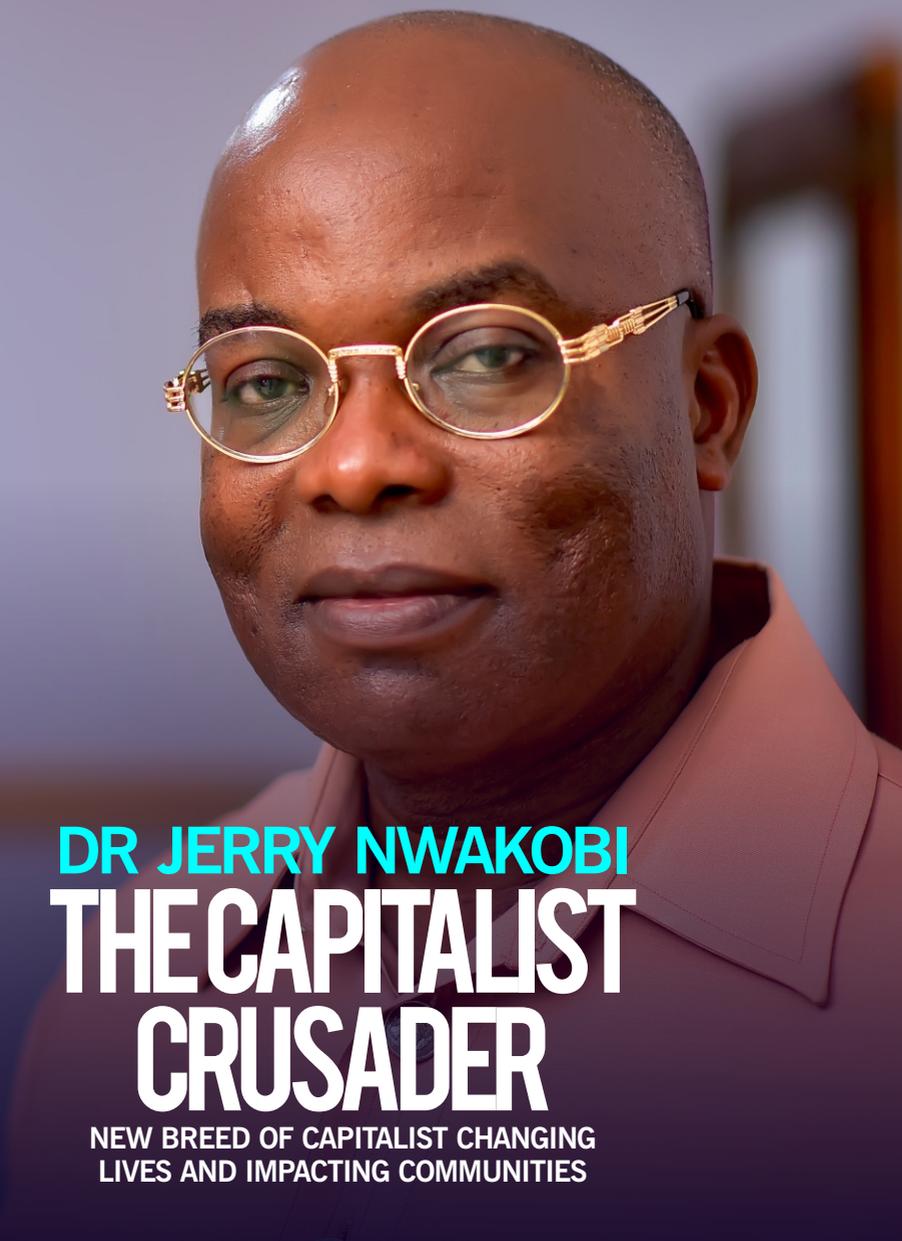


# TrepAfrica

MAGAZINE FOR AFRICAN ENTREPRENEURS



TrepAfrica | Space



**DR JERRY NWAKOBI**  
**THE CAPITALIST**  
**CRUSADER**

NEW BREED OF CAPITALIST CHANGING  
LIVES AND IMPACTING COMMUNITIES



**TrepT*ik***  
 ENTREPRENEURSHIP TV SERIES

## JOIN THE MOVEMENT

TrepAfrica has filmed & documented hundreds of thriving African entrepreneurs' stories.  
 Connect [@TrepAfrica](https://www.instagram.com/TrepAfrica) for your brand storytelling & profile video now.



**FOR SPONSORSHIP:**  
[WWW.TREPAFRICA.COM/SPONSOR](http://WWW.TREPAFRICA.COM/SPONSOR)  
 CALL/WHATAPP: +234 708 701 4284  
 TREPAFRICA@GMAIL.COM



**SPECIAL THANKS TO THIS EDITION'S INTERVIEWEES & CONTENT CONTRIBUTORS**



Oluwaseun M. AKADIRI  
Editor-In-Chief

Aramide FOLORUNSHO  
Assistant Editor

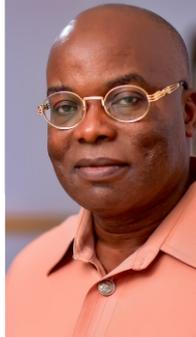
Timothy AJAYI  
ICT Officer

Dr PHOZE  
Creative Visual Art

Kemi ASOGE  
Content Developer

Bukola O. HAMMED  
Printing Lead

Samuel BUSARI  
Ibitola ADU  
Content Editor



TrepAfrica magazine is a Quarterly Entrepreneurship magazine. Each edition features and delves into the world of most accomplished CEO's, billionaires, entrepreneurs, celebrities, & innovators sharing their startup stories, strategies, insights, failures/challenges and successes.

TrepAfrica is more than a magazine; It's a premier media experience and educational brand that empowers and promotes the fast growing community of African entrepreneurs, professionals and change agents. TrepAfrica breaks down her exciting experiences into actionable content productions [videos/prints], academy & lifestyles.

Connect with us on our social media platforms:    @TREPAFRICA // [www.TrepAfrica.Com](http://www.TrepAfrica.Com)

FOR SPONSORSHIP/PARTNERSHIP/ADVERT/ENQUIRIES: EMAIL; [TREPAFRICA@GMAIL.COM](mailto:TREPAFRICA@GMAIL.COM)

TO GET FEATURED  +234 708 701 4284 [WWW.TREPAFRICA.COM](http://WWW.TREPAFRICA.COM) [WWW.TV.TREPAFRICA.COM](http://WWW.TV.TREPAFRICA.COM)

**C H R  
O N I  
C L E**

*Editor's Desk*



I'm Oluwaseun Akadiri,  
Founder & Creative  
Strategist Of TrepAfrica.

TrepAfrica tells African  
stories, so it makes sense  
for me to start by telling  
you mine.



MY NAME IS  
**OLUWASEUN**  
AND THIS IS **MY CHRONICLE**

Being raised by a single mother practically from infancy (dad left ) comes with the perks of early consciousness to growth as circumstances quite unpalatable became stairs of self realisation towards the creation of TrepAfrica. I must say that the peculiarity of my story is akin to me just like many young entrepreneurs' are.

Let me start from the chapter when I turned 11 years old and was ready to start high school education; my mother fell seriously ill and her health became our struggling family's financial priority . One day she summoned me and said "Oluwaseun , your admission into a high school needs to be halted and you will have to stay at home till things get financially better."

I wasn't satisfied with the staying at home part. How do I stay at home when I should be in school? Without any parent's or guardian's behest, I summoned up courage and went to the nearest public school close by to discuss my being admitted into school to the Principal. Putting my age into consideration, she instructed me to get my parent to request the Commissioner of Education to get me an admission letter into her school. I was young, naive and knowing the situation at home, I alone went to the Ministry of Education. Unfortunately, I was denied access to seeing the Commissioner primarily because I was just a child and unaccompanied by an adult.

**T**he next day, I trekked back to the public school and this time, the principal who was impressed by my unrelenting efforts as a child offered to help. I was admitted into the school to start my secondary education. I was beyond happy but then I needed to pay my school fees, get school wears, buy books and so on. At that point and such a tender age, something impelled in me, with the benefit of hindsight, I can tell that it was the entrepreneurial spirit because I was not going to give up. So at that age, I ventured into various activities such as house cleaning business, hawking farm produce such as vegetables and thankfully, I was able to pay my fees through high school.

There is a song that was popular while I was growing. It goes thus “Bata re a dun kokoka ti o ba ka iwe re” (trans.” Your Shoes will sound “Kokoka” if you read your book) Kokoka is an ideophone associated with the shoe sound of an educated person who walks by. It’s a sound associated with prestige, elitism, and enviable success. However, you can only achieve that “If” you are well-read. Education in Africa as far back as the colonial era has been equalized with success. For you to be termed successful you must go to school and get White collar job, also termed as being gainfully employed. Well I got into tertiary Institution too with that notion. There I was, a regular student with the mindset of studying hard, graduating with good grades and start an enviable happy life.

mean who does not want to tread “Kokoka”??. However, I never get to realise that Education does not equate to success when you are only gainfully employed but equates to success when you create values that is beyond getting paid on monthly basis and you are happy doing that. Being “gainfully employed” is beyond getting a paid job. It connotes being “innovative and creative”. I get to know this when I went for my undergraduate compulsory six-months internship (SIWES Program). I noticed that some of the employees of the company I was interning under were not happy doing their job as they feel trapped in a mind-set of mediocrity and limitation.

**TrepAfrica was birthed with the noble need to create an innovative space that “REINVENT AFRICA'S STORY” and there by, promote enterprise culture in Africa and make people to imagine more.**

**R**ight from childhood I detest the notions of impossibilities or limitations. I started thinking about what the future holds after graduation because there was no way I will settle for the mundane when I knew I could achieve more and impact more. We Africans are always seen to be limited but that is quite an erroneous narrative of who we are as a continent and as a race and this is because we dare not to imagine more even when we are blessed with limitless human capitals and natural resources.

Despite all the hurdles and limitations caused by the government and school systems, it is not surprising that most young people have imagined more; took the risk of starting a company, Innovating Products and offering services that make people lives easier, safer and better.

TrepAfrica was birthed with the noble need to create an innovative space that “REINVENT AFRICA'S STORY” and there by, promote enterprise culture in Africa and make people to imagine more.

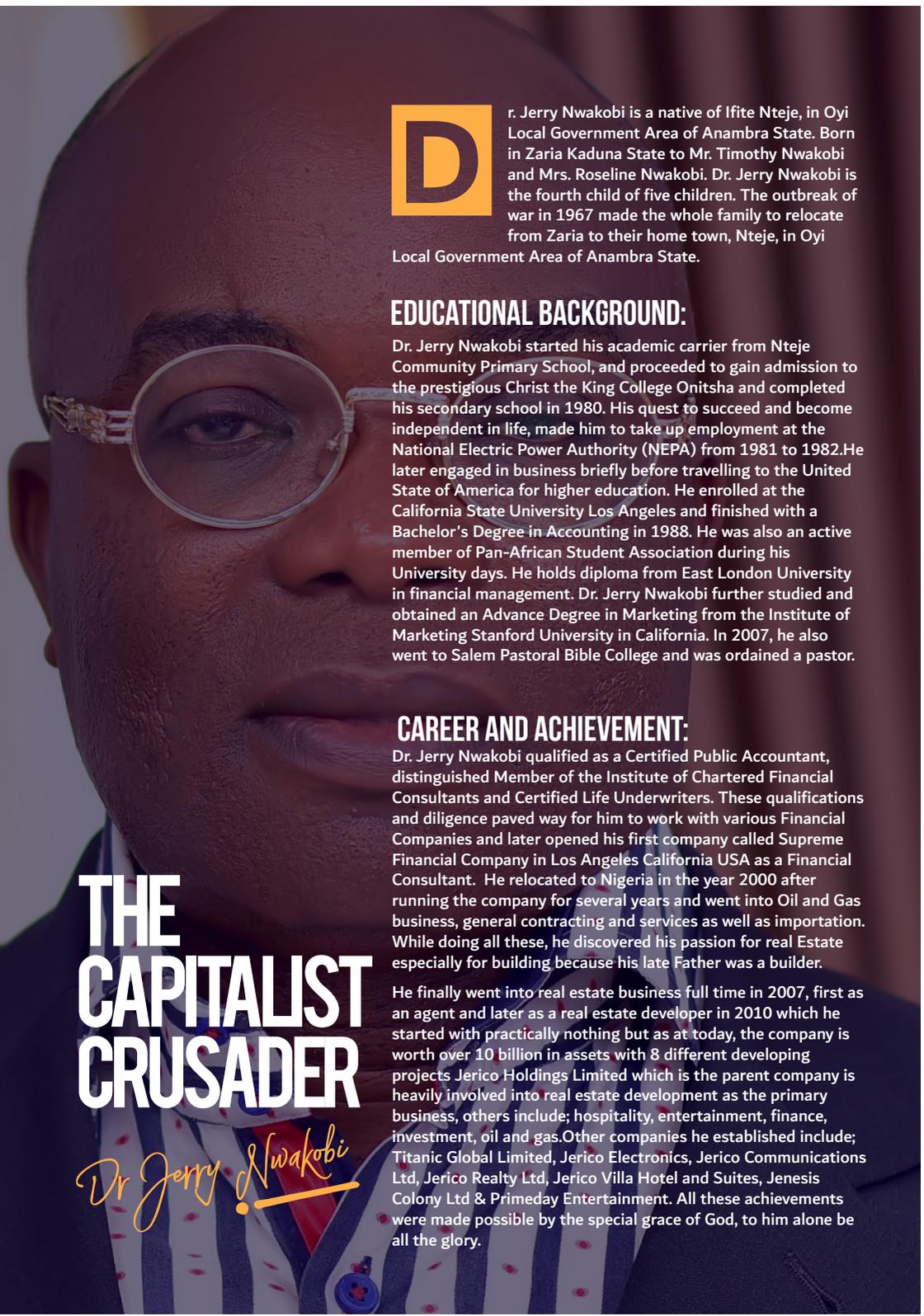
It is sad to note that, Enterprise narrative in Africa is under-told and this has hidden the inventions of a few as well as frustrated the efforts of many. TrepAfrica was conceived as a solution to create an innovative space not just for media experience but a cross-cultural platform of diversity and inclusivity to promoting great discoveries and encouraging collaborative enterprise culture in and out of Africa. The portfolio of our documentary narratives is centered on brands in Africa both local and international brands and through our divers products; TV shows, Video Production, Brand Innovation Designs, Magazine, Digital Media Training and Creative Co-working Studio. We have been able to propel enterprise performance thereby enhance sustainable economic growth in Africa.



Today, TrepAfrica has documented over hundreds of thriving African entrepreneurs using epic video production and print media, that has inspired and empowered hundred of thousands of young people across the continent and we want to do more. Our big audacious goal is to promote enterprise culture in Africa by creating Innovation, Spaces & Smart Cities with overall experience for Entrepreneurs to work, learn, live and have fun.

**My name is Oluwaseun Akadiri, Founder & creative Strategist of TrepAfrica. We'd love to collaborate with potential partners, sponsors and investors in Re-Inventing Africa's Story.**

Imagine more with TrepAfrica.

A close-up portrait of Dr. Jerry Nwakobi, a man with glasses, wearing a suit and tie. The background is a soft, out-of-focus grey.

**D**

r. Jerry Nwakobi is a native of Ifite Nteje, in Oyi Local Government Area of Anambra State. Born in Zaria Kaduna State to Mr. Timothy Nwakobi and Mrs. Roseline Nwakobi. Dr. Jerry Nwakobi is the fourth child of five children. The outbreak of war in 1967 made the whole family to relocate from Zaria to their home town, Nteje, in Oyi Local Government Area of Anambra State.

## EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND:

Dr. Jerry Nwakobi started his academic carrier from Nteje Community Primary School, and proceeded to gain admission to the prestigious Christ the King College Onitsha and completed his secondary school in 1980. His quest to succeed and become independent in life, made him to take up employment at the National Electric Power Authority (NEPA) from 1981 to 1982. He later engaged in business briefly before travelling to the United State of America for higher education. He enrolled at the California State University Los Angeles and finished with a Bachelor's Degree in Accounting in 1988. He was also an active member of Pan-African Student Association during his University days. He holds diploma from East London University in financial management. Dr. Jerry Nwakobi further studied and obtained an Advance Degree in Marketing from the Institute of Marketing Stanford University in California. In 2007, he also went to Salem Pastoral Bible College and was ordained a pastor.

## CAREER AND ACHIEVEMENT:

Dr. Jerry Nwakobi qualified as a Certified Public Accountant, distinguished Member of the Institute of Chartered Financial Consultants and Certified Life Underwriters. These qualifications and diligence paved way for him to work with various Financial Companies and later opened his first company called Supreme Financial Company in Los Angeles California USA as a Financial Consultant. He relocated to Nigeria in the year 2000 after running the company for several years and went into Oil and Gas business, general contracting and services as well as importation. While doing all these, he discovered his passion for real Estate especially for building because his late Father was a builder.

He finally went into real estate business full time in 2007, first as an agent and later as a real estate developer in 2010 which he started with practically nothing but as at today, the company is worth over 10 billion in assets with 8 different developing projects Jerico Holdings Limited which is the parent company is heavily involved into real estate development as the primary business, others include; hospitality, entertainment, finance, investment, oil and gas. Other companies he established include; Titanic Global Limited, Jerico Electronics, Jerico Communications Ltd, Jerico Realty Ltd, Jerico Villa Hotel and Suites, Jenesis Colony Ltd & Primeday Entertainment. All these achievements were made possible by the special grace of God, to him alone be all the glory.

# THE CAPITALIST CRUSADER

*Dr Jerry Nwakobi*

## AWARDS RECEIVED:

2016 - Merit Award by Nteje Development Union. 2017 – Ambassador in the campaign against discrimination of persons with Albinism by Samora Media Ltd. 2018 – An Award of Excellence by Catholic Archdioceses of Onitsha. 2018 – Merit Award for Humanitarian Service by Radio Television Theatre and Arts Workers Union of Nigeria. 2019 - Doctor of science (D.Sc. Hons) in Property Management and Estate Development by the European-American University. 2019 - National Outstanding Leadership Award by National Association of Nigeria Students (NANS) 2019 – Outstanding Business Personality of the Year by NMNA 2019 – Trek Africa Real Estate Brand Company of the Year by Trek Africa Award 2019 – Honorary Award by Sacred Heart Catholic Community Nteje for contribution to growth of the church and faith in Nteje 2019 - Award Of Excellence By Catholic Women Organization St. Anthony's Parish Nteje .

## PHILANTHROPIC ACTIVITIES:

Dr. Jerry Nwakobi is a Christian at heart and in doing. His love and magnanimous nature, made him to establish the following structures in his Town Nteje and still providing till date. In 2000 he constructed a 2-kilometer road.

In 2000 he built a massive Town Hall which was later turned to Primary School for St. Anthony Catholic Church Nteje. In 2003 he completed a Sacred Heart Catholic Church Nteje, which was started in 1956. In 2004 he dug a borehole for his Nteje people to have easy access to water. In 2013 he constructed a multi-million-naira bridge to solve erosion problem that is devastating his Village Nteje. In 2017 he donated 3 plots of land in Ibeju-Lekki Lagos State to

Sisters of Notre Dame (a Catholic Church Organization known for caring for the poor and less privilege in the Society). He has built and donated various houses to the underprivileged and indigent people. He has acquired hectares of land to build private University in his home town Nteje. He has also acquired hectares of land to build motherless and orphanage home. Suffice to say that Dr. Jerry Nwakobi is an epitome of a true Philanthropist sent by God to transform his people. Dr. Jerry Nwakobi is happily married to Mrs. Angel Ifunanya Nwakobi and blessed with five lovely children

**PRESENTER: Now let's talk about you being an entrepreneur, how did it begin for you?**

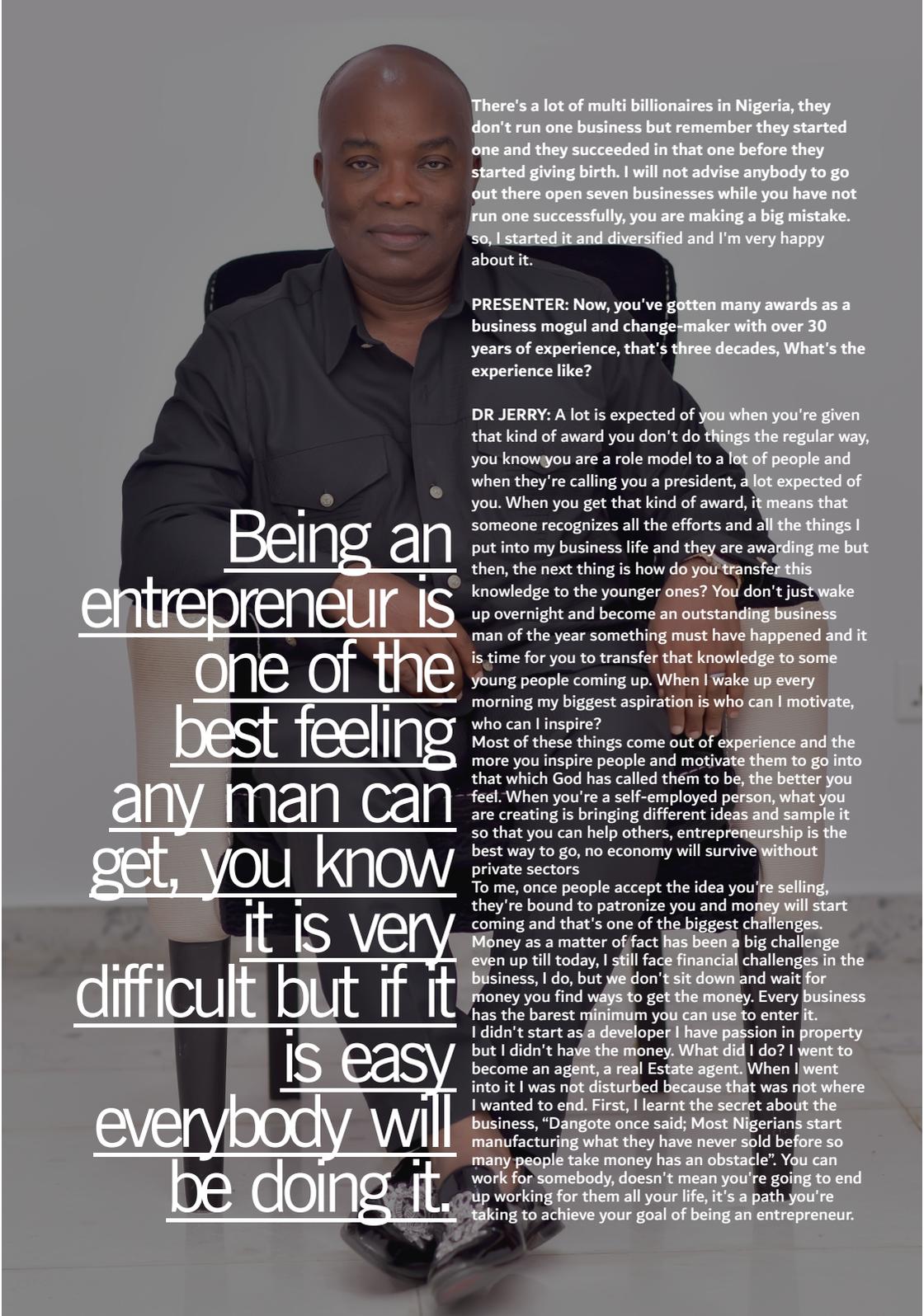
**DR JERRY: You see as a small boy coming out from my hometown my father was a bricklayer so I never saw him waiting for any paycheck and my Uncles working in government used to say; "my biggest fear was for somebody to retire me". And my uncles all came back to the village after being retired. It was a dreadful thought for me because I never wanted to be retired and the only way for me is to be self-employed.**

So, I started doing small training here and there. Eventually, I travel to America for further studies. When I finished my studies in America, I never wanted a paycheck. I wanted to be independent I started working for insurance company because when I came to the insurance company, they have options of either you take salary or you take commission and when you take commission, you are working for yourself, when you take salary you're working for the company. So, I worked as a commission earner.

And then in one year, I was surprised how much I could make, so entrepreneurship is where you get paid what you think you're worth when I came out of school in America I started driving a taxi, from there I opened a limousine company just to be self-employed from there as I own my own accounting firm I never wanted to work for anybody. So being an entrepreneur is one of the best feeling any man can get but you know it is very difficult if it is easy everybody will be doing it, an entrepreneur sees profit over salary. What is profit? it's what you put in, determine what you get you back and you never feel cheated.

**PRESENTER: Sir, what motivated you into starting Jerico conglomerates? Because I read in the profile that you have so many Jerico affiliated companies, franchise and all that among them is the Titanic Global Limited now let's talk about what motivated you into starting these companies?**

**DR JERRY: Yes, you know a rich man is like an ocean, that has a lot of tributaries coming into that ocean that's why the ocean never dries. So, when you are a businessman and you start work, you can start with one and as that one become successful, will give birth to a lot of other businesses, and you find out they complement each other that's my reasons for venturing into and opening so many businesses. Look at Dangote you don't know how many businesses he owns? go and see a lot of successful people, because they succeed in one, they want to venture into another one and they are consumed into all these things.**



There's a lot of multi billionaires in Nigeria, they don't run one business but remember they started one and they succeeded in that one before they started giving birth. I will not advise anybody to go out there open seven businesses while you have not run one successfully, you are making a big mistake. so, I started it and diversified and I'm very happy about it.

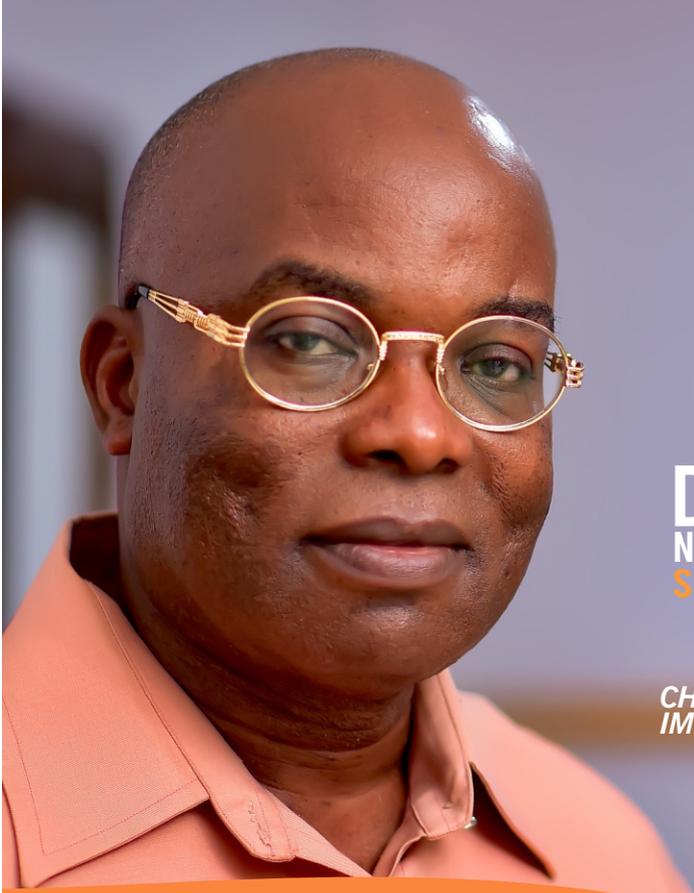
**PRESENTER:** Now, you've gotten many awards as a business mogul and change-maker with over 30 years of experience, that's three decades, What's the experience like?

**DR JERRY:** A lot is expected of you when you're given that kind of award you don't do things the regular way, you know you are a role model to a lot of people and when they're calling you a president, a lot expected of you. When you get that kind of award, it means that someone recognizes all the efforts and all the things I put into my business life and they are awarding me but then, the next thing is how do you transfer this knowledge to the younger ones? You don't just wake up overnight and become an outstanding business man of the year something must have happened and it is time for you to transfer that knowledge to some young people coming up. When I wake up every morning my biggest aspiration is who can I motivate, who can I inspire?

Most of these things come out of experience and the more you inspire people and motivate them to go into that which God has called them to be, the better you feel. When you're a self-employed person, what you are creating is bringing different ideas and sample it so that you can help others, entrepreneurship is the best way to go, no economy will survive without private sectors

To me, once people accept the idea you're selling, they're bound to patronize you and money will start coming and that's one of the biggest challenges. Money as a matter of fact has been a big challenge even up till today, I still face financial challenges in the business, I do, but we don't sit down and wait for money you find ways to get the money. Every business has the barest minimum you can use to enter it. I didn't start as a developer I have passion in property but I didn't have the money. What did I do? I went to become an agent, a real Estate agent. When I went into it I was not disturbed because that was not where I wanted to end. First, I learnt the secret about the business, "Dangote once said; Most Nigerians start manufacturing what they have never sold before so many people take money has an obstacle". You can work for somebody, doesn't mean you're going to end up working for them all your life, it's a path you're taking to achieve your goal of being an entrepreneur.

Being an  
entrepreneur is  
one of the  
best feeling  
any man can  
get, you know  
it is very  
difficult but if it  
is easy  
everybody will  
be doing it.



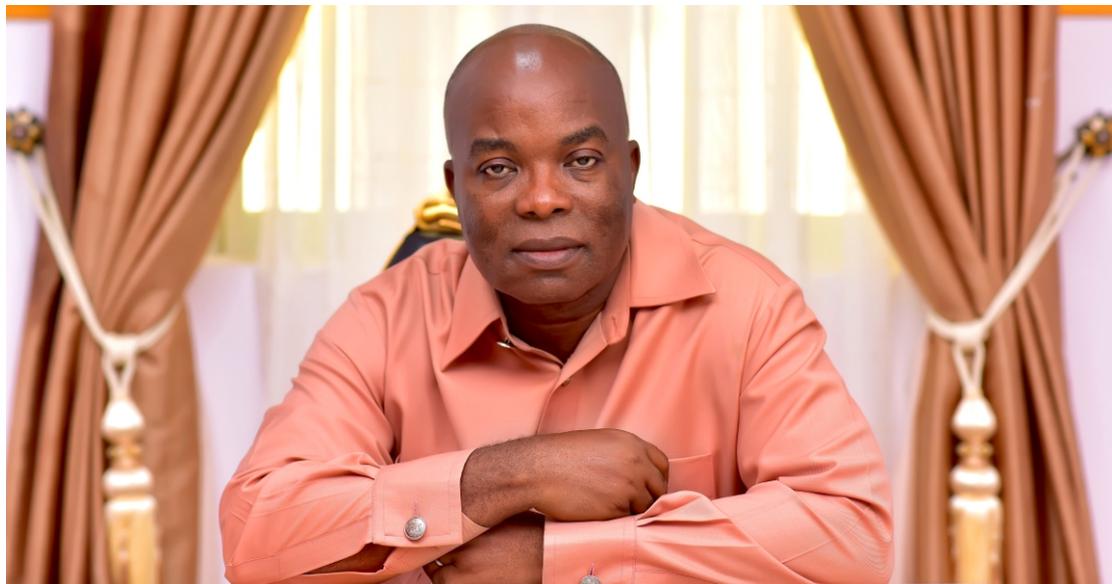
*CHANGING LIVES,  
IMPACTING COMMUNITIES*

# DR JERRY N W A K O B I

**BUSINESS & LIFE COACH**

[WWW.DRJERRYNWAKOBISHOW.COM](http://WWW.DRJERRYNWAKOBISHOW.COM)

    @DRJERRYNWAKOBISHOW



**S**o, my biggest challenge was money but it was not an obstacle. When I actually started real estate development, I started with nothing, nothing! why I say nothing is that, I started this business with only 1.5 million naira, that was about 10 years ago. but it's a multiplication. Multiplication, multiplication until it gets to what it is today.

**I** deny myself a lot of things, so many young people don't want to sacrifice to be an entrepreneur, it's one of the hardest things but one of the best things you can do for yourself. It takes a process, to be a success in life is not a day job, to become successful in what you do is the easiest thing but to maintain that success is the hardest thing. Most young people don't climb the ladder, they look for the lift or elevator and one other thing, some of them don't want to work hard, everybody wants to be CEOs it's very nice, but remember CEO's don't have time schedule, they work 24 hours. Are you ready to commit? Some of them don't want to do that, so everybody cry and talk and cry about money, but are you fully qualified to manage it? I always tell young people it doesn't cost money to start a business, but it costs money to run a business when you start, you're learning the ins and outs, when you get to a certain level, you need money to expand it.

**If you want to be a developer, you want to be a businessman, don't think it's going to be easy, no amount of preparation can get you ready to be a successful business man, it's a journey, once you follow the right path and you know where you're going.**

**PRESENTER:** Ok sir, As a successful business developer what's your own approach to Young entrepreneurs in terms of training and developing young entrepreneurs to become successful?

**DR JERRY:** First of all, they must have a coachable spirit, to be a good footballer, you listen to your coach, most of the time footballers earn more money and play better than their coach but they listen to the Coach. Business is like that.

**Second point, you will not have a stubborn spirit, rebellious and stubborn spirit; they're witchcraft. It means, you're accepting your way so you don't need a mentor, nobody can advise you, no matter what you do, you know better.**

Information age has come but experience will always remain there. Computer can come and bring all the different things but there's still a physical life experience which you must get from someone who has been through it. Most of them don't read books about what they want to start, the reason why those people put those things

in those books is for you to learn what a man suffered for 30 years, this, you can learn you can correct it by reading their book for just one week.

**WHEN I WAKE UP EVERY MORNING MY BIGGEST ASPIRATION IS WHO CAN I MOTIVATE, WHO CAN I INSPIRE?**

one priority in anything you want to venture into, first of all be sure you like it, if you like it and you do it without grumbling 10 hours will be like one hour but if you get stuck in something you don't want to do just because of the money 10 hours will be like ten years. Be open-minded, and the best among all, is to have a mentor.

**Most young people think a mentor is somebody you come to his house to give you money to start a business that's not a mentor. A mentor is somebody that will give you corrections tell you what you're doing wrong that you can do right. A mentor is not supposed to give you, he's supposed to teach you but most of them run into that means thinking you give them money to go and start a business.**

Most time, you don't have to know them, they don't have to know you, but you know them, you can pick up their books. In 1985, I came across Donald Trump real estate I never met trump but I read his book I set my mind that I want to do this, it took me almost 15 years before I was able to do it before I left this country, I read so much about Moshud Abiola, I went to school to study accountancy because Moshud Abiola was an accountant. I wanted a life like that and he came out from a poorer family than mine if I can say it that way but if someone like him can come out from this and build up what he has then, who am I? most young people don't have any mentor, they don't have any life they can emulate and they don't want to suffer what that person has gone through you don't have to suffer it, but buy the books and read about them. Most young people don't read, today, everything is more of chat, that's ok, but also try to read. This has made very possible now as you can Google who you want to be your mentor, it'll give you all the books, you don't have to go to the shop most of them will not read it and yet they want to be successful.

**PRESENTER** ...so I think what you actually said expatiate further on the advice to youth to kind of stand up, to own whatever it is they do...so, the question is I really want to know your own approach to training and development, to helping entrepreneurs. What have you done or what are the things you put in place?

**DR JERRY:** Oh, you see in Nigeria today, I have done a lot, I have set people in business, I have mentored people financially and other thing I continue to do is starting a program; it's a microfinance, how you can let people start with as little as nothing and make something out of their lives. I'm also planning on starting this real estate academic, the practical aspect of it, a lot of people don't know, I'm trying to set up a real estate school where they'll be taught the basic necessity what it takes to be an agent what takes to be a developer and the processes you have to go through. You see, I have a scholarship scheme in place.

**Education is the best thing that can happen to any man even if you want to be a zookeeper or an 'AGBERO', when you are educated your own will be different.**

One of the things in my pipeline by the grace of God is one day to open a university because at the end of it all is a legacy you leave behind, I'm building something like that, that people will not be denied a place because they do not have money, they will only get a place because they are too smart to be wasted.

**PRESENTER:** I love that I think the most imperative word you've actually said to me that really caught my attention was the real estate school, and I think that will be the first in Nigeria. I cannot wait to experience that, Now I need to ask you what is your own definition of success?

**DR JERRY:** My own definition of success is contentment what one thinks is success is different from another person. Being contented with whatever you have achieved in life and being encouraged to continue to be is success.

**PRESENTER:** Sir, you talked about success being contentment so at what point and at least you started like 30 years ago, at what point would you say this is when I actually hit it, that you were contented?

**DR JERRY:** I would say the moment I got to the point I look forward to waking up every morning to going to do that which I love doing I believe that was the point. It's not money, if it's money I don't think I'll ever be contented but it is the passion and the joy that comes with doing what I like to do.



**JENESIS  
COLONY**



# **SAFEGUARD THE FUTURE OF YOUR CHILDREN**

**INVEST IN REAL ESTATE**

**+2348082752471; 08146527883**

  **@Jenesiscolony1**

**6, Jerry Nwakobi Str., Lekki-Epe Expressway, Lagos**



**PRESENTER:** ok so your contentment doesn't have to do with money?

**DR JERRY:** No, but once you're contented, whatever comes, that money you're ok with it. I do not aspire to be better than anybody, my aspiration is to be better than myself every day and that is contentment for me.

**PRESENTER:** I like the fact that when you were behind the scene, when I was talking to you about people quitting and all that and you asked me if I have been appreciative of what I have, that has to do with contentment which I really respect you for more again sir. Now what're the setbacks you encountered and how did you overcome them?

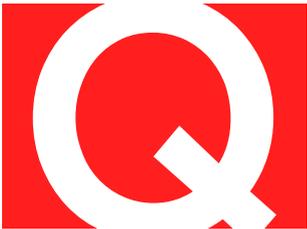
**DR JERRY:** I had family setbacks, like I said I was married before I had two children and I was divorced. To me that was a big setback growing up as a Catholic boy I was taught to that divorce was wrong and growing up I never thought I would be a divorcee. I think that was the biggest setback of my life having to build and destroy and start building again. I learnt that no matter what happens what God said must come to pass every obstacle a man goes through is a package to get you to a destination. So, I looked at my divorce even though it was very painful to me as a path that I must go through, divorce sometimes can take everything you have morally, spiritually, emotionally & financially that's why they said; God hates divorce so I think, I think that was one of the biggest setbacks.

**PRESENTER:** Thank you so much for sharing that. Finally, on today's show, you are a very prominent businessman how are you able to cope with family and business, how do you merge them?

**DR JERRY:** You see what happened is that when we talk about entrepreneurship, we talk about being self-employed. It comes with a price, my daughter once told me that she will never marry a businessman, I asked why? she said you don't have time. In the journey of success some people have to pay for who you are, mostly your family but if you get them to understand and know the kind of person you are they will live with it so as a young man if you're going to do business know that it will take a lot of time, it's just part of your life.

# FINTECH DISRUPTORS;

Meet The Freaks,  
Geeks & Visionaries  
Of InstiQ Transforming  
Africa's FinTech



**ARANIMIE:** Welcome to another super exciting edition of TrepTalk. We are here to inform, inspire, educate and promote the large community of business owners, entrepreneurs across different sectors in Africa.

Today, I am here at InstiQ Professional Services and I have Mr. Tolu Davids, the C.E.O and co-founder of instiQ, and I also have Mr. Bode Bankole who is the Executive Director of service.

Welcome, Mr. Bankole and Mr. Tolu.

**TOLU DAVIDS:** I am super excited you know to have you guys here. We want to hope that this story would encourage viewers watching us.



**TOLU DAVIDS, CEO, INSTIQ**

**ARANIMIE:** Lets talk about instiQ. You are passionate about revolutionizing the African technology space, so tell us about instiQ and how it all started.

**TOLU DAVIDS:** I will start from the beginning. My Co-founders and I were in the bank working as staffs. However, what we did for the bank was to provide solutions. I for one, was part of the solution delivery department of the bank where we made a lot of innovation for the bank and we saw adoption and acceptance of those solutions by the people in the market place. At some point, we noticed based on the three key issues of solutions delivery faced by the bank which I would quickly go over.

Number one is adoption where people buy foreign solution and make it difficult to adapt it to African business processes. Number two, we noticed the very huge price gap. We then said if a bank could be paying a million X+ for a foreign solution, we could provide it at a 10 times cheaper rate which was one of the business model we then adopted. Number three, we noticed what I would term exodus; people moving from Nigeria to go find greener pastures. The movement was not the issue but it then tells on the quality of solution support most banks are getting. If you bought a company's product and the person trained to manage those solutions design; it is difficult sourcing for local alternatives to replace such person. We then felt why can't we provide solutions and guarantee a better support for banks? Those were the three things that made us start instiQ.



**ARANIMIE:** What other sectors apart from the bank do you provide solutions for?

**TOLU DAVIDS:** We started out with the mindset which also applies to every entrepreneur that it is better to start from a place of strength. From BFSI space, when I say BFSI I mean banking and other financial institutions where we had our background we decided to start off. However, we provide enterprise solutions across all sectors. We defined our journey to know where we would be focused on and we chose four areas which are banking, education, health and logistics sectors. I would also like to say we have done remarkably well in BFSI space in the last three years.

**ARANIMIE:** I know you mentioned challenges along the way and starting from 2015 which is five years ago, what are the challenges you have faced Mr. Bankole?

**MR. BANKOLE:** Thank you very much. We have lots of challenges ranging from setup being that we started from scratch. We had to identify the existent problems, the opportunities in the problems and the solutions we can proofed. All those were challenging and also took us time. It was challenging but we persisted and stayed through. There is a thing called staying through. Of course there were times one felt like retracing steps and giving up but once we were focused we stayed through.

Another challenge was gaining acceptance in the market. Some people especially those we worked together would look at you and say "is this not Tolu, why should I pay him such amount of money?" based on the fact that they pay such amount for foreign solution and thereby putting dollar prices makes them look down on you. Marketing and putting solutions in the acceptable state were challenging. Over time however and with trials they were able to trust us and since then they have not been able to look back again.

**TOLU DAVIDS:** Let me add to what Bode has said, sharing the story we started in 2015 and we did not make any revenue till 2017 so it was enough time for anybody to give up. My advice is knowing your market and know your business model. If your business model is going to take you time, then be ready for it. At some points, Bode can bear me witness, we had to call ourselves and say we had to self-fund this company again and we had to do capital pulling which kept us in those moments we would have given up.

**ARANIMIE:** Mr. Tolu that's really an insightful one. You mentioned challenges and I'm sure there were failures, down time and trying times. Kindly share some of those moments with us.

**TOLU DAVIDS:** I would share few ones based on experience. When we started in 2015, there was no office. Just like anyone starting a business we had to meet in cars, eateries and houses. That was one part. The other part was rejection by customers.

Those who you expected from experience would give you something to at least jump start the business would disappoint but you have to focus on where you are going. Number three is that financial institutions or those you expect to come to your aid would not. People want to see traction, success and what you have done before giving you anything.

**MR. BANKOLE:** the next one, we had a job we bid for without money in our account hoping if that works out it would help the brand. So, on the final day to complete the bidding process, we heard “sorry your company was not selected” and I remembered when Tolu and I got outside, we were just looking at each other, we couldn't utter a word! But like he said, we had decided that we had to succeed in this business and going back was not an option. It was amidst the determination in what we are doing and what we had and today the story has changed.

**ARANIMIE:** Having talked about the challenges, what kept you going at those moments even after the door was slammed against you?

**MR. BANKOLE :** Let me state it this way. You know he said when you draw a vision for yourself, come up with something unbelievable by others. The size of your dream and visions propel you and would not let you go back by yourself. Here we have our slogan. When you say “InstiQ” people will respond “I believe”. So for us the “belief” has graduated from being just a belief to becoming a conviction. When belief becomes a conviction, you are ready to give anything. I remember in those days, your wife would expect you to give even without knowing if you were bringing anything back. It even got to a time we asked ourselves how are we still coming to this office? But we had a believe that one day this thing would happen and on the day it

happened I remember we were in the office and decided to go out for marketing and if you remember that day we never knew we were going to get anything but we just went anyways. When we got there one of our big friends from the bank looking at us pitifully so that these ones would not kill themselves called us and said “look at this thing, what can you do there?” what can you do have been a recurring question so we prayed that this should not be like the usual ones. We looked at it and there were four items. He said we could everything but I was like we should pick one. The man said are we sure and we said yes. So he said we should go and submit a proposal. We bought the proposal and later they called us to come for our award letter. I think it was about 27 thousand dollars and it came to be our first major contract. When we got that we were reassured of the possibility of what we were doing and since then we have not looked back.

**ARANIMIE:** Awesome one there. So, at what time did you get the vibe that InstQ was the right idea?

**TOLU DAVIDS:** For me as a leader, I would say from day one it was very clear. Another one was that yes we cannot achieve the dream alone and the dream might not be clear to other people. Our competitors were foreign companies that have thousands of employees. That was what birthed the slogan that Instiq I believe. Whatever we said just believe and do it as such. We were convinced since day one.

**ARANIMIE:** I picked from what you said that you were aware you could not drive the goal alone. You have co- founders. How do you get other people to run this vision with you?

**TOLU DAVIDS:** The marriage is when you come together as Co-founders and say you want to run a dream knowing fully well that if those people are not with you on

that journey you are going nowhere so I tell people when they ask how they can get those people I say they are your friends. They are people around you. The only thing you need to look at is what is my strength and what weaknesses do I have that I need to conquer? Bode is an orator and I am not. I look at Bode as a salesman he has done marketing and operation which I have never done. I am an IT person. Again, I have leadership quality in rallying people so we are complementing each other. That is the best way to find co- founders. However, co-founders would not do because they are watchers. It's like a football match where they are coaches and support staff. The real people that would score the goal and play the match are your staff. How do you then find those people? We then defined a metrics saying 70/30. 70 for us was about the character of those people while 30 was about the skill. Skill can be bought and trained but character cannot.

**ARANIMIE:** How has digitisation helped your brand grow, what impact has it made?

**TOLU DAVIDS:** As regards digital transformation, if you check, you would see we have been growing at over 60% yearly for the past 3 years. This implies that the number of deals we are getting is increasing. Let me give you the magic of how that works. If you go into an organization and digitize one process say we are giving you an internet banking application, before you know it they would start talking to you on how you can provide services like sound box and others. This gives us the opportunity to cross sell within a single this has helped us because even though we have not reached so many customers, the customers we have met we have done so many things in their digital transformation journey



**ARANIMIE:** What's your biggest customer success, I mean the ones you are most proud of?

**TOLU DAVIDS:** For reference purpose I am only going to be mentioning two. Recently we partnered with U.B.A which is a bank in 20 African countries and is currently one of the biggest banks in Nigeria. This partnership allowed us to digitally transform their retail operations. What we are using is our core banking solution called T.M.A which is being deployed across their subsidiaries including Nigeria. I am also proud to say there is another bank with the biggest balance sheet size majorly in Nigeria and the name of the bank is Access Bank. Our partnership has allowed us do a lot of things such as building micro services and all of that allowing them talk from say in Nigeria to their subsidiary. There are other brands but for time sake I will only mention two.

**ARANIMIE:** Do you have any form of Corporate Social Responsibility?

**MR. BANKOLE:** We have Q-Care foundation. As a matter of fact, during the lock down we gave palliatives to the less privileged as part of what we do but going forward Qcare foundation is going to be a well-established foundation that will touch lives in critical sectors of our society ranging from education, health and the likes. The foundation is up and running.

**TOLU DAVIDS:** Let me add the model we are running. The model is such that 2-4% of our commission is dedicated to this foundation. Therefore, if you pay us we as well give back to the society. This why we are able to do more with the palliatives, paying some peoples hospital bills and these are people we do not know. Anybody can access it at [www.Qcare.com.ng](http://www.Qcare.com.ng)

**ARANIMIE:** InstiQ made it to the top hundred digital status on Forbes list. How has that impacted your brand?

**TOLU DAVIDS:** Let's use this opportunity to thank Forbes and the GSE team. You know when you are running solo and people are not passing recognition to you, you may be big but people around you would not know what you are doing. One of the things the accelerator program did for us is that it made everybody to be aware of what we do.

Another one is the recognition of being among the top 10 and part of the companies that would change the narrative when it comes to African processes. How has it impacted us really? That is number three. Immediately we pitched our company on the summit day, we started receiving calls. Few of which are from VC and investment bankers and we have done a couple of follow ups. We are looking at taking capitals to the tune of million dollars and injecting into what we are doing that is working such that we can make a greater impact. For me that is what it has done for us. It has put us out there but we will keep doing what we do so our services can be replicated across Africa.

**MR. BANKOLE:** Being on Forbes and the training, it has been an eye-opener.

**ARANIMIE:** Your advice to aspiring entrepreneurs. Some have the ideas but don't know how to go about it or some that have been striving and not there yet.

**MR. BANKOLE:** Once you have conviction about what you want to do you have to stay true to it. There is something called staying power which is persistence. The only thing you have to do is subject your activities to constant reviews so you do not make same mistakes over and again. Robin Sharma wrote in one of his books that "Happiness comes from good judgement; good judgement comes from experience but experience comes from bad judgements". Bad judgements are mistakes and it is hard for humans not to make mistakes. Some people are afraid of making mistakes and are too conscious of their personality asking what others would think. It is not about those people it is about you. If you have an idea about something yes it is good to conduct research and see mentors but do not stay too long because the same idea occurs to two hundred other people so timing is of essence.

**TOLU DAVIDS:** Africa has 1.2 billion in terms of population, Nigeria alone is a huge pine of about 1/6 of Africa population which is about 200 million so my advice is if you exist in Nigeria you are in the market place as there are many problems talked about such as light. You can produce light from other sources. If that is your solution pursue it, it is legitimate. People say there is hunger in the land, could that be your opportunity? People say there are no equal opportunities in the ecosystem what are you doing about that? Try and pick an area you want to provide solution.

# MEET THE NIGERIAN FINEST EVENT FIXER

I am Funke Elizabeth Ade-Ojo popularly known as 'Madam Fix-It'. I am the founder of Precision Events a full service event planning and management consulting firm in Lagos Nigeria, and owner of the Madam-Fix-It trademark.

I am a problem solver, decisive decision maker and passionate about developing systems, processes and people for optimal efficiency. I can't stand seeing things and spaces out of order. Planning events and being in control of the intricate elements, the set, the crew, the flow, visuals, the entertainment, the production, direction and everything in between that completely takes the stress off our clients fulfills me in a way words can't express. I am extremely organized, structured, resourceful and gifted with an extraordinary eye for detail. These together form the critical success factors that have propelled the Precision brand to great heights in such a short time.

My educational background includes; a Masters in information technology with honours from Nottingham University, UK and a Business Administration also with honours from the University of Westminster, London, UK. My master's thesis titled 'Using Collaborative Virtual Reality to Gain Competitive Advantage in The UK Tourism Industry earned me a distinction.

My postgraduate experience spans +20years of international and local exposure in the areas of retail management, B2B and B2C electronic commerce management, corporate service management, business operations management, and more recently event management. I have been fortunate to work in cutting edge sectors and companies in Nigeria and the United Kingdom, which have refined my expertise in customer relationship management, branding, corporate communication, project management, systems and process development, operational quality control and business development.

A portrait of Funke Elizabeth Ade-Ojo, a woman with long braided hair, wearing a white top, smiling at the camera.

**M**y career began in 1996 with a stint in retail, as a Sales Executive at DH Evans London, a UK based multimillion-pound retail company. Recognizing my back office strengths, I was transferred to the HR department as a junior assistant handling payroll and training of over 200 staff quarterly. I later joined Accenture UK as a contract business and systems analyst from 2000 - 2002. While at Accenture, I was part of the pioneering project team that rolled out a network transformation for the UK's second largest retail chain, resulting in immediate savings of more than 35 million (\$50 million) per year. I moved to Auravita.com, an innovative eCommerce start up in 2003. I rose to the position of B2B Manager overseeing all its online pharmaceutical business relationships with Pfizer, Bayer, AHA, and small independent pharmaceutical chains. I grew the company's electronic payment and digital foot print by 40% within the first year.

I relocated back to Nigeria in 2005 to get married, and a year later stumbled over a startup opportunity where a group of young ambitious consultants co-founded 3Line Card Management Ltd, a switching and electronic payment firm that creates payment solutions for banks and micro finance banks. In 2007 I project managed the move from our one room office space in Ikeja to a purpose built office complex in Victoria Island where the company still operates from till date.

I was appointed as the pioneer Head of the Corporate Service division with the primary responsibility of overseeing the company's; human resource management, finance, office admin, legal and compliance departments. A position I held till 2009. Being a startup, we created the divisions SOP's (standard operating procedures) from scratch. For institutions to survive the test of time, proper policies and standards must be fabricated into the institutions structures.

In 2009 I advanced to the position of General Manager, I served in this office till 2013. I was awarded the 'Women's excellence merit award in two publications, and the 'Leading female financial technology award in 2013. Under my leadership the company enjoyed exponential growth, won several industry awards, ISO certifications, and built up a loyal customer base.

In 2014 I rolled out a succession plan as I had decided to take a sabbatical from full time work for a few years so I could focus on my three demanding young children.

By 2017 I was ready for a new challenge, this time starting again from scratch. I had done it before and knew I had what it took to jump start a formidable brand. Precision Events was born.

I currently sit on the Board of; 3Line Card Mgt Ltd, Alfadeks Nig Ltd, American International School Lagos (AISL), and the Lagos State Gymnastics Commission Board. I chair the Governance committee of the AISL board ensuring the school continues to evolve correct policy direction for the future of its students.



**PRESENTER:** I love the fact that you just reaffirmed my conviction as being a fixer but let us talk about your career as being an event fixer because that is your field presently. How did it all start for you?

**MADAM FIX IT:** precision events, we are an event planning, production, management and execution company. I come from a very structured background where things are done properly with international best practices. I understand how things should be so I came back to Nigeria and began a startup. We did not want it to be a one-man business and we understood it with all the co-founders. We knew things had to be done properly and haven't put structures in place we then started with 30 employees whom we had to manage every month. I decided two and a half years ago to reinvent myself. Coming from a cooperate background I wish I have a splendid story to tell you as to how I ended up in events planning but my re-invention came from pain. About 3 years ago I lost my baby sister. We were planning her wedding at the time and she was so pertinent in me planning her wedding given the fact that I pay attention to details and I knew what she wanted. I told her to choose from the array of event planners we have in Nigeria and I would assist in the background but she insisted I did. I used to joke when she was alive that with all my certifications and awards I can't be an event planner rather; I hire event planners. However, when she died and in my grief which I termed wilderness

I decided to honor her with doing what she wanted me to do and what I know how to do best. I was already considering going into it when I got a call from the Gain time and chance. The lawyer had been convinced by my sister to register a company for me. I had names in mind and when I saw the list of names my sister had given the lawyer I was surprised that she went this far.

The name precision and some others were choices but I chose precision because that is what I do and who I am. I then got a call from one of the co-founders of wing bees Mrs. Borode sham. Her goddaughter was to have her wedding and she wanted me to plan it. I had not done any commercial work at that time and fear wanted me to refuse. She actually insisted I did the planning because back in the American school she had witnessed me volunteering and helping out in planning their events which took them from just being ok to becoming spectacular. We then planned the wedding within 4 months and it was superb. I remember those who came saying that they did not feel like going again. It was a splendid experience and has been then so far. Those who work for me haven't been finding it easy because I am a bit of a perfectionist. Although with the 100% success recorded so far they have come to love my way since it's the only way. We so meticulous like our slogan 'precision events, meticulously planned'. This is also a charge to all females because I am particular about the girl child. It is not too late to reinvent and discover yourself. If you are doing what you do not enjoy you can retrace your steps. The world is waiting for you to manifest and create a legacy that would remain after you long after you have left planet earth.

**PRESENTER: That was so inspiring and I love it. Now let's talk about the most successful event you have ever planned.**

**MADAM FIX IT:** well I would not say a particular event was the best because like I said we have had 100% success rate. I give my soul to every event and we are so particular. We don't take just any event therefore we have time to plan our events. However, there was this very challenging event I planned for a cooperate organization which was an

**You need to have a mind-set of volunteering. I got most of my opportunities not because I was the best but I was willing and was ready to gain experience above money. Now I am at a stage people chase me.**

outdoor event and it rained. It rained from 2am up until 8am when the event was scheduled to start. There was panic all over my crew, vendors and clients but immediately my fixer instincts had to kick in. I called for a meeting and calmed everybody. I assured that as long as I was there the event would be successful. We then got to work. We got people to drain the water that had flooded the place, we got blowers, the entire floor plan was repositioned and in an hour time when the first guest arrived you could not have believed that there was a panic situation an hour before. We fix problems and execute with military precision. Did I mention that my father was in the army? So I was raised to understand military precision and in cases like that we have to fix problems within an hour we do so.

**PRESENTER: At what would you say you felt you had hit a peak of success in events planning and fixing?**

**MADAM FIX IT:** I would say it was when my now 8 year old son about two years ago when we planned a funfair for the American school and sponsored their T-shirt meaning 500 students wearing the Madam Fixlt T-shirt came home on a Monday morning with his mates and ran towards me shouting "mummy, mummy tell these mates of mine you are madam Fixlt". I looked at their young little faces and said I am madam Fixlt. They actually doubted at first saying madam Fixlt is a celebrity but I reaffirmed that I am his mum and also madam Fixlt. Then they were like "can I have your autograph"? seeing the pride and joy in my son's face I was so happy and said yes I am successful.

**PRESENTER: we would love to learn and know if over the years you have had challenges. Please share them with us.**

**MADAM FIX IT:** I feel the biggest challenge in the industry is human capital. It is evident that the event planning industry does not pay as well as say the oil industry or the banking sector. Therefore, attracting the best talents who are ready to learn and go through the learning process is difficult. Learning because the events industry is only as good as the human capitals in it. I have seen people who come into the industry and within a short while want to be event planners themselves. I even attend some master classes by some people and feel disappointed because the people teaching still have lots to learn themselves. Transparency can also be a challenge because finding one whom you can trust could be pretty difficult.

**PRESENTER:** haven gone through your CV it is obvious that you have the skill, talent and qualification so I would like to ask that is there a set skill an event planner must possess to be successful?

**MADAM FIX IT:** I am going with my firm on this one. We have an acronym precision with the following:

**P- PASSION**

To be a good event planner you and your team must be passionate about event planning.

**R- RESOURCEFUL**

You need to know places to get what and when. You are trying to save money for your clients so you have to offer them value for their money. You should be able to network and get the best vendors.

**E- EXCELLENCE**

Mediocrity is not an option in event planning. You just have to be excellent.

**C- CONSISTENCY**

Every event has to be consistently successful.

**I – INGENIOUS**

This means creativity and the ability of you and the team to be problem solvers. You should always bring something new and captivating to every job.

**S- STRUCTURED**

Everything we do is documented. We have the minutes of our meetings, our proposals are electronic, we have scripts for the MC, DJ and production scripts and they are all structured.

**I- INNOVATION**

We bring new solutions and whatever we need to fix events issues we innovate and bring in the solutions.

**O- OPTIMISTIC**

You always have to be happy, cheerful and hopeful because your team would feed off your energy even in desperate situations.

**N- NOBLE CHARACTER**

You have to be of noble character. Your yes is your yes and your no is your no. integrity is our watchword.

**PRESENTER:** All those you said are very pertinent to any entrepreneur and once again thank you for sharing them with us. Next I would be asking how she avoid being burned out with all these expertise, schedule and even remain beautiful.

**MADAM FIX IT:** I feel very relaxed around my children. I find it easy to relax at home. I really value my family so I go to watch my kids play basketball and cheer them on. I also volunteered at a government school once a week where I go to teach little children the intricacy of excellence. I am so concerned about Nigeria revisiting the topic of excellence and I want to catch them young. I do this and every time I come out of the class there is this fulfillment I get from it. Also I love my girlfriends. We have this small community, we meet often to laugh, joke, share experiences and have good time. All these keep me going because the stress of event planning if not careful would burn you out quickly.

**PRESENTER:** So ma what does it mean for an entrepreneur to be successful in your own view?

**MADAM FIX IT:** To me success is you being able to effect change or solve problems in the life of the next person. It could be through sharing experiences, giving actual substances or advice. You would be surprised that ten thousand naira would make a whole lot of difference in the life of some people. In some scenario its training and sometimes its giving your time and I believe that's what TrepAfrica is about.



**PRESENTER:** Finally ma, we don't just wake up to being successful so I would ask is there a ladder to climb, pattern to follow or processes to guide one to attain success?

**MADAM FIX IT:** Of course there is a ladder to climb and as a fixer myself I must tell you that there is no quick fix. For those still in university and the youth, you need to be an early riser and start your day early. Time does not run it is only wasted. You need to have a mind-set of volunteering. I got most of my opportunities not because I was the best but I was willing and was ready to gain experience above money. Now I am at a stage people chase me.

For those in the business you need to have your goals set out. What are we trying to achieve? These objectives have to be realistic, measurable, articulate and achievable not forgetting time bound. You have to be able to check per time how you are doing as touching those goals. You need to be able to network and have the right people around you. There are already enough naysayer. Affirm yourself and have those who would affirm you. You need to have the right team you cannot do it on your own. Finally, with prayers and knowing you need to back up your prayers with actions success is achievable.



# CLEARLY IDENTIFY YOUR GOALS

BY RERE OBAISI

**C**learly Identify your goals. Most young and some even older entrepreneurs fail to do this at the beginning of setting out to achieve a goal, and that is the beginning of the downfall for the mission. Clearly over time, I have realized an entrepreneur can set out with a cloudy mind and because of that, they are not able to decide what to focus on, or better still not able to know when they are making 'actual' progress or not.

**“ It is better to be clear from the beginning on what you intend to achieve, that way, you can monitor actual progress ”**

Think about this, you stand a better chance of reaching a destination if you have a picture of it, whether physically or mentally.

Tailor your goals to your best and most exaggerated ability. When I was about starting business in 2012, I ran a few of my business ideas through close friends, and families and even some people already in business, I wanted to learn or find out how to go about it. However, to cut the long story short, most of the people I took this to, saw my business (Renewable Energy) as a technical business, which is the truth, and thought it better to be run that way.

I thought different, I knew my business was a technical business, I understood the importance of learning the technical aspect first, but I didn't want to run it as a technical business, rather I wanted to run it like an administrative Business, though a technical business on the inside, but administrative on the outside and I did it my way, and over 4 of us that started the business back then, only mine survived the hard days, majorly cause I tailored it to fit my person.

You may want to ask, what's your person: I will answer it this way, I worked in the banking sector for a little bit close to 2 years, and while I was there, I enjoyed every bit of meetings, filings, reporting, strategy sessions and business outlook and cooperate outlook, I flourished in it and it was a natural way of doing things for me, so I adopted that approach for my technical business and it worked.

We are all different, tailor your own goals to suit your best and most exaggerated ability. Place the same importance you put on strategy on execution (goals). I read a book, titled 'EXECUTION' – The discipline of getting things done. A book written by Larry Bossidy and Ram Charan. That book exposed a lot to me in the aspect of "finishing what you started".

Most entrepreneurs, or aspiring entrepreneurs lack the discipline of finishing what they started. They simply have so much energy when they start and then burn out right after the kickoff. Such individuals never achieve anything and most people fall into that category, some are just lucky to have very short term goals, hence they finish it before they burn out.

Let me expose some things to you, (you may or may not know them already) however, you need to hear it again.

**1. STRATEGY IS FLEXIBLE:** You can have a fixed goal and be flexible in your strategy to achieve it. For example a lot of companies started year 2020 with a strategy that became redundant at the entry of covid19 into the world, such companies or businesses have to be flexible in order to stay in business. **LET YOUR THINKING BE FLEXIBLE.**

**2. BE METHODOCAL IN YOUR APPROACH:** Google defines Methodical as a person who pays attention to details and who does things in a precise manner or following procedure. For you to achieve your unique goals, you need to be precise, focused and pay attention to every detail. Only then can you achieve your unique goals. Invest heavily in information, fast, accurate and thorough information about your goals and then you can have an advantage to achieve them, and then you can also have a competitive edge in the business world.

This publication was written by Mr. Rere. Obaisi the Chief Executive Officer of Reohob Limited and Visionary for The Reohob Initiative for Rural Electrification.

Personal website: [www.rereobaisi.com](http://www.rereobaisi.com)  
Company website: [www.reohob.com](http://www.reohob.com)  
Email: [reohobbusiness@gmail.com](mailto:reohobbusiness@gmail.com) | [rere.obaisi@reohob.com](mailto:rere.obaisi@reohob.com)



## THE LIFESTYLE MOGUL

**PRESENTER:** Today I have an entertainment guru whose name is Prince Alabi Oluwaseun. He is the founder and CEO Shaunz royale. He graduated in the year 2010 from the prestigious university of Bowen where he studied economics and was a student entrepreneur. He is the managing director of Alba logistics Nigeria limited and also the managing director of Alba royal hotels and suites. It is exciting to have you here. Let us talk about the name Shaunz, where did it come from?

**PRINCE:** We signify a certain lifestyle of luxury and we had to depict that in our name. I could not use my name Seun so we thought of something classier and we had Shaunz. We also are royalty hence the royale. I am actually a prince as my name implies. I am from a royal family. In the nearest future you may be interviewing me in my palace [smiles].

**PRESENTER:** Let us now get into your startup story. How did it all start for you and why lounge, why hotel and all these luxuries around you?

“ I have always been a social person. I love to party and I have always been a baller. I wanted to create a niche for myself and coupled with the fact that Akure was boring we had to do this. Proudly I can say we have changed the narrative. Hospitality is also something I have always had a thing for. I love to keep people comfortable.

**PRINCE SEUN ALABI**

**PRINCE:** When I finished youth service I wanted to travel abroad for masters but then I thought to myself that I could actually do something for myself instead. I looked around and then we saw that the social and luxurious life enjoyed in other states were not here in Akure. Akure was very boring. We then decided to entertain people and bring the feelings they enjoy at other states into Akure, that was when we started shaunz. Now I have friends and people come to Akure and say Seun, you have done well. You have brought Lagos to Akure. We can say we are one of the pioneer of social life in Akure. Shaunz is a place to be and I think we are doing well.

**PRESENTER:** How long has this establishment been in existence?

**PRINCE:** We have been in existence for like four years now. We started as lounge. Like I said the idea was to make people come together and have fun. We started as a lounge and people loved what we do. We got to a stage that we could not accommodate customers anymore so we had to enlarge. We locked down for some time and told the customers to be patient, we did some works and we came back bigger.

**PRESENTER:** Known as the finest lounge in Ondo state what are your services and core values?

**PRINCE:** We are very interested in providing entertainment. We want our customers to have fun and also to chill. Added to that is the customer satisfaction. We always satisfy our customers.

**PRESENTER:** What is your companies approach to training new staffs and of course development?

**PRINCE:** We have a keen interest in the development and training of our staff. We deal directly with people and these people keep us in existence. Therefore, periodically we organize training for our staff to make them understand what it means to understand people and customer relations. This is also fully funded by the management.



**SEUN ALABI, CEO, SHAUNZ ROYALE**

Furthermore, we are futuristic in our training and developmental practices because we obviously know that they cannot be here forever. We train them so as to be sustainable and able to use those acquired knowledge in their life so that in future they can look back and make assertions that while with Shaunz royale or Alba royale, these were the things I learnt.

**PRESENTER:** So why did you have to go into having a club after studying economics?

**PRINCE:** I have always been a social person. I love to party and I have always been a baller. I wanted to create a niche for myself and coupled with the fact that Akure was boring we had to do this. Proudly I can say we have changed the narrative. Hospitality is also something I have always had a thing for. I love to keep people comfortable. Times while I am in the club and see people dancing and happy, times when a client comes and says I love the services, they give me joy. We make our customers feel at home and some when they come do not want to go. We do not care for them to sleep we make them feel at home.

**PRESENTER:** Now let us talk about some of the challenges you encountered while starting up

**PRINCE:** Well starting up was not easy as it is for any start up but my Dad has always been there. He is my strong pillar. There were times I asked myself Seun can you do this?

My dad would them encourage me and say son we would do this together. Considering the harsh economic situation in Nigeria you have to be a strong person to start a firm. We provide water, light and even road for ourselves, things we are supposed to get from the government. Well I know the government are trying their best but it is not easy. However, with the grace of God we strive through.

**PRESENTER:** You have talked about past challenges, what about those things that pose as challenges presently?

**PRINCE:** Power is a big challenge as we need it 24 hours, water is another challenge as we buy almost on daily basis. Access road is a challenge because we have to grade periodically as the roads here are not constructed. Insecurity also is one based on the recent trend of harassment of youths because of dressing patterns. These are our and it affects our business dearly.

**PRESENTER:** What inspires you to put more into this club?

**PRINCE:** I have a personal relationship with God and when I look at people like shina peller and Dangote, they do not have 2 heads and they started somewhere. They inspire me. The dream is not to stop here, we dream to take over lagos, Abuja and more.

**PRESENTER:** Now let us talk about your customers, the kinds of people as you say, balls in your club.

**PRINCE:** Our doors are opened to everybody. The young, the old, the middle aged are all welcomed. We are here to have fun so we try to merge all ages and still have maximum fun.

**Modella:** now let us in on some facts. What are the great things about you and the brand that we need to know of?

**Prince:** I did a random research and I noticed the rate of poverty in the country is alarming. This is the reason we are starting our own foundation. If we can eradicate poverty in Nigeria trust me Nigeria would be a better place for all. If we can start from the grassroots and improve the state of the country,



it gradually eradicates poverty. Trust me Nigeria is one of the suffering countries in the world ranking sadly. So I would do my part to see that Nigeria improves.

**PRESENTER:** What distinguishes Shaunz royale from other clubs in Ondo state and in Nigeria?

**PRINCE:** As our slogan says. "We are not just a brand but a culture. We do things differently which other clubs do not. We have brought in countless artistes, celebrities, DJs, musicians, Big brother house mates and so many people. If mention the list would be endless. Bharry Jay, Dj Neptune, Indowest, Khaffy, Teddy A, Olu Maintain, Mayorkun, B-Red, Leo, Kimberly, DJ Consequence, Ajebo, Seyi Law to mention a few. These are people we only see on Tv screen so we bring them here to make people have a feel of luxury. Oh did I mention my brother Jaywon and my cousin Toyin Abraham? Great actress she is.

**PRESENTER:** What advice would you give to people, to entrepreneurs out there?

**PRINCE:** Keep being you and keep following that dream. You can do it. We have a lot of distractions but you have to keep being focused. Above all be prayerful. I am a witness of grace. I cannot do it all so I pray and I keep being determined. If you want to sing, do so and believe in yourself. So many youths do not believe in themselves but as for me I keep telling myself that Seun you can do this. Those people you see up there started somewhere. It does not matter how many times you fail keep doing it till you get it.



**LAGOS  
STARTUP  
PROPELLER**  
**TOSIN FANIRO-DADA**

Tosin Faniro-Dada is the Director of Programmes & Coordination at the Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF). She leads the Fund's intervention programs; providing access to finance to MSMEs, facilitating training and job placements for young people, and supporting entrepreneurs in Lagos State. Prior to this, she was the pioneer Head of Lagos Innovates at LSETF, where she implemented the first Government led programs that supported an enabling environment for tech startups to thrive in Lagos State. Tosin has over a decade of professional experience spanning several roles including Assurance, Investment Management, Project Management, Corporate Banking, Strategy, and Public and Private partnerships.

Tosin joined LSETF as the Head of Strategy & Partnerships. Prior to this, she worked in the Corporate Banking division at Polaris Bank (formerly Skye bank) managing Oil & Gas upstream clients, and leading exploratory transactions.

Tosin started her career in PwC's Boston office in 2007 where she audited mutual, and private equity partner funds. She moved to Nigeria in 2010 and worked as a Financial Analyst in ARM's Hospitality and Retail Fund where she evaluated investment opportunities and managed the Funds existing assets and greenfield developments.

Tosin has a MSc. in Accounting from Boston College and, a BSc. from the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth. She's currently attending an Advanced Management Programme at INSEAD.



**MODELLA:** Having studied abroad and worked abroad, how was it to come down, settle and work in Nigeria?

**TOSIN:** Well, I was raised in Lagos, went to primary and secondary school here. I went to the States for college, worked for about 3 years then moved back. I was happy to move back to Nigeria, my family and friends are here. Lagos is home!

**MODELLA:** What is the role of LSETF in developing entrepreneurs?

**TOSIN:** Our mandate at the Lagos State Employment Trust Fund is to reduce unemployment, and create jobs in Lagos state. We do this through our Entrepreneurship, Employability, and Innovation programs. Our loan program provides access to finance to Micro, Small and Medium enterprises. Our theory of change is that if MSMEs have access to affordable financing, they can expand and employ more people. Unlike traditional banks that request for physical collateral as security, we request for social collateral, which in our case is one or two guarantors depending on the loan category they apply for. We also provide capacity building and access to market to our beneficiaries. So far, we have supported over 11,500 entrepreneurs with over N7bn.

Our second pillar is our Employability program where we train young people and place them in jobs. So far, we have trained over 5,000 people and placed over 50% of them in jobs. Our last pillar is our innovation program which I manage, our objective is to create an enabling environment for tech startups to thrive. As we know, startups are only as strong as their ecosystem. Our Lagos Innovates program facilitates access to infrastructure, talent, mentors, and capital for startups. We have supported over 120 startups through our Lagos Innovates program.

**MODELLA:** Hello and welcome to TrepTalk. Just as always we are here to instill the values of change makers, entrepreneurs and those making impacts in various aspects of life. Today I am glad to present my guest, Ms. Tosin Faniro- Dada, the Head of Startups at the Lagos State Employment Trust Fund.. You are welcome on today's show. Tell us ma'am, what do you do at the Lagos State Employment Trust Fund?

**TOSIN:** I lead the Lagos Innovates Program at the Lagos State Employment Trust Fund. Our Lagos Innovates program supports an enabling environment for Tech startups, and Innovation Driven enterprises to thrive in Lagos State. I am passionate about supporting startups, particularly helping them with access and networks e.g. access to corporates, governments, investors, and partnerships that can help them thrive.

**MODELLA:** How do you balance a perfect life work?

**TOSIN:** I wouldn't say I have a perfect work life balance. I make a conscious effort to schedule time for myself but sometimes work get super busy and I just don't have the time. I enjoy cross fit, boxing, and spending time with family and friends.

**MODELLA:** How do you face your worst time?

**TOSIN:** Well, just like most people, I also have bad times. However, I'm always kind to myself and grateful for small wins.

**MODELLA:** What do you think are the greatest challenges for entrepreneurs?

**TOSIN:** I would say Infrastructure is one of the greatest challenges for startups. If we get infrastructure right and make it affordable e.g. power, internet, roads, transportation systems, etc., the cost of doing business will reduce and be more predictable thus, allowing entrepreneurs to experiment and innovate more.

**MODELLA:** What is your advice to female entrepreneurs?

**TOSIN:** I will advice female entrepreneurs to dream big, never feel limited, and do it afraid!



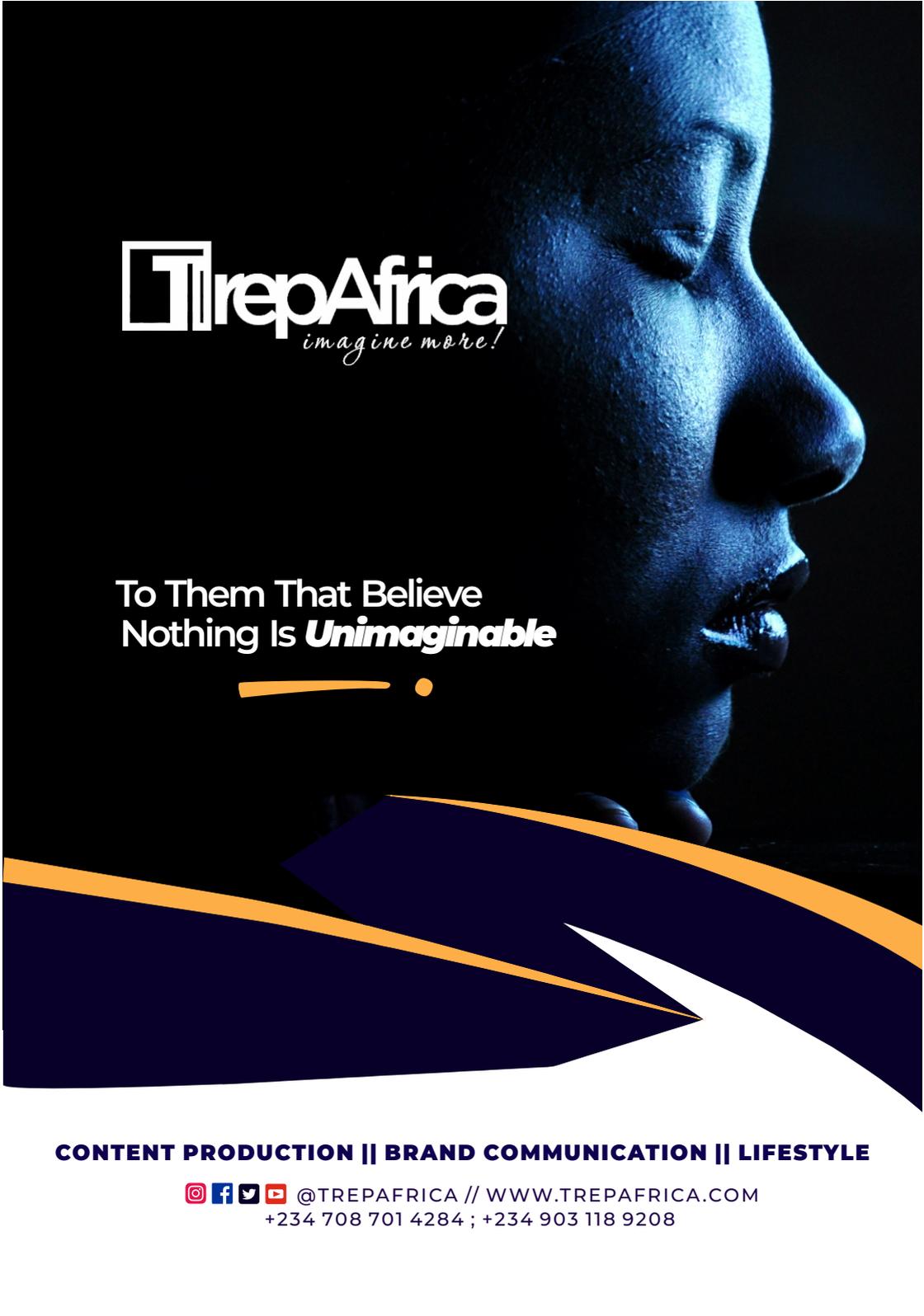
   @TREPFRICA  
WWW.TV.TREPFRICA.COM

After spending 2years interviewing some of the greatest entrepreneurial minds in Africa. TrepAfrica has put together the best collection of African entrepreneurs' stories, experience and advice on how they've built their businesses and life they love.

### **TREPTALK 1.0 FEATURES:**

1. Insights into the thought process of successful African entrepreneurs
2. Practical knowledge from entrepreneurs who have learned by doing
3. Actionable tips & tactics for prospective entrepreneurs looking to pursue their dreams
4. A beautifully designed coffee table book perfect for any entrepreneur

**TO GET FEATURED? VISIT: - [WWW.TREPFRICA.COM](http://WWW.TREPFRICA.COM)**



**TrepAfrica**  
*imagine more!*

To Them That Believe  
Nothing Is **Unimaginable**

**CONTENT PRODUCTION || BRAND COMMUNICATION || LIFESTYLE**

    @TREPAFRICA // WWW.TREPAFRICA.COM  
+234 708 701 4284 ; +234 903 118 9208

# TrepAfrica

MAGAZINE FOR AFRICAN ENTREPRENEURS



MEET THE FREAKS,  
GEEKS & VISIONARIES OF  
INSTIQ TRANSFORMING  
AFRICA'S FINTECH

# FINTECH DISRUPTORS