

# I must quit a job that can't offer a happy Easter

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## OFFICE DANDY

MAN - ABOUT - TOWN

**W**hat is motivation to work? And how does one feel motivated enough to stay in one job for donkey years? I am going through one of those deep-thought process moments. To be honest, I think I hate my job. I feel like it has become too mundane and too predictable and I feel at times that I have reached the very low ceiling of my career.

The other day I bumped into Lydia who was driving a VW Golf and looking as hot as ever. Turns out that after leaving our company, she found another job where she works as an assistant marketing manager.

The car is part of the package and I suppose even the looking good is clearly part of the job. I was secretly pleased at how excited she was to see me — in fact, she was so excited that she insisted on buying me a drink. Initially, I was reluctant seeing that we had bumped into each other at 2 pm when I should have been technically sitting at my desk.

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But what the heck, how many times do I get free drinks? So, I called the office administrator and told her that I had a family emergency that demanded my instant attention. In fact, I made up some story about my mother being taken ill with some high blood pressure. I must have been convincing for the office admin was even asking me if there was anything I could do.

After that, I followed Lydia to this joint somewhere in Westlands. I was hoping that she would not elect to take me to too posh a joint and would not ask me to pay any part of the bill.

My anxieties were calmed when she told me that she wanted to reward me for all the times I was so good to her and, therefore, I should not even pay a bill.

Music to my ears.

Moreso because the place we went to was alright without being out of my league. What an interesting afternoon I had? Lydia regaled me with stories on her working life — how much money



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she works for (the girl already earns more than I do), on the kind of work that she does (sounds more exciting than mine) and how she is always flying in and out of the country (something that I never seem to do).

After some time I killed all the thoughts of jealousy and envy as I focused on enjoying myself. The more Lydia drank, the more she flirted with me. "Does this woman seriously want me?" I kept asking myself. The attention

was very flattering and I am pleased to report that at the end of the evening she gave me a very steamy kiss.

The next morning, I woke up with a massive hangover and a head on fire. But despite this state, I could not help comparing my life with that of Lydia. Lydia is five years younger than me yet she appears to be making five times more than I do. At what point did I miss the bus? I read somewhere that work isn't always about the money

— you can work for passion. But at this point, I need more money not more passion. I do not see myself doing what I do five years from now, I do not see myself worrying about staplers and pins for the next decade of my life. I know for sure that my income will not grow significantly this year since all around me and all I hear is tough economic times and credit crunch.

So, how do I get out of my stagnating life? Perhaps, I need to talk some more with Lydia and find out where the magic might lie.

## Watching DVDs

Right now, I have to figure out what to do with myself this Easter. My bank account is in a sorry state and would not allow me to visit even the national park. I dare not go to the village without bearing a sufficient amount of gifts and goodies for the entire clan.

So I will spend the entire weekend burrowed in the house watching DVDs. I discovered a library in my neighbourhood that gives good rates for very recent movies. So this long weekend, I will have no choice but to saturate myself with good movies.

And ponder long and hard how to get out of the career rut I find myself in.

## It is time to go back to your former school and mentor young students



RICKY'S MYTHS

RICHARD GITONGA



**L**ast week I had the privilege of being one of the resource persons invited by a leading local bank to provide a mentorship talk to Fourth-year students of a local private university. The talk was arranged on a *pro bono* basis and the most the speakers expected to get as a token of appreciation was a gift bag. The students came from faculties including Law, Business and International Relations.

The attendance was commendable bearing in mind most students had completed their final exams and left the campus for Easter. Initially, most of the students seemed bemused by the setup as the bank had gone the extra mile of branding the venue with various banners, posters and standees.

For the uninformed observer, it looked more like an on-campus corporate recruitment drive rather than a mentoring talk. The students sat

quietly and expectedly in anticipation of what the hosts of the session had to offer.

The focus and content of the presentations was anchored on the need for students leaving college (and indeed all of us) to have very clear goals of what they would like to achieve in their lives. The need to have goals that transcend career, personal finance, physical fitness, relationships, business, were all discussed to some level of depth.

## Pleasant surprise

At the end, majority of the students were very grateful for the knowledge they had gained and many wanted the speakers to be their personal mentors. This request came as a pleasant surprise to all speakers as their collective impression was that the students would soak in what they had been told and use their own devices and ingenu-



**If mentored early, learners get ample time to hone skills.** FILE

ity to implement.

In the course of the engagement, one of the speakers had emphasized the need to have a goal focused on giving back to the society. She went on to elaborate that giving back does not necessarily mean focusing on philanthropy or charity alone. It also means leveraging our God-given talents to perform works and deeds that have a positive impact to those around us, without necessarily being paid for it.

Some sceptics may be quick to say that their tax liability covers this element of their service to society and it is

the government's responsibility to figure out how to use it efficiently. Unfortunately, all governments on this earth have a key role in public leadership to put resources where they are most effective. These are the choices we refer to as public policy. Unfortunately, the implementation of public policy can be a zero-sum game.

In this regard, there is need for business leaders to play an augmented role in leveraging their talents to mentor the youth who are yearning for guidance but do not have an avenue through which they can identify and as-

sess potential mentors. The questions they asked after the session seemed straight forward, if not simplistic to the speakers. However, a little rewinding of the clock to the good old college days would have reminded us that such talks were very rare in our colleges and most of the speakers who were hosted were primarily political activists.

## Success story

Is it no wonder that some of us who studied medicine have changed vocations and are now thriving matatu owners? Some who studied accounting degrees have become outstanding marketers? Others who studied law have actually found a calling in fine art? The list goes on. Presumably, if we had all had mentors much earlier on we would have invested more time honing our talents and passions and less time pursuing the predictable pathway laid down by the forbears of our somewhat archaic education system.

Let's challenge ourselves and set goals that reflect our genuine need to give back. Schedule one afternoon out of your business time-table and go back to your *alma mater* and tell them about your success story. This is one time that brag rights will be taken positively.