

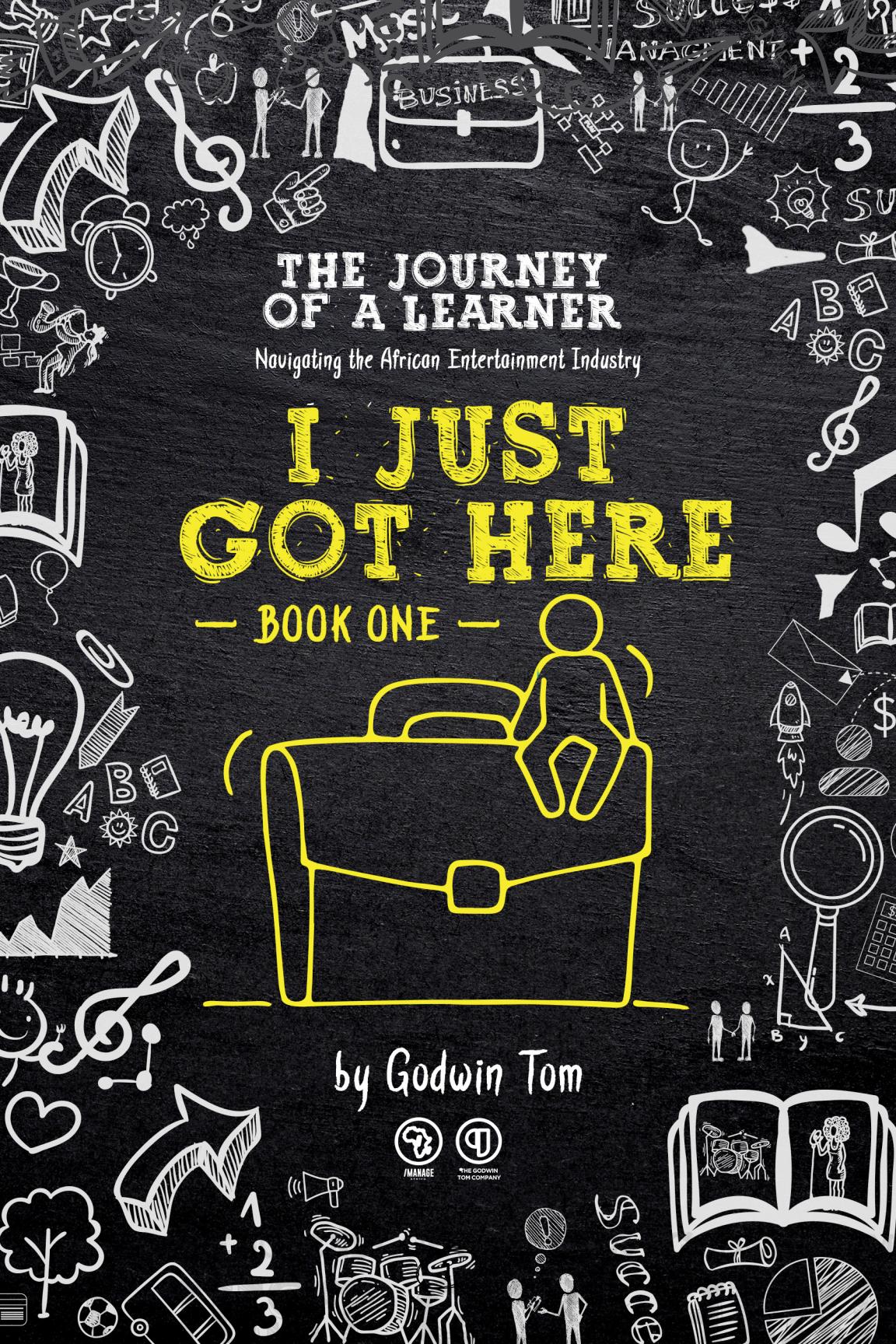
THE JOURNEY OF A LEARNER

Navigating the African Entertainment Industry

I JUST GOT HERE

— BOOK ONE —

by Godwin Tom





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THE JOURNEY OF A LEARNER

A 12-Part Series on Navigating the African Entertainment
Industry

BOOK 1 I JUST GOT HERE

THE JOURNEY OF A LEARNER | GODWIN TOM
I JUST GOT HERE



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Godwin Tom

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Book Cover and Illustrations by Itoro Nehemiah

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THE JOURNEY OF A LEARNER | GODWIN TOM
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Dedicated to those who continue to push
boundaries so that generations to come
may find a path. To dreamers, learners
and doers!

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I JUST GOT HERE



Acknowledgement

First things first, thank you Lord! You are the greatest. Use me as a tool for your work and may my life be the light that will draw the world to you.

I would also like to thank you for buying this book. I hope you enjoy reading this as much as I have enjoyed writing it, and most importantly I hope it helps you develop functional structures for your business.

Thank you Nono, for being an amazing wife. Your support and advice have been essential to helping me bring this ebook series to life. I love you!

To Mr. and Mrs. Mfon Tom, thank you for teaching me to reach for the sky. Thank you for all the sacrifices made. I love you both. To my brothers Imoh, Monday, Ofonime and Uyime I love you all.



Thank you to MI, Jesse Jagz, Iceprince, AiRis, Show Dem Camp, Rooftop MCs, Waje, Wizkid, Wande Coal, Davido, Bez, DJ Obi, Beverly Naya, IKON, Naeto C, Ayo Jay, Mystro, Solid Star, MC Galaxy, SizzlePRO, Yung6ix, Lola Rae, Juliet Ibrahim, Ify's Kitchen, Atela, Temity, Cavemen, DJ Cuppy, Zoro, Yung6ix, Uzikwendu, Boogey, AQ and many other talents I have worked with over the last 12 years! You guys have been an important part of my journey. Thank you.

To Tajudeen Ogunsola, Tunde Karim, Emeka Enyadike, Chiedu Ikemefuna, Olaotan Towry-Coker, Ifeoma Williams... You all shaped my professional life before entertainment. Thank you all!

A special thank you to Colonel C. Derek Campbell, USMC (rtd) you believed in a 15-year-old and gave me access to books and taught me about earning everything I wanted. Thank you for everything. Semper Fi!

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I JUST GOT HERE



Thank you Dolapo for editing this book and asking me a lot of questions. I appreciate everything you do, and I cannot wait to see you achieve great things. Itoro, thank you for the artworks, cover designs and illustrations. I owe you so much, and I look forward to seeing you do great things.

To all my students and interns, you have made this journey worth it. Seeing you all grow and succeed in different fields gives me joy. It also encourages me to keep going. Thank you all!

Finally, a big shout out to everyone who wants to be a part of this industry. You have a long journey ahead and I hope these books help you navigate to your own success. Good luck!



Foreword

I remember Osagie telling me his name.

“Godwin Tom” and I thought, “wow, what a cool name. What a brand ready, corporate sounding, billionaire type name.”

Godwin and I worked together at a time in my life where winning was the only thing that I focused on. I drove my team, I drove the people around me relentlessly and focused on just outcomes and being successful. And it was hard, a lot of friends, some family, a lot of colleagues couldn’t keep up.

But every year Godwin’s capacity increased, and until the final moment when we decided not to work together, I found him capable, I found him hungry,





I found him ready to explore new things. And so, his incredible rise to success, to a position of leadership and mentorship for many new managers isn't surprising at all. I absolutely recommend this book and to Godwin I say, I hope you don't see this as anything other than just another milestone. You have a lot to do, a lot more to share, a lot to learn, a lot more to give.

Keep going, keep learning, keep sharing, keep giving.

Jude "MI" Abaga



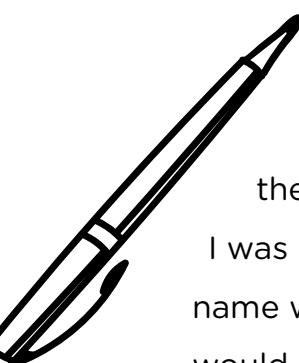
Introduction

Seven years into talent management, I realised I did not know anything about anything. I had been discharging a lot of my pivotal duties the wrong way. No, I wasn't stupid, we all just had to learn on the job and if you were lucky enough to punch in the dark and hit something then good for you. There was no real guidance. We watched a lot of people do great things from afar and no one really showed us the path they took. For the most part, a lot of people were also still figuring it out and most of them wanted to have all the answers before telling us which way to go. A few others did not know how to teach or lead, and we were forced to pick up whatever we heard or saw, as well as improvise along the way and that





became our own education. I reached out to a few people and I realised that they were also trying to keep their heads above water.



In 2016, I decided I was going to write a book, but I was not sure what to call it. I was not sure what it was about, but I knew I would be writing about my mistakes and how I corrected them. I took down articles I had written and decided to develop them into a book. In 2017, I got the name I was looking for. "10 Years a Learner"! The name was a hit. 2018 was the year the book would drop. I made noise and even planned a podcast session with MI to celebrate 10 years in the industry. Then I had a "mild heart attack". I had to start taking my own life seriously and while I continued to announce the 10 Years a Learner campaign, I only did one out of the originally planned ten podcast sessions. After taking some time off work, I came back strong and decided I would put out the book when it is time.

Two years later, the world is in a different place and we are all afraid of going outside. Revenue streams are drying up and young people are asking me to come on Instagram live because they have a lot of questions. After a few Instagram live sessions, I decided to build each chapter and release as books. And here we are, “The Journey of a Learner”.

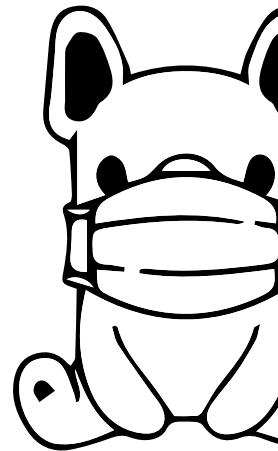




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Before I got here...

I have always loved music. In fact, I loved it so much that in 2001, I started a rap group with one of my best friends, Misan Agbeyegbe. It was a gospel rap group called “The 7th Seal” and we were pretty good, if I do say so myself. Our rap duo started with us rapping over beats made out of knocking and slapping desk tops in our classrooms in secondary school. Not computers... actual desk tops. Misan eventually started making beats cos he had a computer at home, and we made demos and performed at church. We even got signed to a record label called “testify Records” and one of my label mates was Kel... Yes, Kel. The babe that did the song “Wa Wa Alright”. We even have a song together. I am looking for it so I can burn it. It was through this label and church that I met people who still play in this industry to this day. Osagie, Nosa, Segun Fasika, and many





others. We performed at “Spirit of David” shows and a few churches. In our minds that year, we were on to something great. We probably were to be honest. People called me “Cool Gee” even though there was nothing cool about me and my nerdy self, but no one said it was a stupid name so I guess it worked. I must, at this point, issue the first warning... don’t ever call me that name when you see me. Do not call me seven either. I will ignore you.



I started rapping by memorising rap songs from Busta Rhymes to Eminem to 2pac and Biggie. Yes I know I said I was a gospel rapper but I am telling you how I started rapping. And then, I would replace their words with mine. I would go to Obalende to get instrumentals from DJs and I am not sure, but I think I went to JimmyJatt’s studios a few times. I am not sure because I would simply have a list of instrumentals I wanted, and people would say “go to that place”. In those days, I had no access to the internet, so the only way



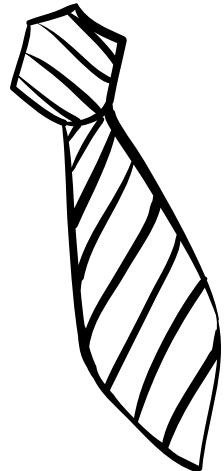
I got my favourite rap songs was to buy empty cassette tapes and record music from radio stations. The hardest part of these recordings were those OAPs and DJs talking over the music. Messing up all the hard work. At least allow the music end before you start talking over the music dude... I am “seriously” dubbing here!

Music has always been important to me but after my friend Misan moved out of the country, I didn't really have the motivation to be a musician anymore. There were also some serious things going on at home at the time and I wanted to support my family. I quit school and went to look for work and only did music when time allowed. I continued with this even up till my last job before I started managing artists. I would finish work and visit Knighthouse studios in Yaba. Rogba, Gomey, Lanre and DJ Klem were the best guys. This was also Osagie's attempt to keep me doing music. I really enjoyed those days even though it was stressful going from



VI to Yaba and then returning to Dolphin estate where I was staying with a friend's family, The Taylors. A family I will forever be indebted to. That is a story for another day.

Becoming a talent manager was the last thing I had in mind. I am not sure the thought ever crossed my mind but a phone call with Osagie set the ball rolling and put me on course for an experience that would change my entire life. One that took me on a journey that brought me here. I was talking to Osagie about my job and I told her I was tired and quite bored. Don't get me wrong. I really loved my boss at the time, and I had a pretty good position in the company. We did some really important work, but I was 21 and was looking for more challenges and more excitement. Also, I felt I was still young enough to take some risks and explore more opportunities. Osagie was managing Kel at the time, I ranted to her about being bored at work, she told me she would keep her ears on the ground for me





and would let me know if anything came up.

After that conversation, we both moved on with our lives and I didn't really remind her. Then one day in September 2008, I got a call from Osagie and her exact words were "Hey! What's up? Are you still bored?"

Initially, I was like huh? Then I remembered the conversation and asked her if she had anything for me. She asked if I was interested in talent management and I said yes, without even thinking it through. Then she said there is a new artist, a rapper called "MI", who was in town and was looking for a manager. She told me she would send me the music and set up a meeting with the artist if I was interested. I wasn't sure, so I asked her to send me his music. She sent me two songs. "Crowd mentality" and "Chant down Babylon". After listening to the songs, I really wanted to meet this guy. Who is this guy? Who the heck is this MI? I was actually excited. I called Osagie and asked her to set up a meeting and she did. There was just one issue.



MI was not looking for a manager. He already had Obinna Agwu. He was looking for an assistant. I laugh now when I imagine what was going through his head as I was bombarding him with questions about his plans and the things he had in mind to do and how he felt I fit into all of that. I say this because MI didn't say much at that meeting. We exchanged numbers and I went back to work. He explained that he was looking for an assistant but that he would like us to meet again. We set up another meeting and this time, he had a lot to say. We talked about salaries or the lack of it. We talked about the studio location which was basically a table in his room in Djinee's house. He was honest with me about where things stood at the time. I believe we had two more meetings after the first one and what he said in that last meeting on the 21st of September 2008, forced me to rethink the whole concept of boredom and looking for challenges. MI said to me "Look, I am 27 years old and I can't get a job at a bank. My scholarship was withdrawn and I moved



to Lagos with nothing but my music so if this music thing doesn't work... I am effed!"

All the excitement about new challenges and new opportunities had just been shattered. What kind of responsibility is this? This is not what I was asking for? This was too much. I went back to work and I could not concentrate for the rest of the day. Do I really want to do this? I do not know much about the business. Where would I even start? I typed a long message to MI about how I was sorry I wasted his time and how I felt he would need to find someone else... Then I erased it and typed my resignation letter. I was a nerd. I was a skinny nerd, but I was not afraid.

On the 22nd of September, 2008 I got to the office and gave my boss my resignation letter and on the 22nd of October, 2008 I became MI's manager! That was the start of my career as a talent manager!



THE JOURNEY OF A LEARNER IN TOMORROW

I JUST GOT HERE

I just got here...

Now I know MI had told me he was staying in Djinee's house, but I was not prepared for the reality. MI had a room in the house. That was it. Everything about MI happened there; in that room. It was his bedroom, his office, his recording studio and everything. I had a little panic attack. Lord, I just got here. What is going on? Did I make a mistake? Dear Lord, what have I done?

My first teacher in the game



MI wanted me to meet the team in Lagos. The “team” was Obinna Agwu, now popularly known as “Angry Mob” and he was no joke, still isn’t. He was a mob. A one-man army. He was about my age, but he was fierce. Obinna drank and smoked. MI tried to get him to





stop a few times by throwing his cigarettes in the gutter. Obinna did not find those attempts funny at all. Obinna is an intriguing fellow. He knew everyone. Radio guys, alaba guys, promoters, everyone. He was not afraid to tell MI that a song he did was not great, and he did that often. It was education for me. I was not an A&R and although I had a good ear for music, Obinna understood it. He heard sounds I didn't even notice had been added to the song. I was determined to learn and he was willing to teach me. Obinna and I were from different worlds. I may have been in the streets and gone through life as much as he had, but unlike me, Obinna had always been about the business of the music. I loved MI's music. From the first day I met Obinna, he made his belief clear. He believed, wholeheartedly and without any doubt, that MI was the best musician on the continent. Look, to me, MI was great and I had quit my job to work with him but I did not feel





that way at the time. And that was my first lesson.

You have to believe in what you are trying to sell to people. This belief is what creates the tunnel vision needed to focus on that artist and his projects.

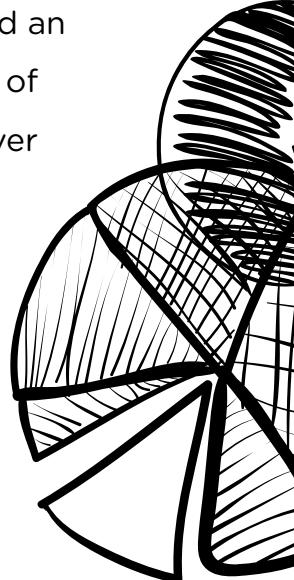
On air personalities, brand managers, show promoters who do not know about your artist will feed off your energy and if it is not real, people can tell. Even if you are an amazing actor, if you do not communicate that belief when you speak about the artist and his music, you cannot sell the talent. Watching Obinna taught me this important lesson. He was the reason I did not run away after the first week. I considered it. I thought to myself “If I go to my boss, she will take me back. Wouldn’t she? She should”. I could reach out to one of



my former bosses and ask for a job. I thought about everything. I doubted myself and on a few nights, I cried. I was so afraid I had made a mistake. I thought I was going to fail. Obinna made me believe I could do this. He was fearless and he was sure. I wanted to be like that about the music and artist I was selling. I learnt a lot from Obinna Agwu.

A humble pie.

Where I worked before I managed MI, I had an office assistant in the office who did most of the running around. To get food or whatever we needed in the office. In my “new job” we did not have that. After the release of “Safe” video, MI started getting very popular. People would greet him in the area whenever he was going out. Djinee’s house at the time was in Palmgrove in Lagos. MI did not have money. He did not own a car. Everyone





loved "Safe", but a lot of people did not know who sang it so when the video dropped, the attention was amazing. The attention came with a new challenge for me.

MI actually enjoyed going to buy his own food or anything he needed by himself. If he felt hungry, he would go buy the food himself. If he needed toothpaste, he would go to the store. Suddenly, he could not do that anymore. I had to do that, and I did not like it. I did not like that at all but I had to do it because we did not have the money to hire someone to do it. So, I had to.

The Bigger picture.

Buying food for MI was not the only thing I had to do. I had to attend meetings. I had to chase payments, no matter how little because we needed it. I had to follow MI to shows and stand next to the DJ to tell them when to stop and play CDs so that MI would not





have to shout “track 2” on stage. I enjoyed those other parts of the job. Suddenly, buying him food was not such a big deal. It had to be done. I was managing a guy that was becoming a super star and it was my job to keep that impression going. It was my job to make sure he was focused on doing what he was good at so that he’s rest assured that other things were being taken care of and if those things included buying him food, then so be it. The more successful we got, the more money we made, the more the business side of things needed my attention and an assistant was necessary.

As a manager or anyone new in the business of entertainment, do not get stuck sweating the small stuff. In the words of Phonte “... everybody gotta do a job that they hate” and most times, that job is

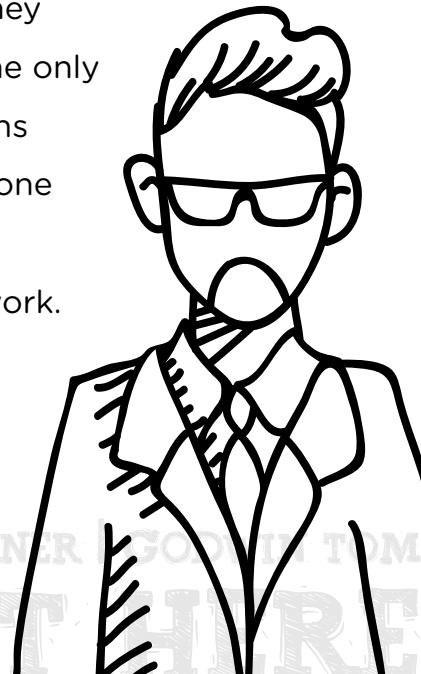


an important part of your growth as a person. To fully understand what the different jobs in your business require, you need to experience them and the best time to do that is in the early stages of your career where mistakes are expected. It will get harder later on so just do it now no matter how “beneath you” it may be.

Looking the part and being the part.

When I came into the industry, I dressed like a kid from a British private school. Always had my shoes, shirt and trousers and sometimes, my cardigan or vest. I wanted to look different and I wanted people to remember me. They did. Several artists including Timaya made fun of me years later but it was confirmation that they noticed me. They remembered, or so I thought.

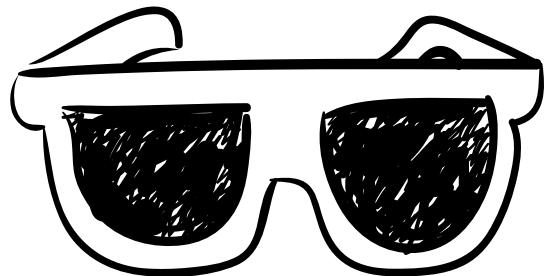
The outfits were a nice touch but that was not what people noticed first. What they noticed was the work. I was not the only one wearing trousers and cardigans in 2008/2009. I was not the only one who wore shoes to events. People noticed how seriously I took my work. I loved my artist and I loved his music and ultimately, I loved





my job and it showed in how I discharged my duties. I was at every meeting and at every show and at every rehearsal. All my friends were not allowed to play any other songs until everyone heard MI's music first. I was at the venue first and left only after everything was done and when I made a mistake, I did not rest until I fixed it or finished beating myself up for not fixing it. MI referenced this during our podcast conversation at Silverbird in 2018 to celebrate my 10th year in the business as a talent manager. That passion and dedication to my work was what people saw. They did not notice me because of the clothes I wore. They noticed the clothes because the hardworking guy was the one wearing them.

Looking the part is important but it is not and will never be as important as actually doing the work.





As a professional in this industry,
the only thing you have to speak
for you are the networks you build,
the value you create and the work
you have done and none of these
happen because you wore designer
clothes. They happen because you
put in the work.

When I got here, all I wanted to do was show
that I could learn and do the work and I used
every opportunity I could find to do that.



Being A Sponge



When I started working as a talent manager, I did not have a handbook to use. There were books and online articles about talent management and I read as many as I could find online. When I attempted to apply some of the things I learnt online, I quickly realised that I was reading a lot of things about America and Europe and most of those things did not apply in Africa, especially Nigeria. I tried to learn from a few existing managers and no one had exactly what I was looking for. I did not find the “secret ingredient” from any one person that made me go “Ha! That’s what I’ve been looking for”. It was frustrating and confusing and annoying. I was ready to work. But where can I learn? Where could I draw references from?

When I worked in my former company, I had tried to book Banky W for an event and I spoke



to a man who acted as his manager. I remember the conversation like it was yesterday. He picked my call and said "Hello, Segun Demuren, who am I speaking to?" He was someone I remembered and thought to myself, I want to be that way. I want people to remember me when I pick up the phone. So, I started saying my name in full. I thought to myself, "there are a lot of Godwins in the world... but I am sure there aren't a lot of Godwin Toms". Boy was I wrong.

The closest entertainment businessperson I had access to was Audu Maikori. He was the CEO of Chocolate City and every time I spoke with him, I always went back home to do more research. He inspired me to learn more because I wanted to make sure I did not sound stupid in any meetings or conversations.

I wanted to be like Audu and I wanted to impress, so I studied. I was not a lawyer like Audu but I was going to make sure I made





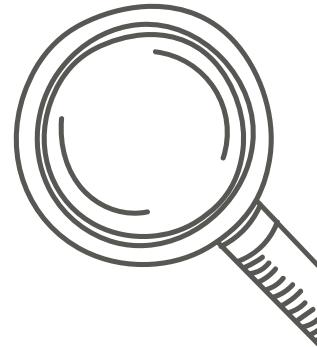
useful and valuable contributions to what we were doing. I think I did. I hope I did.

If you are in the entertainment industry, you must have heard the name Sunday Are at some point. In 2008, Mohits was already a household name and Sunday Are was a name you heard at every event. People were afraid of him. By people, I mean event organisers. I heard a rumour that no one owed Sunday Are money and considering that I had sat in offices for hours waiting for small amounts of money, I wanted that power so bad. I wanted to be that rugged, in and out of events. The day I was introduced to Sunday Are was at an event and he asked; “who be this one?”* He told me to greet him properly. I did not know what that meant but luckily I prostrated. He then said something similar to “ehn ehn... Good boy”. He is a character, I tell you. It felt good to finally have access to someone who could teach me how to get my way with promoters and brands. Unfortunately, he was a very busy man and I



did not have the kind of access I hoped for but I learnt as much as I could from afar.

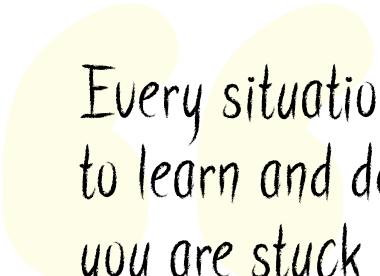
This became the way I learnt on the job. By observation, practice and working to correct my own mistakes. I realised that I did not need to find someone who had all the qualities I was looking for. No one person did. However, there were a lot of people who had different management skills and processes and all I needed to do was learn as much as I could and then see which of the qualities could be applied to me, my personality and temperament as well as my work. This way, I found the best and most comfortable way to grow as an individual. This made it easy for me to make decisions and when I made mistakes, I owned them and learnt from them. There were many more people I learnt a lot from and there are several others I still learn from to this day.





Malice has no economic value

The first day I read that text somewhere I thought about it for days. I do not know who actually said it, but it made and still makes so much sense to me. It reminds me to focus on what is important in my business.



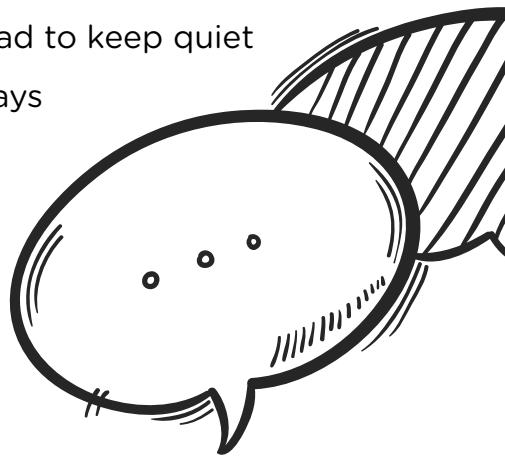
Every situation is an opportunity to learn and develop myself and if you are stuck on reacting to what someone did or what went wrong and whose fault it is, you will only end up doing harm to yourself and your business.

Being a sponge is not only about learning from great people. It also involves learning how to



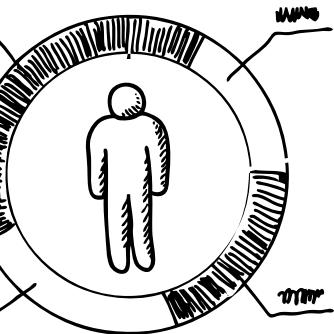
deal with the worse people. How to review information; How to control your emotions and learn when and how to speak. As a young manager, I often found myself in the midst of giants in the industry and it was important for me to make sure I added value to conversations no matter how trivial but if I spoke, it had to make sense. To get there, I had to keep quiet and listen a lot. I did not always make sense and sometimes people shut me up or down and as with anyone, there is hurt involved there.

No one enjoys being told to keep quiet or that your contribution is not useful. For a while, it did hurt me. I even marked faces of people who did that just so I could come back and show them that I was smarter. I ended up being consumed by my ego and losing sight of what I needed to learn.





As a young manager or player in the entertainment industry, this will happen to you a lot. Most players in the business go to the same places and in those places there are tables you cannot sit on because you are not “there”



yet. Do not get mad. Do not get bitter. Instead, look at every single person on that table and ask yourself. What are they doing or what have they done that put them there? Then ask yourself, which of the qualities would I like to emulate? Who among them inspires me to do more or work harder and can I get close enough to learn something from each person that I can apply to myself? This is how you grow. Take in as much as you can so that when the work “squeezes” you, it gets something useful out of you.

It is important to note, that sometimes you admire someone from afar and when you get close you realise that you do not want to be anything like that person. It is ok to stay away.



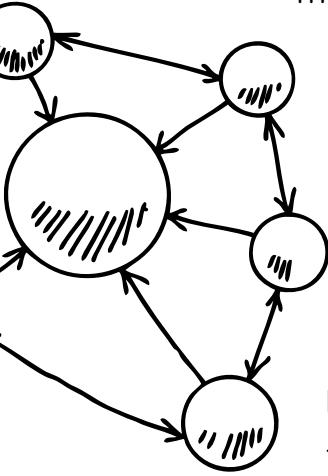
The point of this lesson is to explain that you may not find all the qualities you need in one person but if you want to be in this business for a long time, you have to learn to take in as much as possible, review and evaluate and then put your best foot forward. Every time!

As American congressman, Williams Clay, once said “There are no permanent enemies, and no permanent friends, only permanent interests.”

Building Bridges

The longevity of your career will depend on your ability to build and maintain meaningful relationships.

The respective relationships built with artists, media personalities, businesspeople, brands, and your team members vary based on demands and expectations. As much as you have to look at what each relationship offers you and your growth in the industry, you must remember that people are having the same expectations of you. There must be an exchange of value and value could mean different things to different people or types of relationships.





Mentors

Mentors are very essential for young people who want long term growth in any industry or business, and the entertainment industry is not left out. Some mentors may not be accessible but through their actions and lifestyle you can learn a lot of things from them. If you are lucky enough to have access to your mentor(s), the biggest value you can give them is your ability to put what they teach you into action. It shows the mentor that they are not wasting their time. It does not matter how nice your mentor is, no one wants to give time, energy and advice only to feel like they have wasted their time.

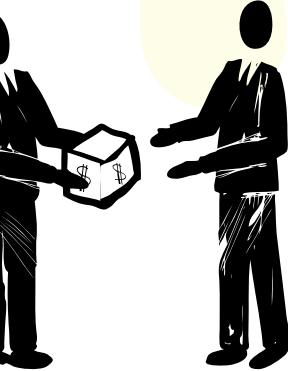
Every mentor knows that the most important and most valuable thing they are giving you is time and it must be reciprocated with actions from the mentee. Your growth and results are the payment to the mentor.



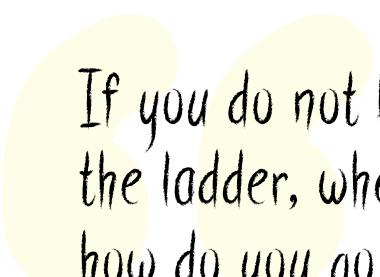
THE JOURNEY OF A LEADER
I JUST GOT IT



Your mentor is not a bank.



Their role in your life is to direct and push you towards achieving your goals. They may not support you financially but that should not be a deal breaker because while some mentors may not give you money directly, they could help you open doors that will lead you to making that money for yourself. A mentor, in most cases, will not hold your hand. They would advise you and point you in the right direction. A great mentor knows how important it is for you to earn your stripes. He or she understands the importance of an earned independence.

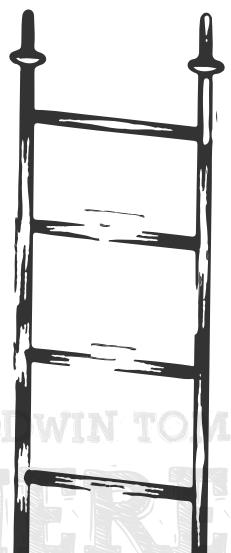


If you do not know your way up the ladder, when or if you fall, how do you go back up? More importantly, how do you show others the way?



Mentorship is an amazing thing, but it can also be complex. Sometimes, your mentor chooses you and sometimes you choose your mentor but the ideal situation is for both of you to eventually choose each other. You have the responsibility of studying your mentor to ensure that they are who they have said they are. You could also decide to choose a mentor based on a strength you identify with. I have a mentor who teaches me about business but he is not the one I go to for spiritual matters and I do not think I have ever discussed business decisions with the latter. I do not think he minds that, as he once told me himself that he struggles with his financial decisions as well.

A very important concept of mentorship that you must understand is that to learn anything, you must empty your cup and allow yourself to receive information and then remove the things that contradict who you are. With the things you learn, you can then add your personality and mannerisms to how you execute your own business.



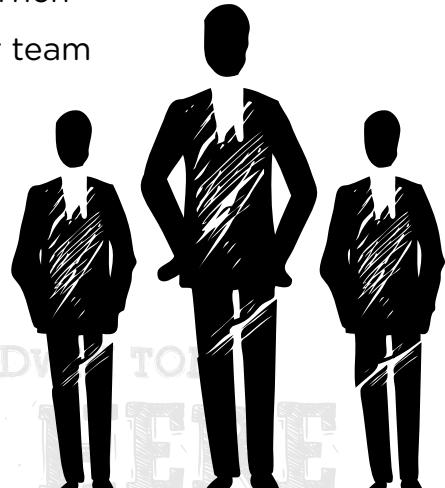
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At the end of the day, mentorship produces a better version of YOU and not another version of someone else!

The Crew

You can also call this your team. For those who do not have teams, let's call this your partnerships and alliances. The best types of relationships involve an exchange of values and complementation. As a newbie in the game, explore as much as you can but identify and focus on developing your strengths and acknowledge your weaknesses. Then make sure that members of your team have the strength you need in the areas that you have weaknesses.





An example is the relationship between managers and A&Rs. Most managers believe they are A&Rs and vice versa. This has created divisions in situations where there could have been a perfect mix. Being a talent manager does not guarantee that you are a good A&R... these are two different jobs. The artist's A&R guides the artistic and creative development of the talent and the talent manager guides and oversees the professional development of the talent. Very few people can do both because each responsibility is a full-time job! An artist will go even farther if he has a great A&R who focuses on his strengths as a creative person. One who can help the artist create amazing music and the other, a manager who focuses on selling that amazing song! Even if the manager is as creatively gifted as an A&R, there is already so much work to do as a manager that it may help to have someone who specifically offers his abilities as an A&R.



If a manager works with a new or unknown artist, who does not have the resources to hire the right people, he or she may be required to do certain things outside their scope of work. As a talent manager I have had to handle PR activities, road management duties and even been a bodyguard for my clients. None of the things mentioned was my job but necessity required that I stepped in. One of the best moments of my career was when I handed over PR responsibilities to Progeny PR, owned by my good friend, Kim. I was able to focus on my work while she handled the part of the business she was good at.

As MI's manager, we did great work together, but I was not the only one there. Jesse Jagz and Ice Prince made sure MI made the best music. Abuchi mixed a lot of the music if not all...I am sure you guys remember hearing "don boos boos on the mix" a lot... yup! That was Abuchi, MI's current manager. Sam Stix made sure the



sound was on point at shows. Moh made sure operations ran smoothly and Audu, Paul and Yahaya advised on each step we were taking. You saw an amazing artist but there was an amazing team. Not all stars are seen clearly but when all the stars in the system align, it is an amazing sight to see!

We should all be down
to earth anyway!

When you walk into an office, one of the first things you do is to find the person you think will get you what you went there for, or take you to someone who can. There is nothing wrong with knowing the “main guy” but how do you treat all the people you meet on the way to his or her office? From the gate to the reception, how do you treat people? I am not asking you to smile like a tickled baby, I am asking if you extend basic courtesy to people.



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A few years ago, I sat amongst some young managers listening to another fellow manager who talked about how he was insulted by the brand manager of a company. He had been invited to a meeting but unfortunately, the person he was meeting was in another meeting that ran longer than planned so he waited for an hour. He said he was so upset he almost walked out. I asked him where he was waiting. He told me he was in the reception area. I asked him if it was one of those receptions that had the receptionist sitting in the same area. He said yes. I asked him if he could tell me some of the things he noticed in the reception area where he sat. I could see he was getting slightly annoyed by my interrogation, but he reluctantly answered and described the reception. Then I asked one last question, what is the name of the receptionist? The look on his face said it all. If I wasn't someone he had respect for he would have probably slapped me.



The receptionist was not who he was going there to see but you never know how helpful that person could have been to him. You never know how much information people are willing to give you simply because you acknowledge or engage them.

In this line of work, some of the most useful work can be done with basic human courtesy and regard. There is no guarantee but do it anyway.

When I reach for something that may seem quite far fetched with brands and they say no, I always say "I would not be doing my job, if I didn't try". Just be nice. It may not even work, but it would not hurt you to treat people with respect and courtesy even though they do not hold the key to what you seek... or maybe they do. You never know!



There are brand managers who started from the lowest positions in a company and worked their way up. These people become loyal alliances that will at least get you through the door to make your case. Building meaningful relationships sometimes simply involves treating people like human beings with respect regardless of what they do for the company.

A CEO once told me that when he wants to hire people, he notifies his lowest ranking staff (gatemen, cleaners and runners) to observe the person. His HR has already sent him the file they believe is suitable, but he wants to know if this person is a good person. Imagine that what stands between you and a good job is how you treat people you do not think can help you. To many, this may be extreme but hey, all you had to do was treat them as humans.

Do your best work, every time!

Early on in my career as a talent manager, all I wanted to do was impress people. To get noticed. As I grew older in the “game” of management, it became clear that my work would always speak louder than how I looked or how well I knew keywords and industry or corporate lingo. Doing the work became the best way to market myself and all of that just made it easier for me to roll up my sleeves and get to work. No one really wants the best dressed guy who cannot meet targets in the office. No matter how charming, no business wants to pay for things they will not get. On the other hand, the guy who delivers at work has all the advertising and branding he or she needs.





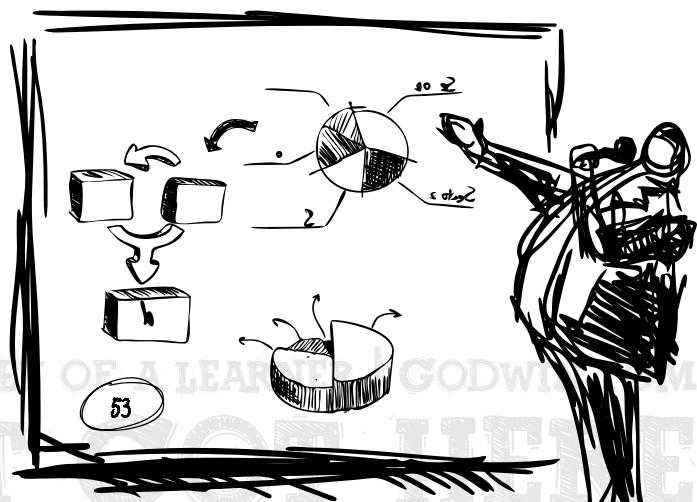
We live in a society where most people want money to work. No one wants to work for money.

We like to reference Instagram quotes about how we should make money work for us but most forget that you have to make the money you plan to send to "work". If you do not have it, you cannot send it anywhere.

No matter how irrelevant a task may seem or how difficult it may be, if you have to get a job done, give it your best shot. Everything adds up, even the failures. I once wrote a proposal to a brand and when I got there for the presentation, I realised I was out of my league. There I was pitching a relatively popular artist to a big brand and sitting next to me were account

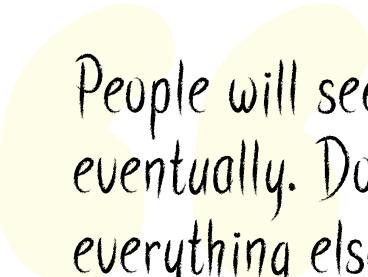


managers of some of the biggest creative agencies in the country. I panicked and almost walked out. I actually felt like they were all wondering what I was doing there and in my mind, they were all laughing at me. When I was called in, I did my best. I kept them engaged but at the back of my mind, I knew there was no way they would give me this job. I was not even prominent enough to be compared to the teams the other companies brought in. After my presentation, the marketing director did not mince words. He smiled and said; "This is not the best presentation I have ever seen but this is a presentation I will remember". I genuinely was not sure if he was mocking me or if he was being serious. I thanked them all and left. I did not get the job. Two months later, one of the agencies who attended the pitching sessions reached out and asked





for a meeting. Apparently, they got the job, and the marketing director told them to contact me and listen to my presentation and find a way to add my client to the campaign. At one of the activation locations, I met the Marketing director and he said he was upset with his team when I walked in because he kept thinking “how did this young man get into this meeting room and who allowed it?”. He laughed and then said, “but I am happy you did. You surprised me. Well done”. I did not get the money I wanted from the agency, but those words meant more to me!



People will see the work, eventually. Do that first and everything else will follow.



The money will come.

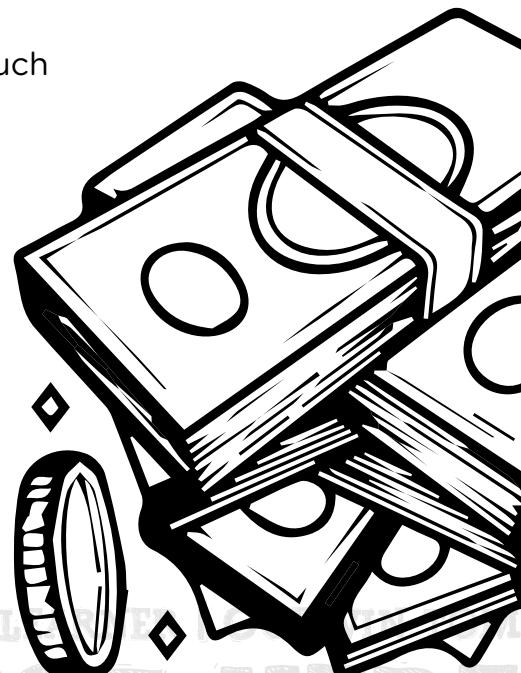
We all need money. There are bills to pay. How do people know we are really in entertainment if we cannot flex a little? Huh?

My advice to young people in the entertainment industry is very straightforward. No matter how much money you are making in your twenties, you are broke!

This is the time to put as much money away and live on a budget. Stay with a friend.

Learn to cook. Learn to bargain. Explore. Put money in investments and forget about them.

Learn about financial literacy and the last thing





you should care about is money to show off.

I know this sounds like crazy advice, but you will thank me later. To this day, I still benefit from work done and relationships built in my early and mid-twenties, unfortunately, I had no financial guidance and though I am doing great, I would have done way better. That's what this entire series is about. It is not just about my successes. It is also about my mistakes and failures. Most of it is, actually.

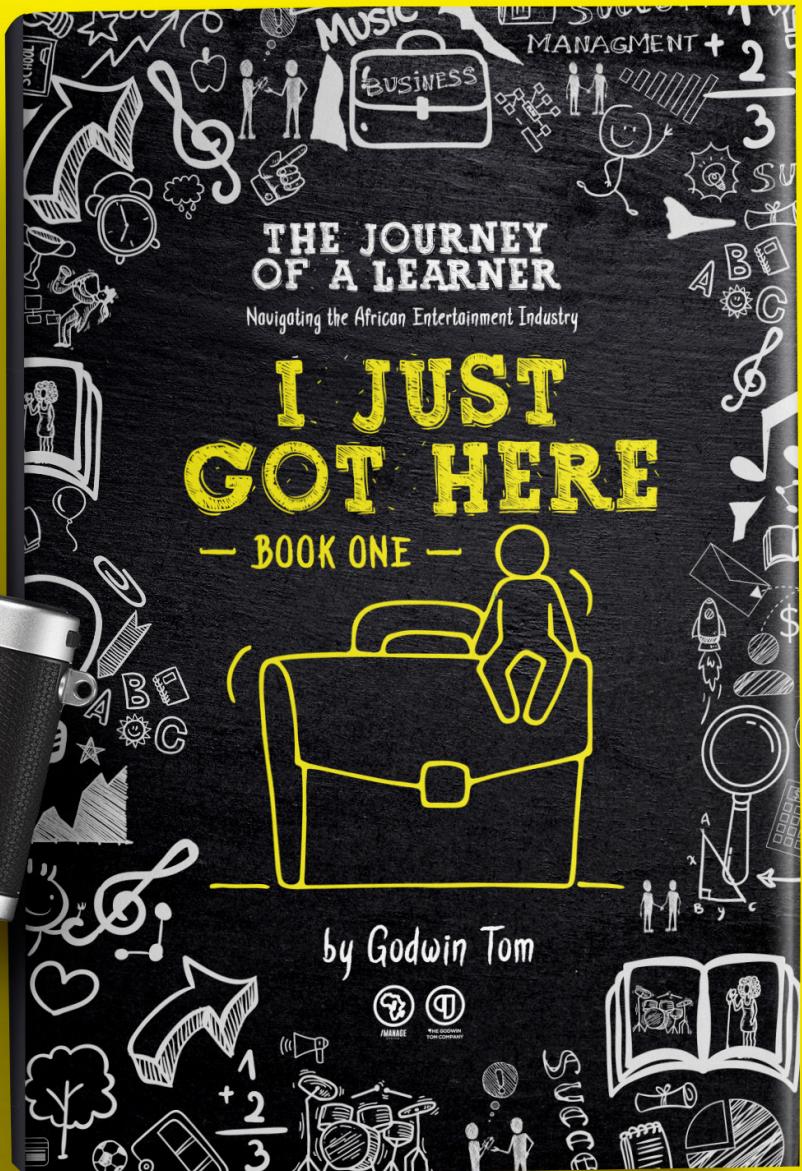
Life is like a video game. A stage only gets easier when you cross it. Especially when you are paying attention.

You will be completely clueless about what you will encounter in the next stage. New demons, new challenges. Give your “future self” a fighting chance. Live early. Take as many stabs



in the dark as early as possible as it will get harder when you get older. It is not impossible but it will surely be harder to do. I have done my best to not only tell you what to do but to show you.

“Those who can, do. Those who can’t, teach...”, then there are those who teach what they do!



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Introduction to Book 2: Why are you here?

It was in 2009. It was a hot and sunny day. I was on my way to a meeting to represent a client and I had jumped from bike to taxi to bike to make it to this meeting. When I got to the building where the meeting was meant to be held, I stood downstairs, right next to an AC vent, collecting some nice air-conditioned breeze hoping that I was not already smelling like burnt plantain, no thanks to the sun. I regained composure and asked the receptionist where the production meeting for the event was taking place. She kindly directed me to the conference room and as I walked in, someone said “Why is this one here?”.

I do not remember for sure who had said it but I knew I was the subject of that comment. The event organiser coordinating the proposed



event directed me to where I could sit and the meeting started. For over one hour, people talked about the event and everytime I tried to ask a question or say something, I got no reaction. It was a conference room and not a football stadium. There is no way no one saw me raise my hand. That was the first time I truly asked myself...

“Godwin. Why are you here?”

Continue in Book 2
“The Journey Of A Learner:
Why are you here?”



JOIN OUR COMMUNITY

You made it to the end of the first of 12 books and I intend to make this a fun ride to the end for you.

By buying this book, you qualify to become a member of our “Journey of a Learner” bookclub. The club will give you access to me after you purchase the book to ask me any questions you may have and how you plan to make the best use of lessons learnt in this book.

Please note that each part released will have its own group as we want to ensure that we give people who actually pay the value for the money spent. For those who have paid for all 12 parts, we will be adding you to the new groups as soon as the parts are released.

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