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PROCESS, PERFORMANCE & PSYCHOLOGY.

When I started my business, I was not sure which of my passionate niche I should project. I was very sound with business processes and strategies and yet also very passionate about therapy and coaching. So I was in a dilemma. It took me a journey in business of about 5 years, before I found that there is a direct correlation between the subtle domain of therapies and the nervous domain of business processes. If business processes are the nervous system of any enterprise, then therapies are the arteries and veins of these enterprises.

01. **THE CURRENT**
the current mindset
of your workforce

02. **AGGREGATE the DIFFERENCE**
the difference between where
they are and where you want
them to be

03. **MUST-BE**
must-be for the overall good of
both employees and their own
critical relationships.

I used to consult for a food business in Abuja. This business was making a monthly turnover of N3 million only as at the time I was hired. Upon my initial assessment, it was apparent that majority of the products were either being consumed or pilfered by staff or the quality of products made easily became B&D (bad and damaged). This was when a scripture like 'LITTLE FOXES DESTROY THE VINE' is usually very apparent. But you see, no business results can be attained outside defined parameters of business processes. It is practically impossible to breakeven and sustain business growth and performance in the absence of defined business boundaries and patterns, which is the heart of business processes. But as much as this is true, no business process can survive the collusion of any team of destructive workforce. In fact, the mere implementation of business processes has the potential of recruiting resistance and sabotage, especially where this is done without ecology.

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There is therefore a direct correlation between the way the workforce is made to think and how the business processes will be adopted. I will share 3 categorical points here:

1. Understand the CURRENT mindset of your workforce and adjudge if this is the crop you NEED for the current operational processes you have (or want to have).
2. Determine what you want to do to AGGREGATE the DIFFERENCE between where they are and where you want them to be. This is probably the most daunting and challenging part of the process but it is evidently the most critical too.
3. Communicate how the organization's processes are a MUST-BE for the overall good of both employees and their own critical relationships. I believe that when there is a link between how a process affects me and by extension, affects my family and life, I am more inclined to support it than resist it.

So how do you 'understand the current mindset' of the people in your workforce? Let me take you through the model we call the PERCEPTION INTERPRETATION MODEL that determines how people see or perceive what your motives are as an organization.

Meet; Sunmbo, Preye, Abdullahi and Nnamdi.

When the management announced that some business units of the organization would be collapsed into other business units so as to streamline the operations of the business, it came with mixed feelings for different people in the organization. These 4 chapters inclusive. Management published a gazette and expected that everyone would go through it and grasp a feel of what it would take to complete this process of restructuring.

Sunmbo, female 24, hired into the organization fresh from NYSC, downloaded the gazette and read through it. She tried to make sense of the professional terms used in the document. She also hoped that the document will highlight what path the new structure would guarantee her ambition to rise through the ranks within 7 years if she stayed with the firm. As she read line by line, she would pause and shut her eyes. She would attempt to IMAGINE her roles and how her appraisal scores would come out and **she PICTURED** how she would receive both a handshake and a letter of commendation, promotion and even a prize for completing her KPIs. Sunmbo could not create the MENTAL PICTURE. Maybe her inexperience was a limitation or perhaps the intention of the project was not clearly communicated. Sunmbo is VISUAL and if management would not create a new saboteur or lose her to competition, a DESIRED PICTURE that captures her needs within the organizational processes may be the WIN-WIN.

Sunmbo left her desk and walked into one of the departments to receive a collapsed unit. She walked straight to her peer, Abdullahi. Abdullahi helped Sunmbo integrate with the firm. He has been in the workforce for about 4 years having come in from Deloitte.

He could be seen as a civilised northerner. Born in Maiduguri but grew up in Kaduna. He had a more optimistic outlook to life. He asked Sunmbo why she looked a bit perturbed. She replied and said: 'I do not SEE my future in the new structure. I may just start preparing to get another job.' Abdullahi felt sorry for her and also disappointed in her. He asked her 'when you came into this firm fresh from school, what confidence did you have that you would succeed in the first place?' Sunmbo looked up in her usual manner and reasoned then said 'because the firm designated a coach to help me and you did a good job teaching me.' And as though a scale fell off her eyes, she exclaimed 'oh WoW!!! Now I see. I have no fears after all. You are here to guide me all over again.'

Abdullahi always thrived on a philosophy: if you tell me, I may remember it. If you show me, I may know it. But if you let me do it, I will understand it.

Abdullahi is KINESTHETIC. And if management means well enough to make him a part of her future plans, issuing a gazette would not suffice. INVOLVING him (and his kind) at different levels of this process development and implementation would go a long way to make them both UNDERSTAND the goal and also SELL it to other members of the organization. This is a WIN-WIN.

While Sunmbo and Abdullahi debated the gazette. Sunmbo asked a lot of questions about the motive, the plan and the implementation of the entire project.

Abdullahi made a lot of visual connections, scribbling on his white board and also drawing flows and maps on sheets of white papers just so as to create a picture of the entire goal for this project. All the while, **Preye** was very attentive. Preye is Abdullahi's rank. She is probably the most experienced hand in the department. But despite being the most experienced hand, the entire process cycle still did not sit well with her. She felt threatened. Questions like 'will I lose my place in the hierarchy? Will I fit into the new structure? Since my department is being subsumed, will I lose my career track? What is in this for me?' flooded her mind. So it was an answer to her muttered prayer when Sunmbo accosted Abdullahi. She paid rapt attention and took notes herself, uninvited to the conversations.

By the time the duo were done talking, Preye heaved a huge sigh of relief and blurted out loud: 'Thank you Abdul.' Abdullahi and Sunmbo turned back and laughed at her tense appreciation. It was such a sight to behold. Palpable tension doused in a few words. **Preye is AUDITORY** and her means of learning or interpretation is through words, verbal illustrations, stories, analogies, comparisons, and more words. Her type does better when instructions are dictated and directives issued verbally. They would rather make phone calls than type emails. They are EARS people.

Nnamdi is the Project Expediter. The CEO particularly hired him into the firm for the sole aim of achieving this process fulfilment for this organization. His usable experience is second to none. In fact, when the CEO muted the idea of restructuring, he did not have to say many words to convince Nnamdi. Nnamdi has both intuitive prowess and on the job experience to translate the ideas of the CEO into tangible results. And so it was like a home run when Nnamdi walked into the room just when the trio of Sunmbo, Abdullahi and Preye were having their laugh. He asked 'guys, what are we celebrating with such laughter?' Preye felt so proud to share her fears and how the gist she eavesdropped in helped her allay the fears. Nnamdi helped all of them see even deeper than they thought they all knew. She shared EXPERIENCES of past projects, the ROIs, the CHALLENGES, the PAINS, the WINS and even the PROSPECTS.

Nnamdi told them what the firm's processes would imply on their JOBS, PERSONAL LIFE and their LOVED ONES. How business processes meant some form of EVOLUTION for the firm. He ended his talk by saying IF WE DO NOT CHANGE, WE WILL BE EXTINCT IN NO TIME. He could do this because **Nnamdi is AUDITORY DIGITAL** and this kinds of people rely on gut feelings, experiences they have had or associated with and a lot of internal conversations about their own convictions to what they believe in or do.

As a business owner, your knowledge of these 4 kinds of persons will go a long way to help you articulate your vision, and ambitions for the overall benefit of your investment in personnel and infrastructure. Let me ask you: are you VISUAL, AUDITORY, KINESTHETIC or AUDITORY DIGITAL?

Let me know your thoughts on this.



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