



## **NATIONAL LIBRARY OF NIGERIA**

**KEYNOTE ADDRESS: "BUILDING A TEAM WORK AS ELIXIR FOR ORGANIZATIONAL GROWTH", BEING THE TITLE OF A PAPER DELIVERED BY PROFESSOR CHINWE VERONICA ANUNOBI, NATIONAL LIBRARIAN/CEO AT THE 2023 WORK PLANS AND TARGETS HELD FROM 17<sup>TH</sup> TO 20<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2023 AT CALIM, ENUGU, ENUGU STATE**

With warm heart and gratitude to Almighty God, I welcome you once again to the Coal City of Enugu, Enugu State in the year 2023. I could remember that the Management Team held a Retreat in this Coal city on my Eight Point Agenda from 7<sup>th</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup> March, 2022.

If we recall, the 8-point agenda revolves around achieving our vision and mission of Connect and build informed citizenry but collecting, preserving and providing easy access to information resources leverage ICT in less traditional and more ICT driven manner. During the retreat we made a number of resolutions which I am sure my SA admin had summarized and sent to us. Remember that your activities will only make sense if it geared towards the achieving our mission through the 8points agenda.

We are in the Coal city again holding a Retreat on 2023 Work Plans and Targets to brain storm on the subject matter and how my Eight Point

Agenda is incorporated leveraging on Information Communication Technology. Therefore, Management Retreat helps you think anew, analyze and envision, reveal area of current challenge(s) and allow a simpler and deeper understanding of your work as a Public Servant. The essence of this Retreat is to chart a way towards building a workforce for improved service efficiency and drive performance through the Management and Development Committee. The success and failure of the 2023 Work Plans and Targets falls on the shoulders of the Management Team.

A Retreat is not a tea party affairs or jamboree. It is an opportunity to engage creativity - a time to remove your nose from the grindstones and look to the hills, a chance to think about what ought to be or where to go - and devise steps to get there.

It is noteworthy to state here that the extent to which an organization achieves results depends to a large extent, on the quality of its leadership and communication between its workforce as well as the extent to which there is a team spirit or a feeling of oneness among employees. This is what is called ***Dynamic Equilibrium*** where everyone has a sense of belonging. Of course, this type of Management style was recently introduced by me, which is termed Mondays Management Briefings. It brings Management Team closer to each other and avoid a situation I am not aware.

With this in mind, no matter how beautiful a policy is, it can only be achieved through a disciplined workforce. There is need to build a disciplined workforce in the Organization. There must be a demarcation between some official behaviors. The Management must always be on top of the game. Further to the disciplined workforce is the objective rating of members of staff by the supervisors. The Annual Performance Evaluation Report is categorized basically into: Personal Record of Officer, Job Assessment, Training, Job Performance, Human Relations, Character Traits, Work Habits, Sanctions, Rewards and Leadership Performance. The ratings of officers in National Library of Nigeria does not reflect the above criteria but leaves much to be desired. A situation where an officer who absents him/herself from office and whose job performance is below average is scored a "B" with a diligent Officer who comes daily and is fully committed to work, what is the rationale? I urge you all to divorce sentiments in dealing with members of your staff to earn the respect. Now that we are making efforts to redeploy and refresh the professional staff, it is time to take the bull by the horn.

It is therefore imperative to cultivate the under listed habits as tips for the realization of the 2023 Work Plans and Targets using the Eight Point Agenda. There is need for a digitally - equipped workforce to build the future and that is what the Eight Point Agenda centered on. The tips are:

**Walk the Talk:** An effective Head of Department leads by example. A good leader not only does the right thing but is seen to be doing the right thing.

**Team Building:** HODs must pick the right people for the job regardless of gender, ethnicity and other differences. A good leader is able to build an inclusive workforce. And they don't let personal feelings get the way of supporting people and working with them to get the job done. A good HOD must get everyone on board, building core values and ensuring that the team work together towards a common goal.

**Communication:** To get the most of your team in the Departments, HODs must be able to clearly communicate their goals and expectations. A good leader ensures everyone knows what the roles is and explains the expectation for that role. This is very important as the National Library of Nigeria is trying to implement changes from traditional library services to the Information Communication Technology, ICT mode.

**Listening:** It goes hand in hand with effective communication. HODs to really listen to their staff, not just hear what they want to hear, want to know if your staff have what they need to succeed.

**Emotional Intelligence:** These days, it is clear that Emotional Intelligence is a key that cannot be ignored. It is important to be able to recognize that things don't and can always go your way. As HODs you hate the good with the bad. Take responsibility, learn from mistakes.

HODs that are empathetic - who understands what makes their staff tick - are able to motivate and inspire those staff more effectively.

**Delegation:** In order to achieve anything in the world of work, learn the culture of delegation of duty, HODs must learn to delegate tasks to the right staff or team.

**Collaboration:** Get rid of ***silos mentality***. It is imperative for today's organization to share information across all the Departments and levels, lack of it leads to power struggle and lowered productivity. HODs must be able to promote collaboration by unifying teams, getting common goals and incentivizing collaborative working attitude.

**Decision Making:** HODs need to make tough decisions to get the job done - and quickly too, as lack of decisiveness leads to missed opportunities. Leadership is a series of a decision made with competencies and confidence. And they don't allow personal feelings get the way of supporting staff and working with them to get the job done. HODs must get everyone on board, building core values and ensuring the team work together towards a common goal.

From above tips, it is very important to clarify the roles and functions of the Federal Government Agencies and Parastatals as:

1. Regulatory Agencies
2. General Services
3. Infrastructural / Utility Agencies
4. Security Agencies

The National Library of Nigeria falls under the Social Services Agency. What is then a Parastatal? A Parastatal according to Civil Service Handbook issued by the Office of the Head of Civil Service of the Federation: is a government owned organization established by statute to render **specified services to the public**. It is structured and operates according to the instrument establishing it and also comes under the policy directives of Government. Parastatals like the National Library of Nigeria are set up by Government as implementing organs for specific objectives which usually cannot be achieved in a ministerial set - up. The scope of the services they provide are usually sufficiently complex to warrant their establishment as separate bodies outside the normal operations of Civil Service. There are some levels of autonomy, so there is need to cultivate the culture of prompt service delivery as also stated in the Civil Service Handbook.

In order to facilitate efficient work, papers are classified according to the degree of urgency attached to them which are grouped into three:

Immediate

At Once

Today or Urgent

When an **Immediate** or **At Once** or **xxx** is attached to a piece of paper or document, it should be handed personally to the officer required to take the necessary action. He should, after completing his action, return

it by hand to the officer who has ordered the work. It cannot be subjected to the normal bureaucratic procedures.

Ladies and Gentlemen, this address will not be complete without mentioning four things that are essential for any organization to progress:

- Leadership
- Communication
- Inter - Personal Relations
- Team Building

The extent to which an organization achieves results depends to a large extent, on the quality of leadership, the interpersonal relationship and communication between its workforce and the extent to which there is team spirit or a feeling of oneness among employees.

I implore you during this retreat to ponder on the extent to which you deploy the following essentials. Unveil your plan so as a team, we assist you in charting a better course for its actualization.

I want to end this my sermon, quoting Liz Wiseman "if you want to become a better leader you first have to discover whether you are a multiplier or Diminisher at work. The former are leaders who brings out intelligence in others and get the best ideas among the people he leads. While the later stifle others and deplete the organization of crucial intelligence and capability.

Once again, it is my desire to make this Retreat highly interactive devoid of sentiments.

Thank you for your patience in listening to my sermon in the coal city of Enugu, Enugu State.

***God bless you.***