what's ahead:

1. **Stay learning.** Even in bloom, take short courses, attend events, or read industry insights. Understand what's happening so that you stay ahead and stay relevant.
2. **Build relationships.** Today's seatmate might be tomorrow's opportunity.
3. **Take care of yourself.** Physical, mental, and emotional rest keep you ready for the next season.
4. **Reflect regularly.** Ask: "Am I still heading where I want to go?"
5. **Be adaptable.** Sometimes, the best decision is to change matatus - a new job, role, or mindset.

Our Matatu has reached its destination....

If you've gotten this far, it's been quite the ride, right?

Before you alight from this written matatu and get back to your career journey, remember this:

Your career will have detours, potholes, and scenic routes. But each season - whether you're building, blooming, or pausing - carries meaning.

Understanding where you are helps you **travel with grace, not comparison**.

So as the year winds down, ask yourself:

With just 61 days to go, am I building, blooming, or pausing in my career journey?

CAPTION

Most of us have taken public transport at some point, right?

In this article, we compare our career to a ride public transport ride or if you like, to a matatu

From the moment you board, to the journey and not forgetting the traffic.

Our careers are similar, with many seasons, each different from the other and each with a lesson of its own.

So, if you are reading this on a smooth sailing matatu, or stuck in traffic, there's a lesson here for you. Read through and let us know which season you are in.

Also, what's public transport in your country?

Visibility Over Perfection



Visibility Over Perfection:

D O N E Is Better Than ~~Invisible~~

Title: Visibility Over Perfection: Why Done Is Better Than Invisible

Have you ever been in a situation where someone less qualified than you got the job? Or seen someone join your organisation with fewer qualifications than you would have imagined?

It happens more often than we'd like to admit.

And usually, it's because of one thing: **they took action.**

They showed up, applied, shared their work, raised their hand—without waiting to be perfect.

Because here's the truth: **perfect is an illusion**, and no one will ever know how good your work is, or how skilled you are, if they've never seen you.

So, where are you? Are you visible?

What Does Perfectionism Look Like?

Perfectionism doesn't always announce itself. Sometimes it hides in polite excuses and quiet hesitations that sound noble but actually keep us stuck.



The Many Faces of Perfectionism



The silent

"I don't want to mess up."

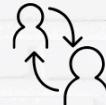


The humble

"I'm not qualified enough."

The subtle

"It's not my turn yet."



The fearful

"What will people say?"

The quiet

"I can do better."



The overthinking

"I need a little more time."



But behind each of these phrases lies one powerful truth: **perfectionism can be paralysing.**

It steals opportunities while we're busy polishing, tweaking, and perfecting. While we wait to "add a little more salt" or "one more iteration," someone else - perhaps less experienced, less prepared - shows up visible and ready.

And guess what? The opportunity goes to them.

Because in the real world, **opportunities don't go to the most qualified. They go to the most visible.**

But What Drives the Need to Be Perfect?

Perfectionism is rarely about excellence. It's about fear.

"Perfectionism is the belief that if we do things perfectly and look perfect, we can minimize or avoid the pain of blame, judgment, and shame." [Brené Brown](#)

So what drives it? Often:

- **Fear of judgment:** "What will people say if I fail?"
- **Fear of not being enough:** The quiet voice that says, "I'm not ready."
- **Comparison culture:** Constantly measuring yourself against what you see on social media or colleagues' highlight reels.
- **Imposter syndrome:** Believing your success is luck, not skill - so you overcompensate by trying to be flawless.

Perfectionism becomes a defence mechanism. We build walls of "perfect" to protect ourselves from criticism. But in reality, these walls don't keep out judgment; they keep out opportunity.

The Trap of Perfectionism

Here's the catch: Perfectionism feels productive. It feels like you're preparing, improving, refining. But really, it's just a well-dressed form of procrastination.

Perfectionism:

- **Stifles creativity.** You edit your ideas before they even have a chance to breathe.
- **Delays progress.** You're always "almost done" but never ready to ship.
- **Chips away at self-worth.** You start to equate output with value - and when nothing feels good enough, neither do you.
- **Creates invisible professionals.** The ones with the best ideas but no digital footprint, no voice in meetings, no portfolio of shared work.

It's a dangerous cycle: fear of imperfection leads to inaction, which leads to invisibility, which then reinforces the fear that you're not doing enough.

And all the while, the world moves on, rewarding the ones who dared to show up.

So by now, if you already feel like a "perfectionist" or know deep down that you are one. What can you do about it?

How to Overcome Perfectionism

Breaking free from perfectionism isn't about lowering your standards. It doesn't mean sharing work with errors and delivering a half-baked cake.

Rather, it's about redefining success.

Because if something is worth doing 100%, it's also worth doing 20%. Start small, start rough, start now, and iterate later.

Here's how to start showing up without fear:

1. **Redefine what your "done" looks like:**

"Done" isn't perfect - it's visible. Share your work when it's good enough to help someone, not when it's flawless.

2. **Detach self-worth from outcomes.**

Your work is not you. Whether a post flops or a project gets criticized, it doesn't define your worth, it refines your skill.

3. **Use imperfection as feedback fuel.**

Every imperfect post, pitch, or presentation gives you something to learn from. Visibility invites growth.

4. **Start before you're ready.**

Apply for the role you think is out of reach. Share the idea you've been sitting on. Post that unfinished thought.

5. **Celebrate progress, not polish.**

Every step forward is a win - especially the messy ones. Growth rarely looks perfect; it looks like showing up again and again.

Here's a New Standard to live by:



“ I will strive for Visibility Over Perfection

You need to replace “I’ll do it when it’s perfect” with “I’ll start where I am.”

Because being visible isn’t about being flawless - it’s about being present. The world can only reward what it can see.

So the next time you hesitate to post that idea, submit that proposal, or apply for that role because you don’t feel ready - remember this:

Done is better than invisible.

And progress beats perfection every single time.

Have you ever taken action even when things were not perfect? Tell us about that time and how it changed how you view perfection.

Article Caption: Have you ever watched someone land a role you knew you were more qualified for?

It’s not always luck. Sometimes it’s *visibility*.

While many wait for perfect timing, perfect credentials, or the perfect post, others simply *show up*.

This new article dives into why **done is better than invisible**, and how perfectionism quietly keeps so many professionals unseen.

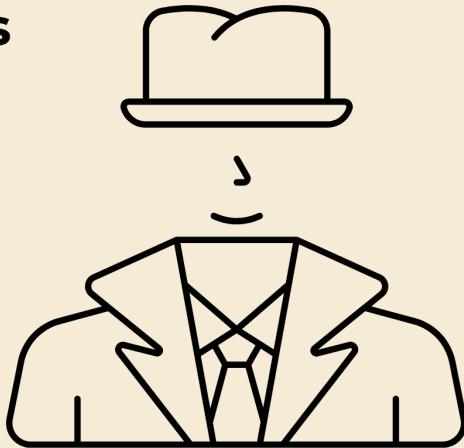
 Read, reflect, and tell us about a time you showed up when things weren't perfect.

Share this to reach someone who needs to show up today.

The Invisible Resume

The ‘Invisible Resume’: What the Internet Says About You

Have you ever tried to Google yourself? You might be amazed or not!



The ‘Invisible Resume’: What the Internet Says About You

Have you ever tried to Google yourself? What popped up?

If you've never tried, do it and hope that you won't be surprised.

In a world where Google is often the first HR manager, that search result is more powerful than you think. It is what a prospective employer or client would see if they decided to get to know you better, over and above your CV or portfolio.

That's what we call an Invisible Resume. The story everyone online is already reading about you. And honestly, most people don't bother polishing it.

Technology didn't just change how we work; it changed how we're seen. Visibility is the new credibility. Gone are the days when only your paper CV could fight and win your battles in your absence. Now you need to complement your CV with a strong Invisible Resume.

It speaks for you:

- Before an interview.
- Before a client meeting.
- Before someone decides whether to trust you or not.

The First Glimpse Matters

What did you think after hitting the search button? If you haven't, here is what often shows up when someone Googles your name:

1. An array of photos - Yours, and maybe of other people who share the same name.
2. Your LinkedIn profile (*if you have one*).
3. Videos of you from your active social platforms - *even posts from your vacation in Diani*

4. An article or blog you published sometime back, or the one you actively write.

That first page of Google is now your first impression, and you don't get to explain it. For some, this might be a nightmare, but when played right, this is an opportunity to make sure that what is visible helps more than it hurts.

But Google is just the first stop shop.

Why does this matter?

Here are a few things happening in Kenya that make this super important:

1. **Everyone is online**, and more young people are freelancing digitally, not just in Kenya but across the globe.
2. **Recruitment has also changed** - A lot of job advertising, recruiting and connections now happen online through LinkedIn, WhatsApp, and even Facebook. For many Kenyans, completing your profile means more attention.

So, this is not just about global opportunities; even locally - in Nairobi, Kisumu, Mombasa - who you are online is becoming the first way people judge you.



What if you don't have a digital footprint or keep a low profile? Are you safe from scrutiny? Not so much...

What Can Go Wrong When You Ignore Your Invisible Resume

Think of your **Invisible Resume like footsteps**. People hear them before you walk into the room. If you ignore those footsteps, a few things can happen before you even say hello.

- Old or awkward posts from years ago can paint the wrong picture of who you are today
- An Experience section on LinkedIn that doesn't match your CV can make you look careless, ignorant or inconsistent
- Typos, half-filled profiles, missing photos or generic headshots give an impression of low effort.

- **And the quietest danger is invisibility itself.** If you don't show up in searches or in your professional networks, opportunities will simply pass you by.

Now that it matters: Let's Make Your Invisible Resume Visible

First, you don't need to overthink this and delete all your TikTok videos. First, understand that not all social media channels are listed on search engines.

So instead of doing an overhaul on your whole online life, just start with one or two of these, and build from there.

1. Google yourself and see what others see

- Search your name now. What shows up on page one? Note the first 5 results. Which are good? Which are not so good? Decide what to fix or remove.

2. Polish your LinkedIn.

- It is usually the first thing that pops up, so make it count. Most recruiters will also post jobs there or headhunt candidates. Use a clean, friendly photo.
- Make your headline count (include what you do + what you aim to do + whom you serve/work for).
- Fill the About section with your journey, your skills, what you care about and the impact you have created so far.
- Add skills, courses, examples of work, and even volunteer work. The smallest things count.

3. Clean up the other social media channels (*recently, Instagram started ranking on Google*)

- If you want to keep that part of your life private, consider changing your privacy settings.
- Archive old posts you're not proud of or delete them.
- Review tags. Sometimes other people tag you in stuff you don't want to show. Untag or request removal.
- If you are in the creative space, optimize this to work harder for you by putting out content that your prospective employers or event clients would be interested in.

4. Be consistent and be active

- Post or share something small every few weeks (a project you completed, an insight, something you're learning).
- Engage with your network: comment, share, congratulate others.
- That visibility builds trust and also keeps your digital footprint updated. More relevant work or information will be updated and appear top.



Remember: Small, visible wins matter more than dramatic clean-ups. Do one thing now and follow up later.

Finally, Let the Invisible Resume Work for You. It already exists, so let it begin helping you and tell a story you are proud of.

What's one thing that you will implement today? Share your **Invisible Resume** wins with us at #Careercafeke - we'd love to see how you're showing up online.

Article Overview

ARTICLE	DESCRIPTION	DATE PUBLISHED
The Invisible Resume: What Your Online Presence Says About You	This article could explore how a professional's digital footprint tells their story even before their CV. Key themes could include visibility, credibility, and the importance of online first impressions.	16th October 2025
The Leadership Gap: Why Emotional Intelligence Is the New Executive Skill	We envision a piece that discusses why emotional intelligence (EQ) is becoming the true indicator of leadership. This could cover self-awareness, empathy, and people skills, emphasizing their importance over traditional titles or control.	
Career Seasons: Understanding When to Build, Bloom, or Pause	This topic delves into the natural rhythms of a career. It could explore the power of pacing, teaching professionals when to push forward, when to pause, and when to focus on growth.	30th October 2025
Visibility Over Perfection: Why Done Is Better Than Invisible	This article would focus on progress over perfection, encouraging professionals to show up, share their work, and take action even when everything isn't perfectly aligned.	23rd Oct 2025
The Career Identity Crisis: Who Are You Without Your Job Title?	<p>A deep dive into detaching self-worth from job roles or external recognition.</p> <p>We are looking for a tone that is real, reflective, and empowering. The ideal length is between 600–800 words, and the style should be conversational yet credible—like an honest chat over coffee that leaves the reader inspired and thinking.</p>	