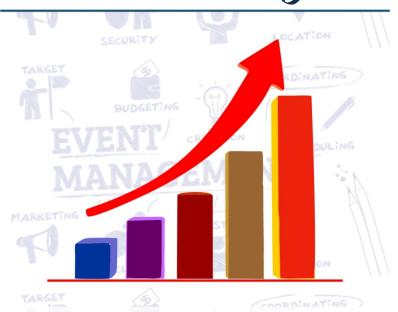








THE CAREER PATH FOR Event Managers



HOW TO START BUILD AND SUSTAIN A SUCCESSFUL, PROFITABLE AND VISIBLE EVENT MANAGEMENT BUSINESS

MANAGEMENT

ADEIFE ABIODUN-ADEYEMI

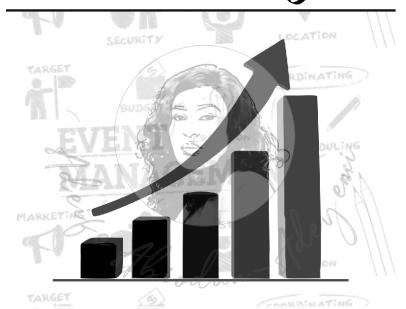








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MANAGEMENT



THE CAREER PATH FOR EVENT MANAGERS

How to Start, Build and Sustain a Successful, Profitable and Visible Event Management Business

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ADEIFE ABIODUN-ADEYEMI

Dedication

This book is dedicated to my late Dad, Dr. Oluwole Olugboji. He was the first event planner I came in contact with. Thank you for creating the opportunity that has helped me to make impact and build a successful, visible and profitable business in the event industry. I will forever be grateful.

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THE CAREER PATH FOR EVENT MANAGERS

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To all my clients, you are the reason why I am still in business. Thank you for trusting my career and giving me experiences to learn from. To my siblings and siblings-in-love, I want to thank you for every effort you have made and still making to support my business. God bless you all. To everyone who at one point or the other has supported my event business, directly or indirectly, you are appreciated.

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Introduction

My Event Career Story

got into the event industry by chance. It never crossed my mind to be an event professional but as fate would have it, I am here and I am grateful to God for how far I have come. It has not been an easy journey and through it all, I have picked up the various lessons to become better each and every day.

Let me take you into my world; my journey to building a career in the event industry. As a child, my parents hosted so many parties - house parties, society meetings, Christmas parties, birthdays and anniversaries. I didn't really know much about what usually went into the planning of those events until I got to secondary school. Then I started helping out with arranging the tables and chairs, serving food and drinks to the guests and other little activities my parents allowed me to do. My late dad was a good planner. All those parties were usually fun and our guests always looked forward to the next party to be hosted by my parents.

Sometime in 2004, my mum came home one day and told me I would be joining two other ladies to usher at a conference. She was a member of the organizing committee for that conference and had put in a word for me when the committee members requested for a third hostess. My mum said "my daughter is tall and pretty, I am sure she can do the job". I can't forget how I felt when she gave me the news. I was very shy, reserved, introverted and very naive but I was excited about the opportunity and I did the ushering job very cheerfully.

I never looked forward to having another opportunity to work at an event. I didn't even think about it but one lesson I learnt from my story is from the scripture which says God's ways are not our ways.

In 2008, my dad wanted to plan a gubernatorial campaign dinner for His Excellency Dr. Kayode Fayemi (Governor, Ekiti State, Nigeria) and then another opportunity came. This time, the opportunity that changed my life. He needed hostesses to welcome the guests and handle registrations at the event. My dad said to me: "Dami (my first name), I need you to get four of your friends to join you to work as ushers for this dinner. I can't have a grown-up daughter like you

and pay outsiders to do this for me". I didn't know God was preparing me for my destiny.

The day of the event came and my friends and I were set. We wore uniformed costumes, made the same hairstyle and we were looking very smart. My mum was our supervisor. Guests came in and were attended to very professionally. The event was a huge success. After the event, some guests whom I was (and I'm still) familiar with gave feedback about the service - very positive feedback. It was a fulfilling experience. Then one of them asked for our business cards...

The Bible says, "Wisdom is profitable to direct". Even though I didn't know how I was going to handle the business, I told the man that we just started the business so we didn't have cards. I gave him my phone number instead. We had two other guests with similar requests and I knew I couldn't afford to miss the opportunity to meet the needs of those guests. Events were already waiting for us anyway so I had nothing to lose.

Days after, I got a friend to design my first business cards. I had given the business a name - DEE PROTOCOL CREW. I also applied the little knowledge of Microsoft Word I had then to create

name tags, printed them and laminated them. I started my ushering business fully in 2009 with no capital of mine. At that time, I had no competitors in Ibadan. Even if there were individuals into ushering, I didn't see them as competitors because I had started to build structures in my business almost immediately.

I saw myself as a leader who had to live by example. I also had to understand that I was now a business owner and had to put measures in place to grow the business. I saved money from the revenue (the money clients paid for each job) to make new costumes. I also put all the knowledge I had acquired so far together with all I had learnt from my parents to create my first ushering training notes that same year.

By 2010, my team had increased from 5 to over 20 persons and we got ushering jobs very often, even outside Ibadan where I lived and schooled. I enjoyed every bit of it. I organized physical recruitment programs, which held mostly at my parents' house and trained at least 10 persons each year. Then, the era of social media came - Blackberry messenger, Hi5 and a few others and strategies began to change.

I didn't understand the importance of social media to my business at the time. I only depended on word-of-mouth and referrals from existing clients. I didn't even know many vendors. I was not building business relationships. I was an introvert but very hardworking and I had discovered the entrepreneur in me but I was not taking advantage of the internet to build my business and this caused some delays or so I thought. It took me about 3 years to get my business in the digital space and by this time, the competition was on the rise.

I had developed a strong passion for my business and so I was determined to build it at all cost. I knew I could not do things the same way. I had to take advantage of social media to reach more people and keep my business running if I really wanted to be in business. Offline marketing strategies still had their place though but from that moment and even till now, digital marketing is still a big deal if you want to widen your reach.

In that same year, I enrolled for event decoration training at T&TT events, owned by Mrs. Lara Ola, in Ibadan. At the time of enrolling for this training, I was not really sure of what I wanted to achieve in the event industry. It was all about the hustle. I just wanted to do everything to make money. While

training in event decoration, I also took a course in bridal stress management. I had learnt to bake cake from my mum who used to bake cakes when I was much younger, so with that knowledge, I made cakes for sale too - cupcakes specifically. I would drop them every morning with a woman who sold drinks etc. at the junction leading to our house. I would then go back in the evening to collect my money and most times she never returned any cake to me. My cakes were also sold out.

The hustle was real even as a single lady. I didn't want to depend on my parents financially. I wanted to be independent and be responsible. I am still like that till today and it's a good feeling, honestly.

I got married on July 23, 2011 and that was the first wedding I was going to plan from scratch to finish. That was the day Ife'ctiv Touch was born. I had built some good relationships with some vendors so it was very easy choosing vendors for my wedding. I also trained two of my ushers then (a male and female) in bridal stress management so they could attend to my husband and me as our bridal attendants. There was nothing to do than to receive visitors, eat and sleep two weeks to my wedding. Everything was set. I needed to prove

my expertise to guests and my family anyway and yes I did. My wedding was a huge success. Then, I had to relocate and I was back to square one.

My business was not yet on social media at this time and I had to join my husband in our home at Abuja. I didn't have clients in Abuja and even though it was not my first time in Abuja, I didn't know my way around so I always stayed at home. I was discouraged and was clueless as to how to move on with my business. I didn't understand the power of the internet. Most of my clients were in Ibadan and it didn't make sense to stay in Ibadan because of business and leave my matrimonial home in Abuja. I couldn't bring myself to do that. "There has to be a way out of this", I told myself one day after crying and crying. Yes I cried. I was missing the pleasure of doing my work and attending to my clients. I wanted to go back to Ibadan. So I started praying about my husband's relocation. I was limiting myself but I didn't know.

Later that year, sometime in November, one of my clients called me for an event in Lagos and it was going to be a high-paying event so my husband didn't have a choice but to let me travel. That event was the turning point for my business. That woman is still my client till date. It was a corporate

event dinner for the Chartered Institute of Bankers in Nigeria (CIBN). I put my wedding pictures together with the few pictures I had from that event and put them up on social media. I registered my business on Vconnect, then I started posting on BBM, then later on WhatsApp. I didn't hear about Instagram on time and even when I finally did, I was so shy to join because I felt it was for some particular people. Now I think about that and I laugh so hard. How ignorant I was!

My prayer was finally answered in December 2012. My husband was divinely transferred to Ibadan. I was so excited. "Now I can get closer to my clients again", I thought to myself. Unfortunately, I didn't make any business contacts in Abuja before we left. The event company I knew was owned by my mum's friend but was closed down before we even left Abuja. I had no event business network whatsoever. I didn't see any big deal about that then but I know better now. We got to Ibadan, settled down and I swung back into action fully and quite easily from January 2013.

Jobs were not coming as often as I had imagined. The market was getting saturated and it was looking like I was on the same spot. My first son was just about 6 months old and being a new mom,

I couldn't keep up with all the hustle like I did before I joined my husband in Abuja in 2011.

Later that year, my dad asked me to join him at his hospital to work as the Administrator/Financial manager. I had never wanted to work in an office environment. I struggled to do the work. I was so unfulfilled but I didn't want to hurt my dad. He noticed that I was not putting in my best into the hospital work so he asked me if there was something he could do to help me focus. I requested for a space where I could attend to my clients, sell and store event items and also train my event planning and coordination students. He granted my request. He gave me a space at his hospital. I started that event store with what I had. I had two event planning students and we had classes in my store. I sold bouquets, bridal fans, rented costumes and decoration items. I was also an event consultant and sourced for vendors for clients. In the midst of all these activities, I felt like something was missing. I felt like I didn't know what I was doing. I felt like I was just doing everything with no direction. I knew it was time to go back to the drawing board. So I took a break.

I got pregnant with my second son and could hardly go to work, so I resigned. Your guess is as

good as mine - my dad didn't like that decision but he understood and allowed me focus on my passion. I wanted more out of my business and I won't scale up if I continued the way I was. I had to get it right. I was now on social media but was still not playing the digital marketing game very well. I was still a learner. I identified all I needed to put in place to create the brand and build my business beyond my location and started planning towards adopting new measures.

While expecting my baby, I got a few jobs - catering and ushering and my husband with my ushering supervisor at the time helped out with executing the event and they were successful. I built more confidence after. My baby came in September 2014 and when I got strong enough to go back to work, I decided to first enroll for online event planning courses. The purpose of my business started to get clearer. I went from the state of confusion to the state of clarity. I started to see my business as not just a hustle but a career. My mindset towards my business changed and then, I had to be sincere with myself about my niche.

After assessing myself and my business, I carved my niche in event planning and coordination and this decision is one of the best decisions I have made in my business. My approach towards targeting clients and marketing my business has become more strategic and more intentional. I see my event business the way career professionals see their work and that has helped me to stay focused and passionate till now. I saw the big picture, wrote down new goals and started to work towards that big picture.

I was not going to allow my location to limit me ever again and this time, ignorance was no longer going to be an excuse. I was prepared to take the bull by the horn, apply all I have learnt from my journey, the courses, masterclasses, conferences and various sources I have learnt from in the industry and pursue my dreams. I had to enhance some skills and invest deliberately in intellectual assets to take my business to where it is today.

Although I am still on the career journey but by God's grace, I have built a profitable, visible and successful event management business. I have trained hundreds of passionate young individuals in event planning, ushering and coordination so far through my signature online courses and I am an award-winning event planner and an authority in my niche in the event industry.

Dear reader, if you don't have the vision set right about your business, you will be limiting yourself as regards growing and sustaining the business so that it can outlive you. I learnt this the hard way but now the story is different.

Your event business should not just be a means of livelihood or source of income but an avenue to gain experience, build and increase your network, influence others, impact lives positively and stay relevant consistently in the industry. When you see your business as just a source of income, it means that you are only running that business because you know it will fetch you money to pay your bills. If you are not passionate and determined about building a career, it's just a matter of time before you get bored of the routine and finally feel unfulfilled.

To help you understand the importance of building a career as an event manager better, let me share with you the differences between seeing your business as just a hustle and seeing your business as a career you love:

 You don't need to love your hustle but you cannot build a career from what you don't love.
 This is why majority of those who go into event industry started by turning what they loved to do (vendors sourcing, consultancy, organizing parties etc.) into a profitable business.

- When you see your event management business as just a hustle, you stick to it solely because of the money the business brings; whereas on the other hand, building a career from your event business is motivated by the other benefits aside money, such as the opportunities and network that you know you can leverage on which have more value than money.
- A hustle will not necessarily give you fulfillment but building a career from doing what you love will bring all the fulfillment you can ever imagine.
- You tend to struggle with keeping up with your business if it's just a hustle but if your event management business is a career, you will likely be self-motivated.
- The passion you have for your event management business will help you to see the bigger picture and set long-term goals if you see

it as a career but if it's just a hustle, the vision will be short-lived.

In this book, I have broken down the career path that will help you to start from where you are right now - start up or established - to the point where you can sustain your event management business so that it can outlive you. Come on this journey with me.





SECTION I

LAY THE FOUNDATION

"As you lay your bed, so shall you lie on it".

THE CAREER PATH FOR EVENT MANAGERS

Chapter 1

The Starting Point

starting a business starts with you. I am sure you will agree that YOU are the only one that can stop you from starting your event management business. You must make a decision to start but then, are you really ready to start?

I want you to ask yourself a question. "(insert your name), who are you? Pause and then write out 10 things about yourself.

You cannot give what you don't have. So, you want to be sure that you are in the right frame of mind mentally and physically, you want to work on the beliefs about you and kick out mindset blocks, and you would want to prepare yourself for the project ahead - the challenges, the risks and the successes.

What are your strengths and weaknesses? Are you ready to develop yourself and turn your weaknesses to strengths? What are your fears? What are you passionate about? Why have you decided to build a career in event management?

What do you plan to achieve through this career? You must be clear about the answers to these questions.

What are the mindset blocks you are currently dealing with? What skills do you need to acquire? How do you need to develop yourself?

Success is when opportunity meets preparation. This is the summary of my business start-up story as an event professional. I got an opportunity to usher with three friends turned sisters but I knew I had to prepare my mind to turn that opportunity into a business. If my mind was not made up, perhaps that opportunity would have just been a part of my past and not a success story today.

It's possible that you have never had an opportunity to prompt you to start, it's fine; but one thing you need to know is that YOU must make a decision to start your event business for you to actually start. There will never be a perfect time. As long as you have the thought in your heart, put your heart to it to start.

"The key to success is to start before you are ready" - Marie Forleo.

This is the same attitude you should have in order to build a career from this event management business if you have already started. The day you make up your mind to see whatever you do as an event manager beyond being just a business that would be the starting point of your career.

The foundation of starting your event management business is very important and must not be taken for granted at all. There are three (3) important factors that will determine how solid your foundation is as you start your event management business. I call them building blocks and they are:

The first building block is PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT.

Remember, you cannot give what you don't have. It is therefore important that you develop yourself appropriately before you start and while you have started your business. The event management business is a service-based business and requires certain skills. Majority of event managers in our world today started off this business by converting their passion into profit. Statistics show that 89% of people who are in the event industry love what they do. It's important to love what you do. Passion

is very important. Passion is what will motivate you to develop yourself while doing what you love. To be a better version of yourself as you start and build a profitable and successful event management career, you must be intentional about personal development. The event industry is evolving really fast especially with the adoption of new media and all the technology in our world today. If you start your business not knowing the importance of personal development, you might not be in business for a very long time.

What then is this personal development I am talking about?

Personal development is simply the process of improving yourself. It involves a conscious effort put into desiring to be better and this is a continuous process. According to Wikipedia, personal development covers activities that improve awareness and identity, develop talents and potential, build human capital and facilitate employability, enhance the quality of life and contribute to the realization of dreams and aspirations. Personal development takes place over the course of a person's entire life. Not limited to self-help, the concept involves formal and informal activities for developing others in roles

such as teacher, guide, counsellor, manager, life coach or mentor.

Personal development for event managers who want to build profitable, visible and successful businesses include:

1. Acquiring and/or enhancing skills: There are certain skills you cannot do without if you are ready to build a successful event management career. You must first acquire skills and because personal development is continuous, you will then enhance the acquired skills as you build your business. Skills are learned so it's okay if you feel you currently don't have any skills.

Five major skills every event manager must have are:

- Communication skills
- Marketing skills
- Organization skills
- Time management skills

· Leadership skills

It is no news that event managers who want to build successful businesses in this world of technology must understand that being tech savvy is a relevant skill that can be acquired or enhanced as the case may be. Another important skill that can be acquired is personal presentation skills and this has to do with your appearance in terms of dressing, body language (gestures and postures) and hygiene.

- 2. **Developing qualities**: You must have discovered certain habits, talents or gifts in and about you which convinced you that the event management career is for you. Most definitely! All you discovered can be termed qualities because they certainly describe you. You only need to develop these qualities in order to build your career professionally. These qualities include being
- Creative and innovative
- Passionate
- Energetic

- Proactive
- Attentive to details
- Confident
- Enterprising
- 3. Getting certifications: A great way to develop yourself as you start and build a successful event management business is through certifications. Please note that there is no specific rule as to how to get certified as an event manager but it is important that you can communicate effectively and possibly attend a professional event management training or enroll at an event management school where you can be taught in details, professionally, step-by-step, both theoretically and practically. Universities now have Event management as a course under Entrepreneurship. This is also a great way to get certified if you still have the opportunity to. This boosts your confidence and brand perception.

The second building block is CLARITY.

Clarity means being clear about something - in this

case, that something is your reason for choosing Event management as your career. What is your WHY? You must be clear about this. Why do you want to be an event manager? What problem will your business solve and how do you intend to solve it? Who are your target audience? Where will you find them? Why are you so passionate about event management? You must be able to give straight-forward answers to these questions. Without clarity, you will be everything to everybody and everybody will be your client. You cannot build a successful, visible and profitable event management business that way.

Another thing to have clarity about is your brand perception and values. How do you want people to see your business? What are your core values? You cannot afford to be confused about your business. Having clarity about your event management also means that you understand the purpose of having an event management business. This helps you to create the plans and strategies needed to build the business successfully.

"A lack of clarity could put the brakes on any journey to success."

The third building block is YOUR NICHE.

You must be clear about your niche as an event manager.

As much as I love to do so many things and solve as many problems as I can, I had to identify the importance of carving a niche in my event business. Believe me if I tell you that I have done practically every type of event business before. Name it... catering, decoration, aso-oke, aso-ebi supply, bridal wears and accessories, small chops, cakes, drink services, bridal stress management, ushering and coordination, sales of bouquets and so on. Doing too many things can be overwhelming and guess what? You won't be known for anything.

One of the importance of carving a niche as an event manager is so that you can be known for a specific aspect of the event industry. Your niche is that aspect of the event industry you are comfortable with, that suitable part of the event industry that brings out your strengths. When you niche down, you are making things easier for yourself and your customers because that way you can narrow down to focus who are your ideal clients and where to find them. The niche you

finally choose should go in line with your vision. It should be something you love so that you are consistent and above all, so that you enjoy what you do anytime and every time you have to do it.

When I finally made a decision to niche down, my business and I were better for it. Among everything I was doing, I realized that my strength was in ushering and coordination and I also love to teach. This has helped me to be seen as an expert in event ushering and coordination and I have trained hundreds of millennials in professional event ushering and coordination.

Always remember that you cannot be everything to everyone and for you to grow a successful, visible and profitable event management business, you just have to niche down. If you are yet to identify your niche, ask yourself the following questions:

- What do I love to do as an event professional?
- What are my strengths?
- How can I use my strengths to grow my business?

- What part of the event industry do I want people to know me for?
- What part of the event industry goes in line with my vision?
- What problem is my event management solving or going to solve?

Create your niche statement using the guide below:

I help (specific person/set of people, that is, your target audience) to (specific need) by (specific solutions) so that (end result).

We will continue to lay the foundation in the next two chapters. Once the foundation of the business is laid, then, you can confidently build a successful, visible and profitable career.

<u>Notes</u>



Chapter 2

Create Your Brand

ow that we have a great starting point, I am sure seeing the big picture about your business as a career is becoming clearer now. Getting rid of mindset blocks and limiting beliefs about you and how far you can go in life and business will help you dream bigger.

The vision of your event business is the future of the business. Having a vision statement helps you to outline what your event company wants to be. It focuses on the tomorrow of your event business. It brings inspiration and keeps you focused on your goals. Your vision provides a clear decision-making criteria. Finally, your vision statement should be timeless. Where do you see yourself in the next 5 years in the event industry? What do you want your dream career to look like? What do you think of as the final end result of your company in 50 years' time?

Can you remember when you were in primary school and how you dreamt of being a doctor or Lawyer? It's the same too with being an event manager. You must dream about the future.

Once you are clear about your vision, write it down in your journal or in a very safe place. You could also create a vision board by getting a picture that represents that vision and paste it on a cardboard and then place it on your wall or on your wardrobe. Seeing this everyday will inspire and motivate you to work on the goals that will help you make this vision a reality.

Creating your brand according to your vision is vital if you desire to build a successful career as an event manager. The following questions come to play when creating a brand:

- How do I want my business to be seen?
- What do I want my business to be known for?
- What are my core values?
- What is the purpose of my business?
- How do I want to offer my services?

- What does customer care mean to my business?
- What are the goals and objectives of my business?
- What is my mission statement?
- What type of clients are we targeting?
- How do I market my business?
- How do I want people to connect with my brand?
- How can I use my personality to create my brand?
- How do I create value through my business?

You must first create a brand before you can build a brand. Building a brand requires consistency and hard work. You want to create a long-lasting impression about your business to everyone that comes in contact with your brand. You can't afford to start and then suddenly disappear. It's a gradual but continuous process.

Also, your personality must reflect in your brand. Who you are comes to play when building your brand. The brand should represent you, so you can't afford to detach yourself from your brand. Show your face as often as you can. People associate with brands that they can connect to and trust. There has to be a face to the brand - YOU.

Your brand must be unique. The event industry is a very saturated market. You must be clear about your value proposition to your target audience. Why should they patronize you? What is so special about your own event management services? What value-added services will you offer? You must have a unique-selling-point (USP).

This is why you cannot create a brand without a clear vision. You must see the end from the beginning so that you can have clear direction about your career path as an event manager. You must then break down that big picture, that is, your vision into goals.

Brand identity includes:

 Brand creative elements such as logo - the graphical or pictorial representation of your brand.

- Marketing style This could be digital, traditional (or physical/offline) or both.
- Value proposition vision statement, mission statement and core values.

It is important to evaluate your progress as you build your brand. Brand evaluation keeps you in check and helps you to ensure that you are still in line with your goals for your brand. This can be done monthly, quarterly or annually. You must always commit yourself to building a brand that will stand the test of time; a brand you will always be proud of.

e Alin I

Notes

Answer all the questions asked in this chapter and create your own brand.



Chapter 3

Plan For Success Ahead

his is an interesting part of this book. You now know who you are - your purpose, your strengths, where you need to develop, skills you need to acquire and/or enhance etc. You now know that having a vision is very important in starting and building a successful business. It's time to take you on the path to your dream career.

Like I mentioned earlier, building your career as an event manager should be the same way as building your career if you were to be a doctor or lawyer. It's a process. It is important that you lay the foundation properly and that is what we are still working on in this chapter.

Personally, I believe in starting from the scratch because I did. Yours might be different. You might have had some experiences in the past and perhaps gave up because you were overwhelmed by challenges, competition and/or the evolving trends in the industry. You can start all over or start

from where you are right now. However you decide to start, you cannot work towards your vision without a plan.

In this chapter, we will be talking about how to plan ahead as you build your career in event management. To build a successful, visible and profitable event management business, there are five (5) plans your business must have:

- 1. Business Plan
- 2. Growth plan
- 3. Visibility plan
- 4. Marketing plan
- 5. Succession plan.

BUSINESS PLAN

I define a business plan as a documented version of how you feel about your business. Your passion, excitement and the momentum towards your business should be felt by the reader of your business plan. Imagine a scenario where you are asked to pitch your business. Your business plan must be a representation of all that you will say physically. You must understand that it is possible to start a business without a plan but difficult to run a business without it.

To plan ahead for success, you must have a business plan to help you and guide you on the path to bringing your big dream about your business into reality. Your business plan helps you to break down your vision into different achievable and realistic tasks which can be used to create the road map to building a successful, achievable and visible career as an event manager.

Why is it important for you to have a business plan?

- 1. Your business plan is a physical representation of the big picture you have about your business.
- 2. It helps you create a road map for success, especially if you are a start-up.
- 3. A business plan is important for the sake of generational reference and succession plans

- 4. With your business plan, you can secure funding e.g. grants, loans etc. or get investors for your business.
- 5. A business plan gives you clarity about the marketing strategies, operations and analyzes in details what your business is about.
- 6. Your business plan also serves as a resume for your business.

COMPONENTS OF A BUSINESS PLAN

A business plan is not an academic exercise as a lot of people see it. Writing a business plan seems like a huge task but when you take each component one after the other, you will find it a lot easier to write. A business plan is made up of:

- Executive Summary
- · Business Identity
- Business Success Factors
- Business Set-up

- Sales Strategy
- Competitive Analysis
- Financial Projections
- Anticipated Risks
- Action Plans

GROWTHPLAN

A growth plan is a continuous plan in business that is focused on how to efficiently plan, track, assess and increase revenue and also stay ahead of competition consistently and distinctly. Value is very important in developing a growth plan for your event management business. Through your growth plan, you can strategically identify ways to focus on how to create value in your business which will eventually lead to revenue.

For your business to grow, the value you offer must increase. You need to grow in order to build a successful, visible and profitable event management business.

From experience, I have discovered that there are four major areas of growth that an event manager must plan for:

- Team Building/Staffing
- Clientele
- Income
- Self-growth

Team Building/Staffing

You cannot run a one-man business forever. You must plan to expand, thereby building a team and/or employing more hands to join you in building the career of your dream. You must plan to grow into being a leader who is ready to make impact and influence others.

Building a team is a lot of work and this is when your Leadership skills come alive. You cannot wake up one morning to build a team, you must plan towards it. What type of team do I want? How will I choose my team? What criteria must they pass to qualify to join my team? How do I make

them understand my vision?

When you have a good team who can run with your vision and understand the value proposition, building your event management business will be a lot easier. With a great team, there will be increase in value and thus, increase in revenue. The goal of a growth plan is to increase revenue.

Clientele

Happy employees produce happy customers and happy customers will keep coming back and will definitely bring new customers. You must have a growth plan targeted at increasing and retaining your clientele.

What's a business without customers? As long as you can prove your values to them and they can see what you have to offer, clients will be attracted to your business. Your growth plan for your event business must have strategies on how to increase revenue by increasing and/or retaining your clientele.

How can you achieve this? Have a client goal. Once you are clear about that goal, create strategies on

how to achieve that goal. You must also have tactics on how to convert potential clients into paying customers. Assess your growth monthly or quarterly and make necessary adjustments until you hit your goal successfully.

Income

This is the amount earned after executing an event. Your business should not be on the same spot year after year. Your income must grow as value increases, as you build a stronger team and as you deliberately build great clientele who keep coming back and referring new clients to your business.

HOW TO CALCULATE YOUR INCOME

REVENUE - (OVERHEAD COSTS + DIRECT COSTS)
= NET PROFIT (INCOME)

Revenue is the total work capital. The amount a client pays you for an event. This is not your income.

Overhead costs are indirect costs. They are expenses that are not directly associated with the revenue for a specific job but are expenses required

to run the business. Examples include: bank charges, electricity bills, airtime, internet, rent etc.

Direct costs: These are costs directly associated with the revenue for a job. They include: workmanship, transportation, taxes, etc. Every amount spent for any particular event is regarded as direct cost.

Net-profit (income): This is what you have left after all expenses have been sorted out. To build your event management business profitably, it's important that you pay yourself a percentage of the total income and invest the rest back into your business.

You have to be deliberate about having an increase in income as your business grows.

Self-growth

This is the process of being a better version of yourself through continuous personal development. As your business grows, you have to grow too. You must consistently and consciously develop yourself in the area of skills, knowledge about trends in the industry; your mindset,

emotional intelligence, experience and capacity. You must strive to get better every time. To build a successful event management business, you must come out of your comfort zone. You will remain in your comfort zone if you don't see the need to grow. When you grow in knowledge, skills and capacity, you will be open to more opportunities around you and know how to seize such opportunities. You will also know how to handle competition and keep focusing on your goals as you build your event management business. Selfgrowth helps you to build more confidence and you won't settle for less. Your mindset towards your business changes and all you will want to do is aim higher and higher.

THE POWER OF VALUE

Value is something that can never be overemphasized especially if you genuinely want to build a successful, visible and profitable business. Getting your ideal customers and making them to keep coming back is determined by the value they get from you. Value is what attracts the customers who will pay for your services. The value you offer through your event business will determine to an extent the worth you place on your business.

Values are also general guiding principles that govern all activities in your event business. When your brand is heard, what can people say about it? What image does your brand have to the public? Values help you to know what you want to do with your business, how you want to do it, where, why and to whom.

The value you create is what stands you out from your competitors. So, for example: Event manager A only talks about sales, sales and only sales to his customers. He has never created anything new in his niche. In fact, it's the same thing he does over and over again. Your customers will get bored because variety is the spice of life. You can only retain your customers if you give them a whole new experience every time they see your social media page, communicate with you or when they patronize you. You have to be creative with your business.

On the other hand, event manager B teaches her audience on social media about the challenges she is going through in her business and how she has been able to overcome those challenges; she also creates new products and services that can meet the needs of her target audience and still keeps to her niche. She solves her client's problems in

creative ways without going outside her niche. She is creating value and will automatically attract more clients who will keep asking for more.

So, before you complain about not getting the right clients or not making money in your event management business, it might be that you just need to be more creative about your brand by understanding the power of value and how to create value that will attract the right people to your brand who will eventually pay for your services. Bear in mind that, to get maximum results, consistency is very key.

THE VISIBILITY PLAN FOR EVENT MANAGERS

I define the visibility plan for event managers as a strategic process of going from being overlooked to being overbooked or from going from being unknown to being most-wanted.

To be visible means to be seen by others. It's not enough to think that you are visible but can others who need you see you? If the right people who need you - that is, your ideal clients, business partners and everyone your business needs to be successful, see you and can identify with the solution your brand provides, then you are visible.

This is however not automatic. It must be planned strategically and intentionally. In this part of this chapter, you will understand how some of the activities you get involved in can make you visible to your target audience and how some of the strategies you never considered can also give you the visibility that you need as an event manager to build and sustain your event management business successfully.

SEIZE OPPORTUNITIES WHERE YOU NEED VISIBILITY

Visibility can be achieved both online and physically. I have outlined 8 ways that can help you get visibility as an event manager.

1. **Volunteer**: To volunteer means to work without getting paid in return or to undertake a task freely. This simply means that when you volunteer, you are working for free - no reward, whether in cash

or kind. However, volunteering is part of the training you need as an event manager, especially if you are in the start-up level (0 to 3 years in business).

You can offer your services for free to get visibility. The term used is "probono", that is free service. This serves as a great learning platform for you. You must be intentional about the type of events you volunteer at. The aim of volunteering at events must be in line with your goals as regards to your career path as an event manager and must also be in line with your client goals. You cannot just jump at every volunteering job just because you want visibility. Remember, the plan must be strategic and intentional.

As a volunteer, no one is obliged to pay you but please do yourself a favour - be obliged to learn as much as you can on the job. Volunteering in the event industry is a very interesting activity as you start and build your event management business because it is a great and fantastic way to gain experience which helps you build your portfolio.

Let me share my major achievement as a volunteer:

As a start-up event manager over 10 years ago, I had to volunteer severally to prove my competence and expertise, as it seems in some cases but for me, the aim is always to learn and keep learning.

In 2018, it was a different experience all together. Let me share the summary of that experience and how it has helped my business till now. I was scrolling through Instagram one night then I saw a nomination post. The nominee on that post is someone I know very well, so I decided to follow the awards page. Few minutes after, I got a message in my DM from the Executive producer of that awards and what he said shocked me. He said and I quote, "I will like to have a meeting with you because I can see value from your page and I believe we can work together". For some seconds, I was like, "is this a joke or what?" but I decided to have a positive mind towards it so I agreed to having a meeting.

The meeting day came and as a professional event manager who understands that time management is key, I got there early enough to meet this Executive Producer. I waited for more than thirty minutes before he finally showed up. While waiting, I was feeling like someone who had been scammed. LOL. Honestly, that was how I felt. That feeling did not disappear until I saw the man face-to-face and heard what he had to offer me.

I had no idea who that man was until my husband saw his picture later and told me his name. I could not believe it. I felt like a star and I have not stopped feeling like a star since then. I don't want to bore you with so much details but I decided to accept the offer to be the official project coordinator of that event for free. It was super worth it and I am still enjoying the benefits of that decision till today. I have learned so much just by volunteering and I also connected with amazing people who are now a part of my business. I am still the project coordinator for that event. This act has made me as an individual and my brand visible in the places that I strategically and intentionally want to be visible in.

2. **Sponsorship**: Let me start by first giving a definition of who a sponsor is in general terms and then apply that definition to who a sponsor is as regards the events industry. A sponsor is an individual, group of people or an organization that provides support either financially or through the provision of products and services towards an event or activity. When you sponsor an event,

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you're partnering with the event host and also take off some responsibility (whether in cash or in kind) off the event host. Sponsorship is a two-way street. This means that you give to get something in return. It's a win-win situation, if we can put it that way.

The word "sponsor" keeps a lot of event professionals on their toes and I have heard questions like: "I don't have money, how can I be a sponsor?", "Can I sponsor an event if I am not popular" and a lot of other similar questions. Here is my general answer: "Use what you have to support events where you can get visibility for your brand". The aim is to get visibility but then you don't want to go bankrupt because you want to support an event. No, you should not. Your decision to sponsor an event should not cause a financial loss to your business whatsoever.

Sponsoring an event doesn't have to be financially-inclined, you can sponsor events by offering your products and services, as long as they are relevant to the event, for free. You must be clear about what you plan to achieve as a sponsor of that event.

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Sponsoring events can boost your brand reach and that's a strategy for building a visible and

successful event management business.

Through research and from personal experience, I have come to understand the significant role that sponsoring events plays in increasing brand visibility for event managers if you have the right strategy put in place. Let's look at four (4) ways to build visibility by sponsoring events:

 Sponsoring events can increase your reach and exposure to new clients, customers and businesses: As an event sponsor, your business name and/or logo will be used on all campaign materials, promotional content and adverts for that event. You need to play your part as well. Set goals to help you put the visibility strategy in place. Make your logo and other information about your brand that will be required available. Don't look down on your brand. The goal is to get more visible so if there's nothing to put on the flier or say about you in the radio jingle, then you have sponsored without achieving the goal of getting as visible as you should be. Think about all the people who will hear about your business and see your logo on the television commercials, radio jingles, social media campaigns and online adverts, just because you are a sponsor of an event. You can't get that visibility by folding your arms.

- Being an event sponsor will put you in the face of your target audience: It's important that you understand the importance of identifying your target audience as an event manager. This makes your visibility strategy a lot easier. When you sponsor an event that is in line with your niche and business goals, you are definitely a step closer to your target audience and potential customers. The attendees of an event should be one of the factors that should influence your decision to be a sponsor of an event. Once you are clear about this, seize the opportunity to be in their faces and intentionally interact with them by sharing your fliers, business cards or by sharing valuable and relevant content for free. Remember to follow-up after the event and continuously build relationships with them. Keep your brand on their minds for a long time.
- When your existing customers are aware that you will be sponsoring an event, they will likely want to attend such event and this helps you to reconnect with them and also connect with new clients. If they have been pleased with your services so far, there is a probability that they will come with their friends and families too.

This is also a good way to get visibility for your brand as an event sponsor.

- Sponsoring an event gives you and your brand credibility and re-positioning: To be a sponsor of an event means that there's a level of trust the event host or organizers have for your brand. It also means that the value you offer can be seen and felt. People will get to trust you more and this is definitely a big deal for you and your event management business. Sales start with trust. No one wants to associate with brands they cannot benefit from even if the benefits are coming for free. Sponsorships are a great way to prove your worth to your target audience and this leads to more visibility for your event business. Credibility also re-positions you and gives you confidence to scale up your career as an event manager.
- 3. **Collaborate**: According to Wikipedia, though rephrased by me, collaboration is the process which two or more people or organizations working together to complete a task or achieve a (common) goal. From experience, I have come to understand collaboration as working with one or more person(s) or (in this case) event business(es) who has/have what you don't have to achieve a

similar end result. I learned from one of my mentors that the idea of collaboration is not to outshine the other party but to bring the strengths of both parties together, to achieve a common goal. The person or business you choose to collaborate with must have similar goals and objectives. Collaboration helps you to learn from the other party, exposes you to people and places the other party knows that you don't know. This is a measure of visibility and no matter how small the effect of collaboration might have, it is better than no visibility at all.

4. Network: As an event manager, networking is a very intentional way of getting visibility for you and your business. Networking can be defined as a deliberate and strategic act of interacting with people who you can talk about your business to and who can connect you to those who can do business with you. Networking might seem like a big task but once you can get rid of mindset blocks, you will feel confident to network with people who can give you the visibility that you seek. You must be clear on your WHY and set SMART goals before networking. Through networking, you get to meet new potential clients, make new friends and thus increase your visibility. Your network is your net worth and you must be very intentional

about this.

Here are five (5) tips on how to network effectively as an event manager:

- Set networking goals: Set goals of how many people you want to network with, how you want to network with them and where you will find them. You also need to set goals on what you plan to achieve from this networking plan.
- Attend networking events: Find out about events where you can get opportunities to network and plan to attend. If there is none around you, you can plan one or collaborate with other event managers to put up one together, to achieve the goal - visibility. Don't forget that the purpose of networking is to put yourself and your business in the face of your target audience and also in the face of those who can connect you to your target audience to give you the visibility you desire.
- Don't go empty-handed: Never attend a networking event without something to put you in the mind of those you will meet. As a matter of fact, as part of your networking goals,

you should ensure that you have your business cards and fliers with you because you never can tell who you will meet whenever you go out for business or even on personal engagements. It is important to exchange something to help the other party know how to reach you. Don't forget to get the person's contact too so that you can follow-up. You can also take a picture if the person permits. If you don't have business cards on you, type the details on your phone or write out your details on a piece of paper and let each person you meet take a picture. This is better than nothing at all.

• Don't be a lone wolf: A lone wolf is used to describe someone who likes to be or work alone. The aim of networking is to increase your visibility through interacting with people. You cannot interact with people you have not even met. Don't gist with people you are familiar with already. That is not networking. People you know don't need to know you again. You need to meet new people to expand your brand reach. Overcome your shyness and take a bold step to walk up to people you don't know and confidently introduce yourself and what you do to them, exchange contacts.

- Be friendly and approachable: No one wants to interact with joy-killers or people who give them cold treatments. Extend friendly gesture, speak audibly, smile and be approachable. First impression lasts and matters a whole lot. You must always create the best impression about yourself the first time. Take control of your emotions even if you are not in a good mood at that time. Be sensitive to other people's feelings. Ensure that the people you are interacting with are comfortable with you and happy to talk to you when they meet you. After the conversation, let each person you meet know how happy you are to meet them. You can simply say: "It's nice meeting you". If the other person says that first, reply with "The pleasure is mine. It is also nice meeting you".
- 5. Leverage: This is a way of seizing opportunities to be visible to more people through other people in your network. There are people that you will meet that will have contacts of your target audience, access to where your target audience are or even know how exactly to reach your target audience. You can leverage on the contacts and connections of these type of people in your network. Most times, you will have to be bold to ask and you might just be lucky to get such

leverage on a platter of Gold. This is why it is important to build good relationships as you build your event management career. You need people to stay in this business so you cannot afford to take relationships for granted in any way.

- 6. Community/Association: Join an event community or association that can help you achieve your visibility goals and make sure you are intentionally active. Ensure that the association or community has activities that will work with your business goals. Gain the trust of other members by sharing valuable content for free, deliberately take up tasks when the need arises and always be a solution provider whenever there is an opportunity to. This boosts visibility for you as an individual and for your brand. I am a member of five (5) different event communities and I am deliberately active when I need to be active. I ensure my voice is heard no matter how small the impact is. It's a gradual process to gaining more visibility and it is better than no efforts at all.
- 7. **Mentoring**: A mentor is someone who is more experienced, has higher capacity to guide and is positioned to put others through a process to achieve measurable results. Having a mentor is not

luxury. It is a necessity because as you build your business, there are decisions you will need to take and it will not be wise to make mistakes over and over again. Your mentor has most likely made most of the mistakes you will likely make. He/she will be in the best position to ensure that you don't make such mistakes and give you the easier process on how to achieve the results you are aiming to achieve. Your mentor should be someone who is very experienced with good records of integrity and leadership to his or her record; someone in the event industry is most recommended.

How can mentoring increase visibility?

Mentoring can help you get more visibility because your mentor understands from experience, what is required to put your brand out to your target audience and will ensure you are guided appropriately and equipped with all the necessary skills.

Having a mentor gives you more opportunities to leverage on more potential customers through your mentor's network and thus increases visibility for you and your brand.

Your mentor can put in a word for you in places where you need visibility and thus giving you the platforms you need to push your brand to the right audience. This is why it is important to write down your goals and also discuss with your mentor.

8. Online visibility: The first thing to bear in mind is that the world is now a digital world. Technology has taken over. As an event manager, you should not limit your visibility to your locality. You can position yourself to people outside your location by being visible online. The home of online visibility is Google. You must aim at making your business discoverable and found by those who need your services when they search for you.

HOW TO BE VISIBLE ONLINE

- Blogging: you can create valuable content about your business or about the event industry through writing. You could either have your own blog or be a guest blogger.
- Website/Online Content: Through SEO optimization, you can increase the visibility of your business by making the content of your

website discoverable to those who are searching for keywords relevant to your website. Having a website is optional but essential.

- Online directories: Vconnect is a common example of an online directory that you can register your business on to get visibility.
- Social media: This gives a fraction of online visibility. Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube and others are examples of social media platforms where you can get online visibility by showing up often and creating valuable content that will make your target audience.
- Google My Business: You can register your business on Google My Business. This helps you to put necessary information about your business, get found through your location and also get reviews from customers.

THE MARKETING PLAN

A marketing plan is an essential tool that helps you to strategically market your business to your ideal client. Once you are clear about who your target audience is, create a customer persona or profile and then plan towards how to put your brand in their faces.

Writing down your marketing plan helps you to have an effective plan in place. It's very similar to writing a business plan but focuses majorly on marketing strategies for your brand.

To create a marketing plan, you must have the following information:

- Organizational Background
- Brand Identity
- Swot Analysis
- · Competitive Analysis
- Economic Factors
- Customer Persona/Profile
- Goals and Objectives
- Marketing Strategies

Financial Projections

Assess your progress.

To assess is to evaluate or measure your progress based on the goals you have set. In order to build your event management career, it's important that you are clear about your progress. You cannot afford to lie to yourself at this stage. It's okay if you have not made as much progress as you expected.

Some of the questions you need to ask yourself while assessing your progress include:

- How far have you come with starting your career?
- What are the lessons you have learnt from the starting phase of your career?
- What weaknesses have you been able to work on and turned to strengths?
- What new opportunities have you identified in your niche and the industry as a whole?
- What skills do you need to learn or improve on?

- What strategies do you need to put in place to make your business better?
- Is this really what I want to do?
- What percentage of my goals did I achieve?

Assessing your progress helps you to know the goals you have achieved and what new goals you need to set for the building process. Perhaps you have not achieved the goals you set at the starting point of your career, you can then review your goals and set new goals.

What should you assess?

Below are the following areas of your event management business that you should assess at this stage in your career:

- 1. **Your Performance**: How well are you doing? How far have you gone in developing yourself? How much efforts are you putting into your business? How can you be better?
- 2. Your Client Goals: Are you clear about your target audience yet? How many clients do you

have so far? Did you meet up with your client goal in the last month, quarter or year? Are your clients coming back? Do your clients refer you to others?

- 3. **Financial Assessment**: How much do you make on the average weekly or monthly? Are you crushing your financial goals? How can you increase your income? What assets do you have yet? How can you avoid or manage debts? Are your prices competitive?
- 4. **Productivity**: Are you getting results in your business? Are your efforts productively visible? Remember it's not enough to be busy. Productivity is a sign of progress. Are the marketing strategies producing leads?
- 5. **Competition**: Who are your competitors? What are you doing better than them? How can you rise above the competition and still stay focused on your goals?

How can you assess progress?

1. **SWOT ANALYSIS**: Analyze your Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. Strengths and Weaknesses are internal factors because they

have to do with you as an individual or as a brand. Opportunities and Threats are external factors. The goal of a SWOT analysis is to convert your weaknesses to strengths and your threats to opportunities. This is a moment of truth for you and your business.

2. WHEEL OF LIFE: This is a self-assessment tool that helps you to know where you are in certain areas of your life (and business), helps you determine the areas to be improved on and helps you set goals on how to be better in those areas of weakness that you have identified. You can use the wheel of life to assess both personal growth and business growth.

<u>Notes</u>





SECTION II

UNLOCKING THE CAREER PATH

"It does not matter how slowly you go, as long as you do not stop."

MANAGEMEN I

THE CAREER PATH FOR EVENT MANAGERS

LOCATION

he career path for event managers is the journey or the process of moving up the ladder from the level of little or no experience to being experienced and established through personal development, skill acquisition or the appropriate education and tools needed to achieve the highest level of the career.

This cannot happen in 3 weeks. This cannot happen in 10 days. It will take continuous effort and development to become the best you want to be. It's a journey of endless learning, relearning and unlearning.

So, imagine this scenario...

You got employed in a company during Youth Service or as a fresh graduate, how long do you think it will take you to become the GM of that company? Even if it takes a short time, it means that you must be ready to go the extra mile to add value to yourself and prove your worth to that company for you to be eligible for a promotion. It's still a process.

This is what a lot of people are afraid of or run away from. Building a successful, profitable and

visible event management career is not a joke at all. You must be ready for it to achieve it.

So how does this career path work?

First of all, I define the very beginning of the event management career with USHERING. This was where I started from. From here, I developed myself and became a VENDORS MANAGER, and then, EVENT COORDINATOR/MANAGER, then an EVENT PLANNER and I have broken new grounds by being A COACH, ONLINE COURSE CREATOR AND AUTHOR.

Your path might not be the same and that is why Chapter 2 had to deal with YOUR VISION.

So, from where you are right now - based on your past experience and vision, what career path would you want to follow as you build your event management career? Write it out and feel free to send it to me via email.

Why is it important for you to have a career path?

1. It helps you appreciate where you are at the start of your career.

- 2. It helps you identify the areas where you need to develop and improve on
- 3. It works as a guide to help you stay focused
- 4. It helps you stay on your lane despite the competition
- 5. It helps you appreciate your progress and celebrate your wins from level to level.

I have broken down the career path for event managers into four (4) levels in this section.

Chapter 4

The Passionate/ Opportunist Manager

his is the term I came up with to describe the new, inexperienced but passionate event manager. Although, not everyone starts a career in event management out of passion. Some, like me, are opportunists. I developed the passion to build a career in event management after having the taste of the event management experience and I enjoyed every bit of it.

This is the career discovery stage in the career path for event management. It is also the entry level for you if you have no prior experience in event management but you have found out that you have a passion for organizing events.

Who are those that can be termed the passionate/ opportunist manager? You are a passionate/ opportunist manager if:

 You are inexperienced in event management but passionate and ready to start a career as an event manager • You got an opportunity to be part of an event for the first time and you discovered that you can build a career in event management.

So how can you start this career from this level?

My answer is START AS AN EVENT USHER. This is because Event Ushering is the lowest level of the event management career. As an event usher, you will be able to build a solid foundation and also learn about the following:

- Self-discovery
- Body Language (Gestures and Postures)
- Poise and Etiquette
- Communication Skills
- Emotional Intelligence
- Wardrobe and Style
- The Art of Professionalism
- Accountability

- Team Spirit
- Confidence
- Time Management
- Human Relations and so much more.

The foundation is very important in building a career and this is a great way to start. Starting your event management career as an event usher will help you appreciate others in that position as you rise to the top of your career. You will understand their feelings and their fears and it will be easier for you to advise and inspire them as they also build their own career.

I don't want to assume that you know what event ushering is. So let us talk about it briefly.

Event ushering is the art of ensuring orderliness at an event by making guests feel comfortable, helping them seat appropriately, attending to them throughout the event, ensuring that they are properly served, helping them to locate significant parts of the venue e.g. restrooms, changing rooms etc. and being the intermediary between guests and vendors. Event ushering is usually one of the last event services to be considered, however it is an essential service for all events. Professionalism is very key if you want to get the best out of event ushering.

Event ushering has been misinterpreted in various forms and a lot of times, clients are skeptical about using ushers at events. However, if your goal is to build a successful, profitable and visible event management career from this level, professionalism in all its forms is non-negotiable.

To be a professional event usher, it is important that you have the following skills and/or qualities:

- 1. Good Presentation Skills (Physical Appearance)
- 2. Multi-tasking Skills
- 3. Time Management
- 4. Self-confidence
- 5. Good Team Spirit
- 6. High Emotional Quotient

- 7. Creativity
- 8. Good Relationship Skills
- 9. Solution-driven Ability
- 10. Willingness to Learn

What qualifies you to be a professional usher?

A training on professional event ushering which could be online or physical will be ideal. Training must be both theoretical and practical. This is what we recommend at Ife'ctiv Touch and we have a signature event ushering course. It also comes with life-time mentoring.

It is also not too early to start putting your memories about your experiences together. There is no glory without a story. As you gradually build your career, you will definitely have opportunities to share this story with those coming up. Remember that it is not money alone that defines success. Success is defined by impact and influence.

I will recommend that as an event usher, get at

least three years of experience with some clarity about your career goals before proceeding to the next phase.



<u>Notes</u>



Chapter 5

The Go-getter Manager

ccording to the dictionary and my research on the word "go-getter", it means so many things and it's such a powerful word. It means "an aggressively enterprising person, someone who is eager to succeed, an ambitious person, energetic and determined. A go-getter is stubborn about building his/her event management career.

I describe the go-getter stage as the career development stage. You are in this category if:

- You have started as an event usher and you will want to take your career in event management a little further;
- You are already an event vendor or you have some experience in the event industry e.g in catering, baking, bridals, decoration etc and have discovered your passion for event management and would like to start a career in it and still stay in your niche.

A go-getter manager loves what he/she does and wants to seize more opportunities to get new experiences. At this stage, leadership skills and team building capacity begin to develop and the thirst for knowledge is on the increase. A go-getter manager is very proactive and shows good accountability skills. They are ready to go the extra mile than just being event ushers.

In this category, we have the following roles:

- 1. Event Ushering Supervisors/Team Heads
- 2. Assistant Event Coordinators/Vendor Managers
- 3. Bridal Attendants/Wedding Coordinators.

If you find yourself in this category, you must ensure that you learn as much as you can learn on the job. This is the phase where you are conscious about creating a brand. Offer services on pro bono basis to get more visibility.

This is also the phase where you want to build your portfolio. You can achieve this by applying for internship at a reputable event company that can help you achieve your career goals. At this stage, your willingness to learn must be aggressive. Having a mentor at this stage is very essential. Apply for mentorship from your internship employer or intentionally identify who you will want as a mentor and device means of how to connect with such a person.

You can be at this level actively for 12 months before proceeding to the next career phase.



<u>Notes</u>



Chapter 6

The Advancer/ Advanced Manager

he word, "advance" means "to raise in rank or promote, to move forward". So, in simple terms, an advancer is someone who moves forward in the event management career.

This is thus the career advancement stage and career advancement refers to the upward progression of one's career. Before you can think of career advancement, there must have been a career discovery and then a career development as explained in the first two levels above.

There is no more child's play at this level. It is expected that at this level, you now have clarity as regards what you plan to achieve as an event manager. This is the stage where you build your brand like a boss.

As an advanced manager, you can decide to have your own event management company, own an ushering agency, be an event consultant, a professional event coordinator and vendors manager. The responsibilities will now increase because you are working with more teams of vendors now.

Some of the things to note as you advance in your event management career are:

THE BUILDING PROCESS

This is the phase of your event management career where you strategically and intentionally build your portfolio by creating more value and gaining more experience in your niche. This is where you test your passion because you cannot build your event management career carelessly. You must be consistent about it and this is a lot of hard work.

UPGRADE YOUR MARKETING STRATEGIES

This is definitely an upgrade of the marketing strategies you had at the start of your career. As you progress, you will definitely know the areas in your marketing plan that you need to improve on or eliminate or include as the case may be. To build your career as an event manager, you cannot afford to play small when it comes to marketing. You have to plan it and be very deliberate about the

strategies you put in place as regards targeting your audience, prospecting and turning prospects to paying clients. You have to make more noise about your brand and have a visibility plan.

At this stage, it is expected that you are now clearer about where your target audience are and how to pitch your business to them. You cannot be showing up once in a while on social media. You must show up every day.

At this stage, you must invest time and money in personal development continuously. You can take courses, attend workshops/conferences, attend a masterclass, read books, join an association or event community and be actively involved.

This is also the stage where nominations for awards will begin to show up because you are now building a visible and valuable brand. So don't wait for those opportunities before you get prepared, prepare yourself in advance for those opportunities. At this stage, it is also possible that you discover certain skills like teaching. You may decide to take up opportunities to facilitate trainings or create such opportunities yourself by teaching others what you know and sharing your experiences as well.

<u>Notes</u>



Chapter 7

The Breaker/ Ground-breaking Manager

his is the career accomplishment stage. I describe the breaker as that event manager who wants to break new grounds either in the event management space or outside the event management space. To break new grounds means to do something completely different from what you are known for.

As an event manager, you can break new grounds by being:

- An event planner
- · An event business coach
- A mentor
- An investor
- An author

- A speaker
- An owner of new event-related businesses
- Founder of event communities/associations
- Convener of event exhibitions, masterclasses and conferences
- Multiple award nominee/winner.

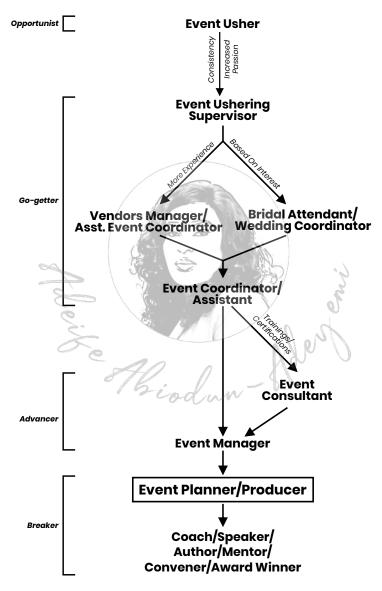
At this stage, one of the things you must do is to ensure that you build passive income and have multiple streams of income as a succession plan and exit strategy.

I am currently at this stage and it has been an amazing journey for the past 12 years. This is the phase of great influence. At this stage of your career, so many people are looking up to you directly and indirectly. You must be very conscious of sustaining a reputable brand. People can now identify with your brand based on how you have built it right from the beginning. Your actions must be more mature and you must learn to take wiser decisions at this stage.

<u>Notes</u>



Career Path For Event Managers®





MARKETING

SECURITY

LOGISTICS

LOCATION

SECTION III

THE SUCCESSION PLAN

"Work until you no longer have to introduce yourself"

6

BUDGETING

CREATION

COORDINATING

SCHEDULING

MANAGEMENT

MARKETING

LOGISTICS

THE CAREER PATH FOR EVENT MANAGERS

LOCATION

Chapter 8

The Power of Relevance and Influence

obuild a sustainable business, you must be relevant. What do I mean by being relevant? Being relevant as an event manager means that your input, effort, personality, and brand are important and integral parts of the event industry.

What this also means is that, it is not enough to have an event business, you must make positive impact in this lives of others in the industry.

When you hear names like Funke Bucknor-Obruthe of Zapphaire Events, Yewande Zacchaeus of Eventful, Bisi Sotunde of Busybee Events, one of the things that comes to mind is **relevance**. Apart from being in business, they have replicated themselves by training people in event management and planning through workshops, masterclasses, and conferences. They keep up this relevance through consistent social media activities and being a part of the fast evolving trends in the event industry.

I am a proud member of the Busybee tribe (an alumni of the masterclass 2018) and I have leveraged on the knowledge, network and experience of the other members of the tribe to help me stay relevant in my own space as well. I can boldly say that in Ibadan where I currently reside, I am one of the top event planners that is exercising her power of relevance.

Being relevant also means that you get involved in activities that solve real-life problems in the event industry. There is power in relevance because it shows that "you matter", and if you matter, you must do all that you can to continue to matter. It is not an opportunity to be arrogant, instead, it's an opportunity to make yourself available to others who are looking up to you in one way or the other.

HOW TO BE RELEVANT AS AN EVENT PROFESSIONAL

- 1. Build a strong workforce and replicate yourself in them by constantly teaching value and investing your time to make them better versions of themselves.
- 2. Organize seminars, workshops, masterclasses,

exhibitions, etc. to constantly help you increase your network and make positive impact on those coming after you.

- 3. Be active and consistently involved in social media.
- 4. Be actively involved in the association you belong to. Offer to take up tasks that will make the association better. This also helps you to gain new experiences.
- 5. Be intentional about teaching others what you know. You can do this through online courses, emails, WhatsApp, Facebook, webinars, etc.
- 6. Grab opportunities to sponsor events or partner with brands that can help you gain more visibility and push out your brands to the audience you need at this level.
- 7. Be a mentor to budding events managers and don't quit until you see them succeed.

HOW TO KNOW THAT YOU ARE RELEVANT

1. Recommendations will come easily and often.

- 2. Requests will come from those who want to learn from you.
- 3. Opportunities to speak, be on panel sessions to facilitate workshops, etc. will show up.
- 4. Nominations for awards will come up.
- 5. You will feel it and will desire more.
- 6. You will be invited for interviews on the Mass Media.

Relevance births influence. One of the benefits of relevance is influence. If you understand the power of influence, people will be attracted to you. You will become an authority in the industry. Your exposure to various activities and the evident results from your effort will make people want to associate with you.

Influence is a lucrative asset if you have it as an event manager. The benefits are countless and the feeling is something that cannot be explained if it's not experienced.

Influence itself is power. However, a lot goes into

gaining influence. It is not automatic. A lot of skills, hard work, sacrifices, time, networking, smart moves and commitments are involved. Influence is very critical to the success of your business as an event professional.

Some of the factors that aid influence are:

- 1. Trust this starts even among your coworkers/ team. They have to trust you. You can't influence people who don't trust you.
- 2. Reliability can people take you at your words? When a problem needs to be solved, can people rely on you to solve it?
- 3. Skills do you have the right skills needed to influence people? Leadership skill is key here.
- 4. Consistency you must be consistent with your business (quality service delivery, excellent customer service, commitment to your business, etc.)
- 5. Confidence and Strength you must be confident about who you are and what you stand for. You must exhibit your strength at all times.

- 6. Be human you are obviously not superman or immortal. You are human. Let people know who you are. It's ok to fail or make mistakes. People connect with those they know can understand their pains.
- 7. Integrity this is key if you really want to influence others. What do people think about when they hear your name or see you? A good name is better than silver and gold.
- 8. Be a good listener to influence people, you must know what they need or where they need help. This can only be achieved when you listen to them. Allow people to talk to you and share their opinions, worries and concerns with you. This builds trust.
- 9. Be flexible it's ok to have your personal beliefs and core values but in cases where there are people, especially, partners and clients who do not share your beliefs, you can still work with them. However, being flexible should not make you compromise your core values.
- 10. You cannot do without people. How you treat and relate with people definitely determines how

powerful your influence on them will be. People should respect and love you for you to greatly impact on them.



<u>Notes</u>



Chapter 9

The Exit Strategy

Everyone is going to exit his business someday.

It's just a matter of how and when.

- G. Christian

hatever has a beginning must surely have an end, however, the end indeed justifies the means.

This chapter will help you to know how to exit from active service as an entrepreneur and still sustain a successful event business. You definitely do not want a business you have labored so hard to build to end just like that. Definitely not!

So what should you do to ensure that your business outlives you and still maintains that reputation it has been known for?

- 1. Plan to exit
- 2. Have a successor
- 3. Have shareholders
- 4. Make your brand a franchise

- 5. Convert all active income to passive
- 6. Sell off.
- 1. **Plan to exit** there must be plan to exit. You must set goals on when and how you plan to exit. Run your business with the end in mind.
- 2. Have a successor who will take over your business when you exit? Will it be your child? Is it a business you want your future generation to inherit? Do you want a neutral person to take over, perhaps, one of your loyal staff who you believe is responsible and confident? If our business must outlive you, there must be someone to continue from where you will stop.
- 3. **Have shareholders** sell off some of the shares of your company, this way, you can have individuals or companies who will co-own your business with you and be in charge of running the business while you sit back and enjoy the dividends. This will require a legal process.
- 4. **Make your brand a franchise** you can exit your business by allowing individuals who can buy your business as a franchise. This requires that the

franchisor, that is you, provides a licensed privilege to the franchisee to do business with your business name in return for monetary benefits. This is what Mr. Biggs, Chicken Republic, etc. do. The intellectual property, procedures of business operations, etc. are handed over to the franchisee. This ensures that there is consistency of the standards your brand has been known for.

- 5. Convert active income to passive income. Not all event services can be converted to passive income. However, if you have been an event blogger, you can convert this to passive income. You can create more online courses and launch strategically instead of showing up physically to teach. You can also create an online booking platform or communicate with your clients virtually. Although this will require a lot of technology but it is achievable. You might not be able to convert physical event coordination services to virtual yet, a robot might be needed for that.
- 6. **Sell off**. Not interested in keeping the business? Then the worst you can do is to sell the business off and plan your finances wisely so that you don't end up broke sooner.

The dream of every successful business is to build a business that can outlive them and they can still benefit from even after death. This should be your dream too.



<u>Notes</u>



Conclusion

his book - THE CAREER PATH FOR EVENT MANAGERS - takes you on a journey from starting your event business to exiting the business when the time comes. This requires a lot of hard work, skills, intentional living, commitment, focus and passion. The power to create wealth from your event business is in your hands. I look forward to seeing you at the top.

<u>Notes</u>



Author's Bio

luwadamilola Adeife Abiodun-Adeyemi, popularly known as Adeife, is a work-from-home multi-talented serial entrepreneur.

Although a graduate of the Department of Food Technology, the University of Ibadan with a second-class upper division, Adeife decided to follow her dreams and passion to be an entrepreneur and job creator by using her skills and talents to solve real-life problems.

She is the author of The Career path for Event Managers and an award-winning event planner, Founder/CEO of Ife'ctiv Touch - an event planning and management company and also the Lead coach and mentor at Ife'ctiv Touch Academy where she trains passionate young individuals in professional event planning, ushering and coordination from little or no experience through online courses and physical trainings. In the past 11 years, Ife'ctiv Touch Academy has trained over

650 individuals.

Her online course in Professional event ushering is the first of its kind in the Nigerian event industry. She has also helped other event ushering business owners in Nigeria to train their ushers and create their own online courses in Professional Event Ushering.

As an event professional, Adeife is an executive member of Professional Events Planners and Vendors Association (PEPVAN) and a member of the Event Industry Nigeria (EIN). She is an alumni of the BusyBee Masterclass 2018 set. She is also a co-founder of The Events Solutions hub - a platform where a team of event professionals plan and manage events with fixed budgets without compromising quality.

Adeife has been privileged to plan events ranging from low-budgeted to premium social, corporate, political, Royal and award events. She was the Chairman, planning committee for The Eventpreneurs Conference powered by PEPVAN, Ibadan chapter and is a two-time Project manager for Pacesetters Entertainment and Recognition Awards (PERA) - 2018&2019. She also planned the maiden edition of the Gubernatorial debate

organized for Space FM, Ibadan in 2019.

As a new-media enthusiast, she expresses and utilises her digital skills as the Head, Digital Solutions at Leaders Consult - a new-media consulting firm. Under this brand, she has cofacilitated trainings for hospitality staff both physically and virtually. In September 2019, Adeife was privileged to be on a panel at a conference to discuss New Media as a way of marketing a brand in Nigeria.

Adeife has been nominated twice in the Event planner of the year category by Ibadan Wedding Awards in 2016 and Blingz Events Awards in 2019. She won the Event planner of the year award in 2019 by Blingz Awards. She was also a nominee for the Entrepreneur category for the Ladies of Honour awards 2019. Her ushering agency is currently nominated as the Ushering agency of the year by PEPVAN awards schedules to hold on December 1,2019.

In August 2019, Adeife was confirmed a speaker for SLAY Festival 2019 powered by She Leads Africa on How to master your personal finance.

When Adeife is not working, she spends time with her family, sleeps and watches movies.

She loves teaching, designing graphics, solving problems related to business startups, very passionate about financial independence for women, youth and women empowerment.

Adeife is a Christian. She is married to Abiodun Adeyemi and they are blessed with children.

THE CAREER PATH FOR Event Managers HOW TO STATT BUILD AND SUSTAIN

A SUCCESSFUL, PROFITABLE AND VISIBLE
EVENT MANAGEMENT BUSINESS

s an event planner with several years of experience in the events planning, styling and coordination business, one major issue for anyone starting off in this career path is market entry.

Adeife has clearly made it all easy in this book: The Career Path for Event Managers.

This is such an insightful book that will help you start successfully as a budding event manager, build and sustain your business profitably.

This book harnesses the power of starting small, maintaining and nurturing healthy relationships amongst your network, the power of influence that comes from mentorship, acquiring more knowledge, trainings, new media and so much more using the digital marketing strategy.

In this book, you will gain clarity, on how to find fulfillment on your career path, scale up and watch the business live beyond you. This is not just a theorem by the books, these are proven results and a truth established from Adeife's experience.

Kudos Adeife, this is a powerful tool and success is inevitable for anyone who digests the information and runs with it.

- Sunmbo Adeoye Esob Events, Nigeria.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



deife is an award-winning event planner, an event business coach, and tech-enthusiast. She is the Founder/CEO, Ife'ctiv Touch, the Lead coach, Ife'ctiv Touch Academy and the Initiator, The Event Managers Community.

She is on a mission to help event professionals start, build and sustain profitable, successful and visible event businesses that will outlive them.

Through her online trainings and courses, she has impacted lives of hundreds of individuals in the event industry in the last 10 years. Adeife is an executive member of Professional Event Planners and Vendors Association of Nigeria (PEPVAN).

Adeife is married and blessed with children.