**6th Induction**

**29th September, 2016 @ Hill Station Hotel, Jos-Plateau State**

**Learning: We Must innovate**

In today’s world, work is no longer perceived or seen as being how hard one works but how smart. The same applies to Learning & Development.

Unfortunately, here in Nigeria we still take pride in complicating work & Learning processes when it can be made simple. Little wonder we are unable to compete effectively and efficiently with the rest of the world. This is in spite of our seeming advantage in Human Capital. We have the numbers, but we are yet to learn how to take full advantage of the human resources at our disposal. America in the 1930’s leaped over the rest of the world just by doing three things.

First was Educational Innovation; age ceased to be a barrier, so was, time and funds. They designed their educational system to meet their needs. If you wanted to do a five-year program in one year you were welcome, if you wanted to do it in 10 years so be it. If you wanted to attend your classes at night, there would be a professor available to attend to you. They made it flexible. If you wanted to stagger your tuition, kumbaiah

Secondly, they began a system of attracting talent from all parts of the world, they created a system that enabled them to attract the best academics and Scientists from around the world as long they thought you had something to offer. This is what later metamorphosed into visa lottery. They brought in the brightest and the best.

Thirdly, they took their people and put them to work, and also motivated them and treated them like partners in progress and not as liabilities. Fair wages for a fair day’s work.

What is our own experience here in Nigeria, in the last 50 years? We have done the opposite. We chased away talents to foreign lands and on the altar of Nationalization we sent the experts away even before we had completed the process of learning from them. Then we shut the doors on new ones coming in.

Then we complicated our educational system. We choose a model that is alien to our culture; we did away with teacher training schools, we are gradually killing part-time study, we have a suspicion for distant learning and suspicion for anything we are not familiar with. We refused to adapt.

Then we choose not to motivate our people, by treating them less than they deserved. We enabled the – brain drain- of our brightest and best in droves while we made excuses.

Truth be told, we are the architects of our own misfortune.

Having said all these and painted this not so encouraging situation of affairs all hope is not lost.

This is now where you and I come in. This workshop is part of our continued effort to turn the tide and put things back into shape. We can do it. We can reverse the ugly state of things. All we need to do is decide to do things differently. We must focus on training and improving the quality of our people and boosting the competencies of our workforce.

Recently, the Federal Government released a directive of cost cutting measures which include the ban on use of workshop bags, souvenirs, printing of programs etc. This is commendable in this time of recession.

However, they are not far reaching enough nor are they what we really need now. What we need is to deploy new systems and techniques for workforce learning and development. Today we will be sharing with us some of these systems which will not only bring down costs but are also efficient and effective. The employer gets value and the employee gets value too. A win-win situation for everyone.

We have here a team of experts to help us do justice to these. We will be running you through modern techniques such as virtual Learning, E-Learning, M-Learning and certain aspects of Action-Learning. These tools are needed in today’s world where knowledge doubles every 8 hours. I wish to use these medium to commend the Federal Government on its recent decision to remove the BSc/HND dichotomy, however we wish to say that in itself is not enough.

On the 14th April, 2014, the Institute submitted a memoranda to the then ongoing National Conference and copied the Minister of Education as part of our recommendations No. 13 said “Ending of educational dichotomy, stop educational dichotomy where graduates of polytechnics and colleges of Education are treated as second class and third class citizens largely due to the fact that the raw materials allowed in there are substandard due to the arbitrary lowering of standards as such employers of labour have little confidence in the products”.

This way we will begin to boost the skills gap which is actually the reason for so much unemployment. We must begin to consider what skills are needed in industry and deliberately retool our young people so that they can be productive.

Also, we wish to call on key stakeholders to try to resolve the raging embargo between the National Open University and the Council for legal education. This is an ill wind that does not blow anyone any good.

We must stop a system that encourages mediocrity and not excellence for as long as it is perceived that failures are those who end up in such systems nothing will change. You cannot alter public perception using policy and legislation. The private sector is going to go for excellence.

Together we can all work towards making our society better. Thank you for listening.

# Cyril Ogboli

Chairman; BoT