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July 2010

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COOR

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to the third edition of Core. The last few months have been a frenzy of activities as you will notice on reading this issue.

Since our last issue, Group Vision and Mission posters have been placed at all companies, to remind us of our goals and to emphasize the core values we need to have, to get there. The editorial team felt that we should highlight one of our values in every issue of Core to give a better insight to all and decided to focus on teamwork for this one.

Teamwork is crucial whether in our workplace or personal lives. We all know the importance and benefits but how often are we able to let go of our individual needs and put a shared belief and goal to the forefront? It's not meant to be just about me... it's meant to be for the betterment of all. In our work environment, we are faced with teamwork challenges not only within our own individual organization but with our group companies as well. We all need to collectively work together towards our goals and appreciate that "None of us is as good as all of us." With this common aim, the results will be needless to say fruitful for all.

Prital Patel

"Individually, we are one drop. Together, we are an ocean."

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For any feedback on Core or if you want to join our Editorial team, drop your comments & suggestions in your company's suggestion box or e-mail us on core@rgoc.org

a CreativeEdge design

WELCOME

A BIT OF HISTORY

As we continue down memory lane, next in line after Rambhai & Co. and Ramco Hardware was Juma Hardware Store Ltd.

Juma Hardware was an existing business situated on Race – Course Road which was invested in, in 1986. Subsequently a second branch was opened in Gikomba which is strategically located next to Machakos bus station. With the increase of activity and growth in this area, the initial branch closed down and the Gikomba shop continued its operations.

What is remarkable is, that since then, the team at Juma have expanded to four outlets and a showroom within the same vicinity. Gikomba being a busy commercial area, to run such a business especially with the extensive competition faced in hardware, one literally has to be on their toes. The Juma team has taken to this challenge and proven successful.

What is also remarkable is when it comes to any Group activities, the Juma team are always there by the dozen to participate or to offer moral support – whether it is a cricket tournament or any other Ramco Group event. The comradeship shown is unique and one that we must emulate and applaud as well.

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USISAHAU!



OUR MISSION: To excel in every sector we are in

OUR VISION: To be a World Class conglomerate

OUR CORE VALUES

Integrity

We conduct ourselves and our business with dignity, honesty and accountability.

Energetic

We strive to be dynamic, passionate and focused.

Customer Focused

We believe in building long term relationships with our clients by understanding their needs and providing timely and professional service.

Equitable

We are an equal opportunity employer and are committed to rewarding our team based on measured performance. We are committed to staff development and ensuring that they have suitable resources to perform at their best.

Innovative

We strive to be leaders in our industry for new technology and solutions.

Teamwork

We believe that
working together with
our customers, colleagues
and suppliers will result in
success for all



MILK TANKERS TO RWANDA

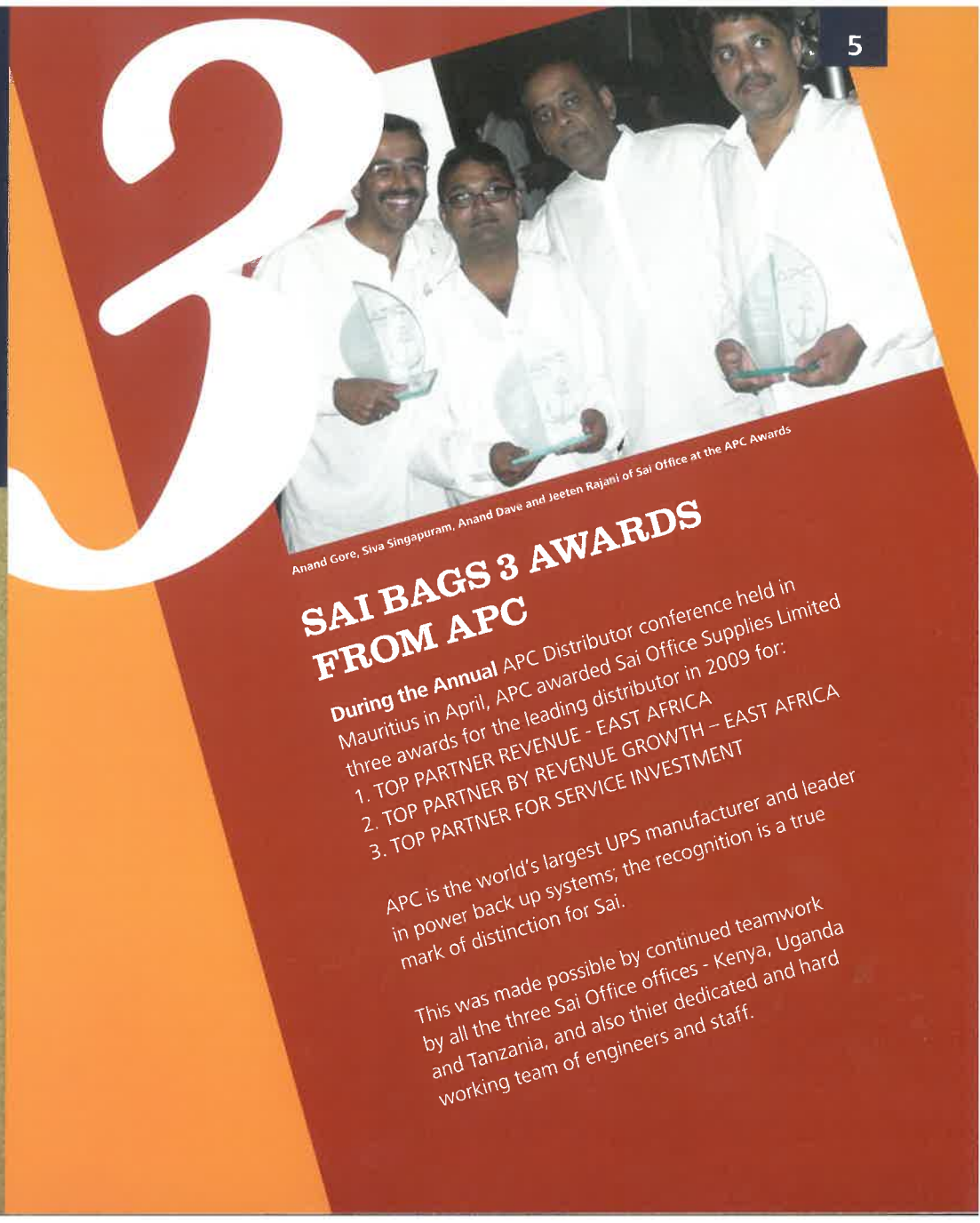
ASL Heavy Fabrication recently supplied three milk trucks to Inyange Industries of Rwanda; the Rwandese President H.E. Paul Kagame at a later visit to the factory was impressed by the quality and workmanship of the tanks.

ASL PACKAGING TAKES ON KAIZEN

With over 10 years of experience, ASL Packaging Division is gearing towards embracing working techniques that give a practical approach to problem solving with implementation of the 'KAIZEN approach'.

"KAIZEN" means 'constant improvement' in Japanese, and captures the spirit of always aiming higher and doing better than what we do at present. It is marked by a 'down-up' approach (where every employee is a solution provider) as opposed to the traditional 'top-down' approach, where all decisions are made by management.

The entire ASL Packaging team is not only eager but are already channeling their energies and expertise to achieve the highest and the best of this management tool that is recognized and embraced by some of the most respectable organizations around the world.



Anand Gore, Siva Singapuram, Anand Dave and Jeeten Rajani of Sai Office at the APC Awards

SAI BAGS 3 AWARDS FROM APC

During the Annual APC Distributor conference held in Mauritius in April, APC awarded Sai Office Supplies Limited three awards for the leading distributor in 2009 for:

1. TOP PARTNER REVENUE - EAST AFRICA
2. TOP PARTNER BY REVENUE GROWTH - EAST AFRICA
3. TOP PARTNER FOR SERVICE INVESTMENT

APC is the world's largest UPS manufacturer and leader in power back up systems; the recognition is a true mark of distinction for Sai.

This was made possible by continued teamwork by all the three Sai Office offices - Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania, and also their dedicated and hard working team of engineers and staff.

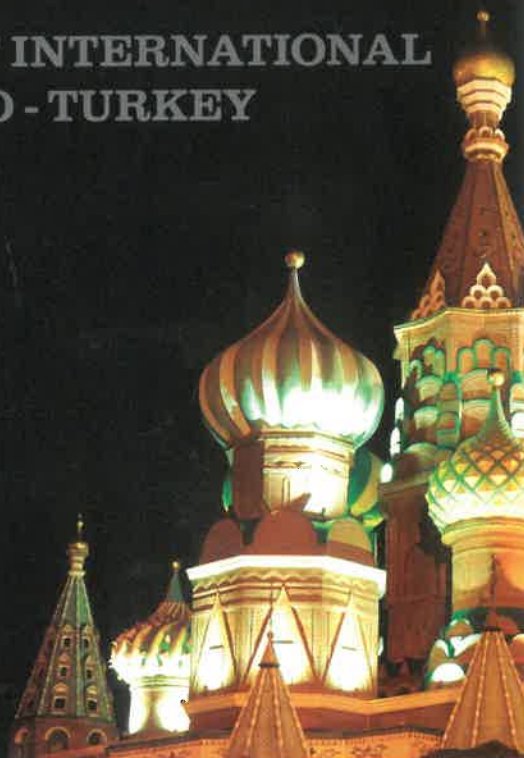


Seema Raval (2nd left) at the ASTA Travel Expo, Istanbul

TRAVELSHOPPE AT INTERNATIONAL DESTINATION EXPO - TURKEY

As part of the American Society of Travel Agents, Travelshoppe was exhibiting in Istanbul, Turkey. Held in April, the six day event was a meeting point for ASTA, the world's largest association of Travel Professionals.

Travelshoppe used the opportunity to promote tourism in Kenya, and the stand was one of the busiest, drawing plenty of people who showed an interest in visiting and holidaying in Kenya.



POLYTHENE SET FOR A SECOND CI PRINT MACHINE

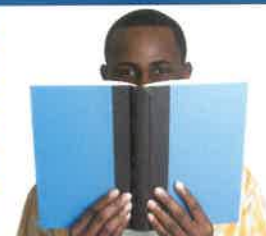
Having succeeded in printing high quality packaging with the installation of the CI-8 Colour flexo printing machine in 2008, the first of its kind in Kenya; Polythene Industries is now set for a second CI machine to keep up with the demand especially for the food and horticultural industries.



RAMCO GROUP LAUNCHES EDUCATION FUND



Ramco Group is awarding 10 secondary school scholarships.



Who can apply:

- All staff of Ramco Group of companies on behalf of their children.

Criteria:

- Scholarships will be awarded as per criteria of evaluation in the application form.

WHAT'S NEW AT CREATIVE EDGE

CORPORATE PUBLISHING

With the increase in demand for companies to produce their own in-house staff publications and client newsletters, Creative Edge is now geared up with a Corporate Publishing Department. The department is headed by Bella Nyamamu, an experienced publishing industry professional.

Along with design and print services, Creative will also provide content, event coverage and photography.



SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

Through strategy, engagement and sparking conversations, Creative can now ensure the maximization of their client's online presence by devising strategies that fuse content with technology and helping brands make deeper connections.

A key part of this strategy will be creating a social identity that people will love to 'like' on platforms such as Facebook, Linked In, You Tube, Twitter and Flickr. Creative will provide the tools to create demonstrable ROI for marketing spend as all activities are 100% measurable.



OTL APPOINTED DISTRIBUTOR FOR ROWE GERMANY

ROWE Germany, a leading maker of document processing equipment, has appointed Office Technologies Limited as their authorized distributor for East Africa.

ROWE has been a synonym for quality and innovation for more than 50 years. The company develops and produces all its products in-house, including A0 document processing for Print, Copy and Scanning.

As a distributor for ROWE products, OTL enters into an emerging market that offers rich opportunities for expanding sales and growing market share.





HELLO NANYUKI

Travelshoppe has opened a branch office in Nanyuki in March at the Cape Chestnut and will offer all travel related services, making it the first travel agent in Nanyuki.

The office-opening was marked by a special clients' get-together, hosted by Travelshoppe and British Airways. Later in April, Travelshoppe held a special cocktail evening at the Nanyuki Sports Club in partnership with Safarilink. Both events were well received and graced by an appreciative audience.



RAMCO PRINTING & SAI AT OSHWAL EXPO

On May 21st - 23rd, Sai Office and Ramco Printing Works participated in the Oshwal's "Creating Opportunities" Expo 2010 at the Oshwal Centre, Westlands. The Minister of Justice, National Cohesion & Constitutional Affairs in Kenya, Hon. Mutula Kilonzo opened the exhibition and visited both stands.



Chirag Patel and Elvis Murimi of Sai Office with Hon. Mutula Kilonzo at the Sai-Ramco stand at the Oshwal Expo

MARKET POWER PUTTING THE GROUP'S VALUES TO PRACTICE



DELIVERY

With Nairobi's traffic getting worse, Marketpower have decided to take advantage of this problem by increasing their fleet of motorbikes to deliver and collect work from customers. Marketpower hope to increase customer loyalty by minimizing their time in traffic.

CUSTOMER FOCUS

Marketpower has also started a prepress night shift at Ramco Printing to deliver even better customer service to the Ramco customers. As Prepress Manager Joe Muchiri says "As Ramco grows, we need to grow with them to deliver even better service".

GROWTH

Marketpower recently won two large contracts of note – all the hotel rooms in the new Sankara Hotel will have Marketpower prints hanging on their walls; they were also awarded the contract to brand 50 Barclays mini buses.

INNOVATION

In order to give Marketpower customers a competitive advantage, we have recently launched an oversized display stand; for being different is what helps Marketpower customers to get noticed.



ASL TRADING PARKLANDS BRANCH OPENING SOON!

ASL Trading Division will soon be opening a showroom at Securex Place, Parklands Road in September 2010.

The showroom will provide customers access to products that includes ceramic tiles, paint, sanitary ware and electricals.



ARE YOU USING THE SUGGESTION BOX?

Give ideas on how to improve your workplace and customer service. We need your contributions – be part of the team!

SUCCEEDING THROUGH TEAMWORK.

BY KIPKEMBOI ALLAN

Significant to creating a lucid team is building trust among team members. This is much more difficult on a distributed team. Unable to rely on repeated, frequent face-to-face communication, distributed teams need to take other measures to build trust. What also helps is early pressure for the team to produce working mechanism at the long run, even the earliest ones.

Unfortunately, many a time we schedule too much time for team building exercises and discussions too early. Guiding these dissimilar teams to success requires some counter intuitive running practices. In particular, team influential should focus on tasks at the early stages, rather than on interpersonal interaction, and then switch to relationship building when the time is right. Though this suggests that the early focus should be on tasks, it does not mean to suggest that product owners should be assigning tasks to developers. Rather, it means that this cream of the crop should emphasize the need for the team to make verifiable progress even in the early sprints.

The problem with an early emphasis on relationship building is that it encourages less-than-ideal subgroups to form. Any large group will inevitably rip into subgroups.

If these subgroups are allowed to form too early they will form around surface-level attributes— Simply put, in a team's early going, the more people interact with one another, the more likely they are to make snap judgments and to emphasize their differences.

What a team should do is defer relationship building until members have learned more significant things about each other, such as specific skills, competencies, approaches to work, and so on. This is done through early emphasis on progress rather than relationship building. The subgroups that form at that time will be based on the mutual need to work together to develop the product. To develop a particular user story from the product backlog, you and I need to work together. In doing so we learn each other's skills and specific competencies. Teams with subgroups formed around compatible skills, attitudes, approaches to work, and so on are less likely to lead to a later breakdown in trust than subgroups formed on exterior attributes.

After a team has worked together for a few sprints, shift the emphasis toward relationship building by incorporating more social activities and shared downtime into the sprints. A team needs to have a

sufficient amount of shared experience before social activities and relationship building can be useful. But when that has been achieved, instilling confidence in the team and creating opportunities to socialize at that point helps the development of new abilities and allows the team to grow. As a team leader, good Scrum Master will continually nudge a team toward adopting improved technical practices that help them learn how to overlap their work. If a team doesn't learn effective ways to do this, team members may settle on a less desirable approach: activity – specific sprints.

A specific function sprint is as bad a practice as it would be an abbreviation. In this approach, the team decides to use one sprint for analysis and design, a second sprint for coding, and a third for testing. The team is split in thirds, with the analysts working one sprint ahead of the programmers and the testers working one sprint behind them. This can be a very riveting approach. Not only does it ostensibly solve the problem of how to overlap work but it also allows each kind of specialist to work mostly with others of their own kind, which many may prefer until they become used to the close collaboration of a Scrum team.

What's your **TEAM** personality?

Every team has different members, and those members all have different personalities. Knowing which ones are present in your team makes the task of working together much easier. Professionally, psychologists have identified four major personality types. Where do you fit in?

Hares: These are the risk takers. Even before they've understood the problem, they've jumped into it. Left alone, hares would produce chaos, but in a team, they are often the ones with big ideas.

Tortoises: If they seem to take their time, it's because they do. But they have one guarantee: they'll get the job done whatever happens. These conservative types have one rule, "Experience counts!"

Squirrels: These are the experts. Detail is their obsession and they thrive best in areas where accuracy and facts are important. They work well with hares, especially in creative tasks.

Owls: These are the planners and managers. They carefully consider the situation before giving any solution -- once a clear solution is laid out, they commit themselves to it and make sure it's done till the end.

Most people will find that they have more than one tendency, and it's a normal thing. What is important is for everyone to contribute their strengths and commit to seeing the job done!

40

TOP 40 WOMEN
UNDER



We would like to extend our highest congratulations to Prital Patel, Managing Director of Creative Edge and Editor of "Core" for being recognised as one of Kenya's Top 40 women under 40.

The New Toshiba e-Series: Seamless Document Management

Toshiba recently introduced the new intelligent e-STUDIO 5520C/6520C/6530C series. This full color series features Toshiba's 3rd generation e-BRIDGE System, which are more powerful, reliable, secure and integration-ready.

With the new e-STUDIO, Toshiba has developed the perfect high demand market solution, without compromising colour quality. With a remarkable speed of 65 pages per minute in Full Colour and up to 75 pages per minute in Black-and-White, this series can easily produce long-run prints.

All these allow outstanding Colour quality for in-house production, where handouts, brochures, leaflets or posters, will look appealing to any target market.



GOOD ATTITUDE

For one to really have any meaningful change you have to change your attitude. A positive attitude is the starting point of required change. ASL Packaging gives us their insight.

What is a Good Attitude?

Given the choice of dealing with a positive, upbeat person with a "can-do" attitude or dealing with a disgruntled, bored, uninterested person, which would you choose?

Most people prefer to be around people with a positive attitude. So developing a good attitude can help you get more out of your work experience, and can benefit you in all areas of life:

- It makes you feel better.
- You can brighten other people's day.
- People want to be around those who have a good attitude.
- Employers want to employ people with a good attitude.
- Customers prefer to deal with people with a good attitude.

How can I show a good attitude in the workplace?

- Be enthusiastic and willing. Think about how your work will benefit others, this can help you to find job satisfaction even in menial tasks.
- Think about lessons learned, even if something goes wrong, or the placement isn't what you expected you can still learn something from the experience.
- Focus on the positive aspects of your work experience, nice people, nice workplace, easy journey to work, opportunity to learn etc.
- If you're bored, try not to show it. Most jobs have some aspects that aren't as fun as others.
- Listen carefully to what you're being told and ask if you don't understand something.
- Some workplaces are quite formal while others are more relaxed, so use how other people behave as a guide.
- Be friendly and smile! – Smiling can actually make you happier!

WHATEVER YOU THINK THE OPPOSITE

PAUL ARDEN, author of the
world's bestselling book 

IT'S BETTER
TO REGRET
WHAT YOU
HAVE DONE
THAN WHAT
YOU HAVEN'T.

In this book, Paul Arden's main message is "It's better to regret what you have done than what you haven't". He uses a very witty style of writing to encourage the reader to take chances, experiment and not to let their dreams and ideas just remain as what they are "dreams and ideas".

The book is divided into different sections that include:

"It's better to regret what you have done than what you haven't"

"Over the top"

"Reaching for the stars"

"There is no right point of view"

These are just but a few of the topics that are talked in this book.

The author is advocating for people to move away from their comfort zone and start doing those things that you may think about but reason that they may never work or it is risky to go that direction. He says that doing opposite of what everyone else is doing (business) may lead you to the triumphant path of success that most successful people have taken. He justifies this argument by giving an example of how fashion trends start or how Saatchi and Saatchi began. He also gives an example of what he has done by illustrating how he took up a great opportunity.

"When a client asked how much it would cost to get permission to photograph the Eiffel Tower

for use in an advertisement, the bureaucrats representing the City of Paris said £10,000. The client didn't think that was such a good idea any more. So they didn't use it. I wanted it for this book, but I don't think £10,000 is such a good idea either. So I didn't ask."

Whatever You Think, Think The Opposite is a must read for anyone who is thinking of finding new ways of being above average and willing to question the norm even if it means fail a few times to succeed.

This book is a must read!



WE DREW THE GREENLINE!

In the spirit of conserving the environment, Ramco Group recently participated in the Nairobi Greenline Project.

The Project, launched by the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) and the Kenya Association of Manufacturers (KAM), intends to create the "Nairobi Greenline" by planting and growing a 30-kilometre long, 50-metre wide forest of indigenous trees from the Cheetah Gate in Athi-River all the way to the Carnivore in an effort to protect the park from any land grabbers or polluters.

As the print media partner, Ramco Printing printed the marketing material in kind to show support for this worthy cause.

The Greenline was drawn at the Nairobi National Park on 3rd June where a 'human chain' was formed by people holding hands to show their support for the initiative.



GIVING VISION

RAMCO GROUP DONATES TO LIONS EYE HOSPITAL

With the aim of helping those with eye problems, Ramco Group donated Ksh 650,000 to The Lions Eye Hospital to sponsor patients for cataract operations at the hospital. The patients were selected from various eye camps that the Lions Eye Hospital held countrywide.

The Ramco Group team were shown the hospital facilities and met the patients who were operated on. The facilities at the hospital were impressive with good staff, modern equipment and well maintained facilities.



Gulam Hussein, Alice Mutitu, C.R. Patel, K.R. Patel and Bharat Patel of Ramco Group presenting a cheque to Dr S.P. Amin (4th left) of Lions Eye Hospital

BEING ETHICAL

BY BIJAL HARIA

People are constantly bombarded by messages and it is difficult to persuade them towards a particular design if the message is not clear. One big difference between the 21st century generations compared to previous ones is that we are well tuned to communication and media avenues. And these days, this has become of increasing value due to increased inter-connections via social media and the net. Current business models are also moving to more sustainable and ethical practices. Therefore money is what really counts. In line with this, it is important for designers to understand how influential their work really is and how they can use it to promote positive ideals to society. Ethically correct advertising can get businesses and ultimately designers, the attention they require from their selected audiences.

Ethics are the moral principles and values that govern the actions and decisions of an individual or group. We learn our ethical framework from our parents, schools and the community we live in and these are developed through individual life experiences.

Generally, strong capitalist business models have had people looking to their 'profits' first. This model largely seems entirely reasonable as everyone has his or her own ideas and

concepts and everyone wishes to be ahead of the rest. However, current and future business models especially, after the recent global recession, are realizing that ethical positions that require you to think beyond yourself may be the new business sense.

Take for example advertisements done by United Colours of Benetton. The company is successfully famous for its controversial adverts that try to address certain issues like racism. However, they drew controversy by taking a stand against the death penalty in their advertisements. After assessing the impact of the advertisements, they found that in the USA they were not popular. Their intended message might have been selling a brand that tests the edge of time, but it certainly drew mixed feelings, especially with the families affected by the actions of these convicts.

Although the example is somewhat extreme, it goes to show the extent of responsibility that designers and businesses need to take to ensure some sense of ethics is reflected in all of their collateral.

One big difference between lives in the 21st century compared to previous generations is that we are a media society.



WHERE'S YOUR NYADHI?

7 SIMPLE RULES FOR PROFESSIONAL ETIQUETTE

Etiquette can be explained as "The Art of Speaking, without saying a word". Etiquette, or the lack of it, speaks volumes about your personality, attitude and approach. It refers to how a person is expected to behave and carry themselves, both privately and in public.

Work with these seven simple rules to guide your practice of etiquette:

1. Etiquette starts with consideration of others; treat them well and they'll treat you well in return.
2. Be punctual, always. If this is not possible, call in advance and give notice of your delay and the reason.
3. Always introduce yourself clearly and with confidence. It sets the pace for a productive meeting or relationship. If you are the leader, introduce all those who are with you.
4. When given a business card, make sure you read the person's name and details. It shows concern and interest, and is a good way to remember who they are.
5. If the setting is formal, always take time to prepare before going into the meeting. It shows that you take the meeting and your other attendees seriously. During any meeting, minimise interruptions and avoid taking calls or sending messages.
6. Social settings are where etiquette really comes to life. In any social setting, always try to be hospitable to everyone in attendance, whether or not you are the host. If at a corporate dinner or cocktail, resist the temptation to over-eat or over-drink.
7. Practice etiquette in private; this will create a personal sense of purpose, awareness and confidence.



**MEET
THE GROUP
HUMAN
RESOURCE
MANAGER
ALICE MUTITU**

“

My role is to ensure that the employees are professionally recruited, rewarded and trained to work together as a team”

Please give a brief background of your experience.

I started my career as a credit officer, working for a bank. From there, I moved into manufacturing, agro-processing to be specific in an HR and Administration role. It involved putting up the management structures and operational procedures. This was my first HR job, and everything grew from there – including what I do now.

As the Group HR manager, what is your role? My role is to ensure that the employees are professionally recruited, rewarded and trained to work as individuals and as part of a team. All this is done with an objective of ensuring both company and individual goals are profitably achieved. Putting together policies and structures, and communicating what the essence of HR is to the team.

6 months ago, you started as the first Head of HR for the Ramco Group; has it been easy? It has actually been a challenge that I am enjoying.

Which innovations and changes will the group expect to see soon?

Clear reporting structures, rewarding people for their performance, standard operating procedures, adherence to labour laws, tapping synergy of group companies, having all companies become ISO certified, creating an accepted code of ethics in all areas of operations and having CSR done

Teamwork is critical for the success of any organisation. How would you advice co-workers who are seeking to establish strong teams? What would they need to do? People need to meet; managers should appreciate staff in public, but caution them in private; suggestion box for employees is a platform for airing views; recognize outstanding achievements through rewards and appraisals. Something else to consider is regular meetings where everyone's idea is taken into consideration.

Any memorable moments? The launch of the Ramco Printing vision was special. As well as bringing together the Ramco Printing teams from both Dunga Road and Mombasa Road locations.

So far you have told us about your professional life. What do you do in your free time? Socially, I am involved in a lot of CSR work and I currently sponsor a child's education. I also do motivational speaking and mentoring professionals.

“

My passion is to see people grow”



GROOMING TIPS

The impression that you create plays an important role. Personal grooming is equally important for men as it is for women.

The primary thing is to have a clean look. These are a few basic steps of your grooming.

- You need to dress appropriately. The typical corporate look tends to be conservative and professional.
- Your hairstyle must also be simple and neat.
- Keep shoes neat and polished and wear appropriate shoes.
- Have your nails neatly manicured. For women, avoid wearing showy nail colors that are too bright or catchy.
- Wear deodorant, always.
- Wear a perfume or cologne but do not spill the whole bottle over you. Too much may be annoying to the people around you.
- Makeup should be simple and light for formal workplaces.
- For jewellery, try to keep it simple; avoid wearing too much of it. Jewellery that is noisy and too large tends to annoy people around a serious discussion.
- Keep a pack of mints close by for fresh breath.

LEADING CHANGE

The quest for change continues as there are now "Guiding teams" within each company. Formed by the staff themselves, these teams are there to lead change from within. The Change Agents have set up these teams and we should look forward to seeing what new initiatives are in store for us. Areas that have been identified include customer service, team work and motivation to name a few.



A clean up activity organised by Change Agents at Eden Square

What do you think?

Which Kenyan football club did Joe Kadenge play for?

A prize will be awarded to the first person who will send us the correct answer through their company's suggestion box or e-mail us at core@rgoc.org



Answer to the Last Quiz:

Q: How many lakes are there in Kenya?

Ans: 11

The winner was Rina Gadhia of TravelShoppe. She was awarded two movie tickets.



OTL staff members with Toshiba trainers from South Africa at a recently held Toshiba High End Colour Multifunction Product workshop



It's all smiles for Caleb Shikanda of MarketPower (2nd right) and "Wernono" when they received Group of The Year award at the Groove Awards 2010

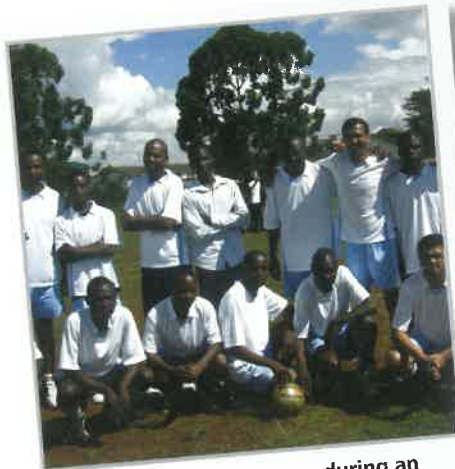


Derek Steel (seated top right) of MarketPower with his Rhino Charge team

Captured Moments



Winner of the last Core quiz, Rina Gadhia (left) being awarded movie tickets by Seema Raval



The Sai football team during an inter-company friendly football match at the Impala Grounds



Ramco Printing staff at the Launch of the Company's Vision.

