



THE BEGINNING

Quite often, the people who move ahead break barriers, and make a name for themselves in any sphere of life are individuals who yield to counsel. Obeying counsel is the pathway to greatness.

Sometime in October 2012, I wrote an article titled 7 costly mistakes entertainers make. It was published in some blogs and the defunct, Entertainment Express.

As an entertainment journalist and visibility strategist, I researched and observed that entertainers all over the world, especially in Nigeria my country, make mistakes that put their career on a downward path. Some recover from this plunge, others don't.

My observation inspired this book and it is my hope that it will serve as the panacea you need to change the course of your career as a showbiz practitioner and set you on the path of progress and success.

NOTE: This book is not only meant for entertainment practitioners. The mistakes highlighted can be made by anyone in any sphere of life. So whether you are an actress, comedian, actor, musician or even an entrepreneur, a part of this book will resonate with you. I hope you avoid the mistakes highlighted and make a masterpiece out of your career. Go make it happen.

CHAPTER ONE THE WRONG MOTIVE



"I made a lot of mistakes when I began acting and that was because I did not have plans. I just wanted to be known"- Toyin Abraham- Nollywood actress and filmmaker.

I have read stories of entertainers who got distracted by the glitz and glamour in the industry and got side-tracked from their purpose. The moment you get fooled by the allure of showbiz and refuse to focus on developing yourself and honing your skills, you will soon be left behind. On January 14th 2017, Nollywood actress, Ebube Nwagbo stated in an interview with Vanguardthat entertainers who come into the industry with the wrong motive will not go far.

In her words:" The industry is a big place; everybody comes from different places, different life backgrounds, and different stories. At the end of the day we don't know who is here to do the right thing. If you're here for the wrong reasons then you're not going to last".

Once your motive is wrong from the beginning, then your success won't be guaranteed. Many young people come into the entertainment with the intention to be rich, famous and live life on the fast lane. While there is nothing wrong with being famous and rich, a misplaced motive will limit your growth.

- -The entertainment industry is not the shortcut to fame and fortune.
- -Being an entertainer is not a reason to be undisciplined, lazy and uninventive.

Successful entertainment practitioners will tell you showbiz is a labour of love. When you come into the industry with the wrong motive and you don't succeed early enough as a result of your unrealistic projections, don't blame anyone. It is only a sign that you came in with a wrong motive. Anything worth celebrating takes time.

Why are you in the entertainment industry?

Do you see being an entertainer as a means to an end or the end in itself?

What is your higher calling?

At the 2017 edition of 2017 edition of Success Story Africa conference, Nigerian actress, Toyin Abraham made a salient point about her career journey.

According to her: "I made a lot of mistakes when I began acting and that was because I did not have plans. I just wanted to be known. But, I now know that being popular isn't the same thing as being successful. When I got into the industry and the fame became too much, I became irresponsible".

CHAPTER TWO DEARTH OF FINANCIAL INTELLIGENCE



Despite being highly talented and blessed with an awesome voice, he King of Pop Michael Jackson died bankrupt. Outside of the entertainment terrain, Michael Jackson's life was plagued with drama. When he died in 2009, his estate went bankrupt, and he owed about \$500 million to the IRS. His imminent music tour was planned solely to resolve his debts, but due to his untimely death it never began.

This is what the dearth of financial intelligence does to you as an entertainer. What you make is not as important as what you invest. You may be charging millions for shows, for movie appearances but that doesn't matter if you don't learn what it takes to multiply your money and make your money work for you.

Speaking at the Success Stories Africa Conference in 2017, Nollywood actress and filmmaker, Toyin Abraham said:

"I could not boast of N1 million in 2016. I was making money and I wanted to feel among. When one of our colleagues bought a car, it was trouble because we all strove to buy the same car or a bigger one. I had to change my circle for good and this change started in March 2017".

Hollywood's Veronica Lakes initial success was wasted by mental illness and a stream of broken marriages. Although she was rewarded heavily for big-time roles in Sullivan's Travels and as a pin-up girl, the achievement couldn't last. As is the case with many A-listers who also threw away their fortunes with reckless abandon, Lake poured her wealth into liquor bottles and eventually died in poverty at 50 years old.

Proverbs 22:7 cautions: "The rich rules over the poor, and the borrower becomes the lender's slave."

Don't allow the glamour and the hunger to constantly fit in make you wallow in debt. Take your own baby steps, invest your money and make it work for you.

According to a Cheatsheet.com 2017 report:" Back in May 2015, Forbes named 50 Cent one of the five wealthiest hip-hop artists, pegging his net worth at \$155 million. But had investments and a big lawsuit — he was ordered to pay \$5 million to a woman who says he posted a sex tape of her online — put the rapper's fortune in jeopardy.

The man who once promised to get rich or die tryin' "filed for Chapter 11 protection in a Connecticut court, a move that allowed him to reorganize his finances while developing a plan to repay his creditors. At the time, he estimated his debt at between \$10 million and \$50 million and his assets in roughly the same range. In July 2016, he emerged from bankruptcy with a plan to repay more than \$23 million in debt over the next five years"

Dave Ramsey, author of the Total Money Make over said: "You must gain control over your money or the lack of it will forever control you."

CHAPTER THREE TAKING YOUR FANS FOR GRANTED



In my work as an entertainment journalist, I have experienced several instances when entertainers take fans for granted. I recall attending a particular concert hosted by one of Nigeria's revered indigenous rappers. His fans had thronged to stadium, hoping to watch him perform live and connect with his music. Sadly, a concert that this so called rapper was meant to headline ended with him performing for less than 30 minutes. Several questions ran through my mind that day.

Is the rapper too big to entertain his fans?

As the headliner of the concert, shouldn't the time allotted to him be more than the one allotted to any other artiste?

His die-hard fans left that concert disappointed, like a lover whose heart has been broken. You cannot declare on social media that your fans made you who you are and your actions goes in another different direction when it comes to giving them value for their money.

As an entertainer bear in mind that being good at what you do is how you reward your fans for choosing to stand by you. Don't call them haters or bash them when they criticise you or your music.

You need to perceive them as your customers/client as the case may be.

In his Facebook post, Nigerian entertainment journalist and poet, Tofarati Ige recounts his experience as regards attending music concerts in Nigeria.

According to him: "I have attended many concerts in Nigeria by virtue of my job as a journalist.

Most times, I wonder why people actually pay money to attend thoseshows. I make hold to say that 90% of the music shows in this country are depressingly horing, drah and unimaginative. I would never pay a dime of my money to attend those shows.

The artistes would just come on stage and start jumping around. To worsen the matter, they would point their microphone to the crowd, and the audience would end up singing the songs themselves. What nerve!

Our artistes and event organisers really need to step up. The fans and concert goers also need to demand more value for their money"

In his article titled, 'Treat your fans like gold', Jon Ostrow said:" Regularly delivering value to your fans online is a big part of nurturing their loyalty. The more value you deliver on a consistent basis, the more loyal they will become. But with the idea of delivering value comes a problem that many artists run into, which is to make promises they don't carry through. This could be in the form of promising a new song release on a certain date, promising a live performance like no other, or even simply promising that your music is like nothing anyone has ever heard before."

How you treat your fans as a showbiz practitioner goes a long way in determining how far you go as an entertainer.

CHAPTER FOUR NOT BEING VISIBLE



Never allow the fear of criticism hold you back from blessing humanity with your light. Be willing to shine your light and put the spotlight on what you do.

-KEHINDE AJOSE

I slept that day feeling like a king. I had appeared on a TV programme earlier that day to do a motivational session meant to usher people into the New Year. The producer of the show was on the lookout for speakers who could do a career enhancement presentation; she did a Google search on the subject matter and found my contact. Gaining visibility for your craft isn't going to happen by miracle or magic, it is intentional. The experts you applaud and laud have learnt these secrets.

In 2015, I wrote an article titled 'The Johnnyfication of YemiAlade'. In the article, I shared how the songstress uses storytelling to gain visibility for her brand.

Read the excerpts below:

"Most of the books that make it to the bestselling status are usually stories. Stories connect to the emotions while facts bore. A sincere heartfelt story will reach out to the soul than facts.

Yemi Alade maximized the story telling strategy in composing Johnny.

According to her: 'The inspiration came from a media personality in Abuja who suggested carelessly that I sing a love song for once with someone's name and I said ok, I would give thought to it and it worked out. Everybody has a Johnny in their life at a point in time or must have experienced a similar situation. But the thing is that even though I mentioned only three names in the song, in my own case, it's a book full of names.'

You need to understand that talent is never enough .Being able to sing, act, share jokes isn't just enough if no one knows about what you do.

Maximize visibility opportunities

Whatever you do, there are always opportunities for you to expose and promote your brand. You have to be constantly prepared to maximize those opportunities.

Whenever Yemi Alade grants an interview, she tries to make the narrative favour her by redirecting the conversation to subject matters that helps to showcase her expertise.

Every social media post, meeting with a client, media interview and media campaigns are golden opportunities to open your expertise to the world and the world to your expertise. Do not underestimate it.

Showbiz is a business of visibility and I saw it come to play at the 2015 edition of African Magic Viewer's Choice Award (AMVCA). The beautifully dressed celebs waited patiently on the red carpet for their snapshots and interviews. A popular rapper said this to me: "See as them dey hustle for red carpet".

They wanted to be seen and be in the spotlight. They understood the fact that their visibility is as important as the talent (Ability). You need to intentionally step into the spotlight and make the world know you for what you do.

The likes of Korede Bello, Tenientertainer, Reekado Banks, John Drille, Mayorkun and others were discovered and signed via social media. Social media isn't just a net working tool, it is a tool for creating visibility for yourself as an entertainer.

Mayorkun said in an interview:" I recorded a song using my cousin's piano in late December 2015 and I shared it on social media late January 2016 and Davido saw it on February 1. Then he followed me and sent me a direct message via Twitter. He later followed me on Instagram and asked if I can do more than playing the keyboard. I then sent him some of the songs I have done. He picked on one that I recorded while still in school and told me 'guy I am signing you on'.

CHAPTER FIVE FALLING IN LOVE WITH SCANDALS AND CONTROVERSIES



"Some stars follow the path of wisdom and restraint—building sustainable brands, getting credible endorsements, and engaging themselves with uplifting courses—others manage to rumba with controversy ever so often; they are stuck on the mud path, getting their feet soaked in mire that messes up the ultimate perception they desire.

Their lives always seem like one hand is dipped in boiling water and the other hand is forever trying to redeem/defend/fight-for-whatever-is-left-of-their-worth that has been reduced to crumbs!"

— Joy Bewaji, Media personality and writer

A man walked into a restaurant with his friend and was ushered to a dimly lit corner table. Then, two things happened. One of the waiters, an Indian, had his jaw drop and eyes widen in recognition of the man. And the man, in appreciation of this recognition, had his attitude transform from one of casual 'nobodiness' to conscious starriness. The man was Shah Rukh Khan.

There are two points to consider here. Something happens to us when we see a celebrity we cheer, scream, shriek, shout, jeer, or wave out, reacting in different ways. Our reaction implies there is something about the star that demands a response. But something also happens to the star. The line between person and persona gets blurry. And when that occurs on a daily basis, the person can become the persona.

For a celebrity to be able to avoid controversy there has to be a disconnection between the celeb's person and the persona. Celebrities and controversies are inseparable. The star life makes it difficult for celebs to stay hooked to the reality of life which sets them up for untold scandals that in turn reduces their brand worth and harms their public perception.

A scandal or controversy changes the value of a brand forever. There is a certain value attached to every image that you project, whether a clean one or a promiscuous one. A celebrity can therefore decide to date controversy or embrace living life on the right principles and ethics. Speaking of how controversy has destroyed promising careers, Rauf Ahmed, a Senior film editor points out the peculiar case of NavinNischol, the late actor.

According to Ahmed, Shashi Kapoor's role in Deewaar had first been offered to Nischol. "Navin refused to play second fiddle to Amitabh Bachchan. His contention was that he had played a hero to Amitabh's villain in Parwana in 1971. And look what a disastrous decision it was. From that point onwards, Shashi Kapoor and Amitabh became the most successful male pairing of the 70s, while Navin's career never recovered."

Success has destroyed more people than failure. The glamour of success sometimes makes one unteachable and exaggerates one's self worth.

The likes of Davido, Wizkid, Tonto Dike, Cossy Orjiakor haven't been fortunate in this department though they have been able to ride on the controversies that tainted their brand.

Personalities like Tiper woods. Fedris, Abdul Kareem, Soul F. Blackface are still finding it difficult.

Personalities like Tiger woods, Eedris Abdul Kareem, Soul E, Blackface are still finding it difficult to make a grand comeback in their careers after their rumba with controversies.

When brand ambassadors get caught in something less than epic, companies distance themselves as quickly as possible. Contracts are ended, ads are pulled, and the superstar finds out who their real friends are.

Ben Johnson gave up his 1988 Olympic gold medal and lost a \$2.8 million deal with Italian sportswear maker Diadora.

Mike Tyson lost millions when Pepsi ended its endorsement deal with Tyson after his wife said he abused her. Pepsi let go of endorsement deals with Magic Johnson after he announced that he contracted HIV in 1991.

Although OJ Simpson was never convicted of the crime, Hertz likely regrets that the main suspect in the Nicole Brown and Ron Goldman murder was once their biggest spokesman.

Nutella and McDonald's dropped their endorsement deals with Kobe Bryant when the basketball star was caught up in a sexual assault case.

Steroids helped Barry Bonds break records and also led to MasterCard, KFC, and Charles Schwab breaking endorsement deals with the slugger.

Also, after the Woods sex scandal hit the news, AT&T, Accenture and Gatorade soon dropped their endorsement contracts with him.

No company wants to associate herself with someone who won't help elevate her brand status in the marketplace.

Proverb 22.1 says: 'A good name is more desirable than great riches; to be esteemed is better than silver or gold'.



ABOUT The Author



Kehinde Ajose has repeatedly asked to be called Mister Awesome but no one listens to him, so he prefers to wear the cap of visibility strategist, journalist and author.

As a visibility strategist, he helps individuals and organizations to gain visibility for their products, ideas and services in order to become highly paid and highly influential.

He was christened a formidable speaker by Edutainment magazine in 2008. He was the co-host of The Land is green business show on radio and also the author of Donjazzyfied, which tells the story of Africa's leading music producer Don Jazzy, detailing how he was able to achieve great ends through humble means.

In 2015, he clinched the award for the Entertainment writer of the year at the Nigeria Media Nite-out Awards and was listed in 2016 as one of the top 100 most influential Nigerian writers by Nigerian Writers Awards.

