

"The Right Tools For The Job - Part I of III"

By: Obi Abuchi



*"You will be successful because of who you are, not because of who you are not."
- Anonymous*

After a recent DIY experience gone wrong, I was telling my wife how much I hated DIY. To be honest, although I certainly don't love DIY, I'm actually not bad (at least, I don't think so). That said, I'd be the first to admit that I'm no Tommy Walsh. But of course, like the "good" workman that I am, I blamed the bad experience on my tools.

Truth be said, on this occasion it really was down to not having the right tools for the job. I was trying to make do with an old drill and incomplete set of drill bits. I had an outcome, what I wanted to achieve, but I didn't choose the right resources and equipment to ensure success.

When it comes to successful career development and progression among young professionals, the same applies. Having (and effectively applying) the right tools could make the difference between mediocrity (poor to average performance) and excellence (high performance) in your work, which in turn can make a difference to your rate of progression, job satisfaction, remuneration, and your overall achievements.

In their book "Beyond Entrepreneurship", Authors James (Jim) Collins and William (Bill) Lazier point out that there are five basic conditions under which people tend to execute well, one of them being - **"People execute well if they have the right skills for the job."**

Having the right 'tools' for the job would appear to be a no-brainer. Yet, in my experience, it takes a lot longer for people to realise what the right tools actually are.

For the purpose of this article, I'm going to focus on one of three tools that will help do the job right or make clear the right job to do. We'll cover the other two tools in Part II and III of this newsletter series.

The first tool is **"talent"**.

Why start here? Well, unlike skills, experience and education, talents naturally exist within you and cannot be acquired. So, where better to start than with what already comes natural to you?*

As one author put it, "Your greatest talents don't come into play only during your life's big events - you use them every day. Your talents filter the way you approach every single situation you encounter and every decision you make."*

Some of the most successful people alive will tell you that whatever vocation you choose in life or whatever role you are in, you will be most successful, indeed most fulfilled, if it is built around your greatest natural abilities i.e. your talents. This is because by focusing on your talents, you are more effective at your tasks and roles. It's a dangerous game to try and build your vocation around a weakness. Unfortunately, a lot of people and organisations do just that; often due to a lack of awareness. However, an organisation that acknowledges, celebrates, develops, and builds upon the diversity of talents within it is almost guaranteed to achieve immeasurable success.*

Every person has a unique combination of natural abilities. You are no exception.

But wait a minute, how exactly do you discover your talents? There are numerous ways to discover your natural abilities or confirm what they are. Here are some questions to get you started:

- What do you naturally excel in?
- What things come easy to you?
- What subjects did you excel in at school?
- What activities have you always found very easy?



- What have you always loved to do?

Your answers to these questions lead you along the path of discovering what your talents are. And as you begin to discover your talents, you are well on the path to discovering your area of core strength and excellence. Additionally, I recommend that you ask trusted friends or colleagues what they perceive your natural talents to be. This will help you get a more objective view of what your abilities are or are not.*

Needless to say, just because you have a natural aptitude for something doesn't mean you have arrived. Your sweetspot still needs developing.

Developing and *applying* your talents is imperative if you are going to excel. It requires taking risks. You must step out, try new things, or take a chance by doing something you might fail at - at first. But if you do not take risks - emotionally and physically - you will never grow.*

It's also important to note that although they are 'natural' abilities, just like muscles, your talents can atrophy if not used. Once you've discovered your talents, the way to achieve growth is to invest and develop them. The law of cause and effect is applicable here. I'm reminded of what Kevin Costner said in the movie *Field of Dreams*, "If you build it they will come". When it comes to your talents, *if you invest them they will grow*. The only way for your talents **not** to grow is to not invest them.*

You can't control how much talent you are born with or have in a specific area, but you can control the effort that you put into investing and developing the talent you do have.*

When you uncover your talents, armed with your first right tool for the job, you are well on your way to excelling in what you do.

Next time we'll look at the second tool for the job. See you then!

Remember, whatever vocation you choose in life, you will be most successful if it is built around your greatest natural abilities.

*This article includes excerpts taken from the Motivatem Booklet "8 Steps to Discover Your Sphere of Excellence".

To Your True Potential,

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