



Business Ethics Department Launches Gift, Conflict of Interest Portal to Deepen Transparency

A special interview with the Head, Business Ethics Department, Murjanatu Gamawa, where she gave insights on what the Department is doing to nurture the culture of business ethics and good governance in NNPC Limited. - Pg. 2



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How did Business Ethics Department come about and what is setup to achieve?

After the transition, the Business Ethics Department was created in the Governance, Risk and Compliance to support the business in eliminating, or reducing to the barest minimum, risks associated with corruption in the workplace.

The department has worked tirelessly to promote clear and consistent set of guidelines aimed at modelling the day-to-day activities of all employees in order to meet the expectations of the company in line with our internal policies as well as national and international laws.

It is important to note that it is not just enough to put in place controls to fight corruption, efforts must also be made to model the behaviour and actions of all staff to safeguard the reputation of the company.

What is your department doing to help enlighten staff on what is expected of them?

We have conducted general and targeted knowledge sharing sessions to inform staff the new competitive landscape as well as the need to appreciate and be in compliance with NNPC Employee Code of Conduct and related policies.

We have worked closely with Corporate Communication and IT to develop contents related to promoting the work of Business Ethics which were shared through the digital signages and snapcoms.

In addition to all of that, we are also working with IT on a Roadshow that is aimed at galvanising momentum around promoting adherence to ethical conduct so that staff are fully informed as ignorance is not an excuse for violation.

To take these initiatives to the next level, we have already approached SMT for leadership buy-in and commitment. Part of our strategy is to have the GCEO send quarterly podcasts on importance of Ethical Conducts for the Company. This will no doubt highlight the importance of adherence to business ethics in our company.

Going forward, we have also designed an e-learning platform, just like the PIA Immersion Program, and we are working closely with Talent Management Department (TMD) to devise a strategy in making it compulsory for all staff to undergo the training. This will also come with an assessment that will help the company monitor and gauge employees' understanding of the company's business ethics principles.

What steps has NNPC Ltd taken to combat corruption, and can you discuss any progress made as a result of these efforts?

A lot of work and resources have gone into the development of the Code of Conduct Policy as well as the Due Diligence Policy, Money Laundering Policy and Anti-Bribery and Corruption (ABC) framework.

In addition, we are doing a lot of campaigns to encourage staff to come forward, if there are issues of corruption or ethical breaches, through the Whistleblowing and e-mailing platforms. Of course, people will be afraid to

open up, unless they are incentivised. In this regard, we are putting safeguards in place to ensure proper protection of whistleblower in addition to ensuring that the identity of whistleblower is well protected at all costs.

We have often emphasized that the identity of every whistleblower is safe with the Department and under no circumstance, whatsoever will the identity of any person be compromised for whistleblowing. We understand that this will take time, so we will continue building the much-needed trust and confidence to encourage people to come forward at all times.

It is safe to also mention that we are working assiduously to upgrade the Whistleblowing platform to world class standard. This entails working closely with, IT and the CSS Change Management Team to upgrade the whistle blowing portal as well as work with Corporate Communication to design the relevant information to be shared on the collaborations platforms, including all the digital signages across the company.

How has the Code of Conduct Policy and the Business Ethics Survey helped in pushing employee's adherence to good governance and best ethical practices?

Our major contributions in the fight against corruption in NNPC Limited is the development of a Code of Conduct policy, which has, in no uncertain terms, set the tone for what constitutes a breach, expectations on employees and so on. We are also working with HCM in developing a consequence management register so that employees will clearly understand what constitutes an ethical breach in the company as per the provisions of the NNPC Employee Code of Conduct.

To encourage feedback from staff, we launched a compulsory Ethics Audit through an online Survey with the aim of capturing the most prevalent ethical issues that require immediate attention of the management. This has solicited tremendous responses that have provided us with compelling insights into the areas that need of improvement, which will help us in addressing ethical issues affecting the company. The findings of the Audit Survey have contributed in shaping our strategy in the Business Ethics Department.

What are you doing to ensure ethical practices within NNPC Ltd's supply chain system, particularly with contractors and suppliers?

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In the coming year, we are looking to start Integrity Due Diligence on our counter parties with a view to



Murjanatu Gamawa

checking if they have been involved in bribery, corruption, terrorism financing or any financial scandal that will have implications for the company.

GRC carried out a lot of reviews in 2021 and has provided strategic recommendations on how to improve Transparency, Accountability, and Performance Excellence within the company. One of the recommendations we made to Supply Chain Management is to automate their procurement process to ensure transparency and accountability.

We were, however, aware that there were discussions already within supply chain on the need to completely automate their processes, including the Procure-to-Pay process.

Currently, we are aware there is tremendous progress on the ARIBA Project, which is all encompassing in automating NNPC Ltd's business processes. Supply Chain is working to integrate E-tender, which is automating Procure-to-Pay. This is aimed at providing transparency and visibility across the procurement process of the company. This is a major milestone for the company.

Your Department has just launched the 'Gift and Conflict of Interest's Portal. How will the portal help in eliminating conflicts of interest before they occur?

Gift and Conflict of Interest portal will afford staff the opportunity of playing safe by declaring gifts within the threshold set by the company. It has been realised that most corruption and bribery cases stem from staff collecting gifts that may somehow metamorphose into serious acts of Conflict of Interest.

The launch has no doubt raised awareness amongst staff to be wary of gifts, even if they fall within the approved threshold of N100,000.



The portal also will provide an opportunity for employees to declare any potential conflict of interest (COI) so that safeguards can be put in place to mitigate any risk that may have implication for the company before it crystallizes.

Also, it is expected that every staff will log on to the portal at the beginning of every year to declare their conflict of interest. It does not matter if employees do not have any conflict of interest, everyone is expected to log on to the portal to declare whether or not they have a COI.

What message do you have for staff on the need to adhere to the highest ethical standards?

My message to colleagues is that, no matter the odds, let us always try to stay on the side of the law and build a company of global excellence. We all have a responsibility to ensure that NNPC Ltd outlive all of us.

Consequences of Neglecting HSE Procedures

– The Story of Adonye By Leo Aniuche

Sometimes we feel there are too many HSE requirements to contend with in our daily activities. Skipping a routine inspection of fire equipment or walking under suspended load in a construction site might seem normal to us, but it can have grave consequences. This article tries to demonstrate some costs of neglecting HSE processes with this brief story of Adonye.

Adonye was hard-working, though he abhorred HSE procedures. As a Project Manager, he continued to have squabbles with his team due to his brazen violation of HSE processes. Efforts to persuade Adonye to eschew this negative attitude to safety fell on deaf ears.

Regrettably, Adonye, like the proverbial stubborn fly, followed the corpse to the grave. One day, he was declared missing when he was not seen at site at the close of work. The company commenced detailed investigation immediately.

One startling disclosure from investigation report was how a Payloader operator inadvertently loaded Adonye with de-grubbed material into the dump truck, and the truck subsequently dumped him at the dump site. The report showed that Adonye compelled his workers to work at late hours even when there was no adequate illumination.

Another revelation from the investigation was a conversation Eric (Adonye's assistant) had with Adonye a day before on Adonye's non-adherence to HSE processes. **Below is the extracted WhatsApp conversation between them:**

Eric: Good evening, Sir.

Adonye: Is there any problem?

Eric: No problem, Sir. I just wanted to have a discussion with you regarding some HSE procedures we are forced to ignore. I am afraid

our work may be suspended by HSE Department. Our team members are worried about their safety.

Adonye: Eric, Listen now! I have been working for the past two decades, I'm not new in this field. Nobody will close my site. Those HSE observations and documentations are distractions to me. Those guys deliberately delay our work, we have target we must meet.

Eric: The HSE guys are helpful to us, they also carry out periodic surveillance to ensure zero harm, and not to slow us down.

Adonye: That is your problem. I have made my point clear. Mobilize the Heavy-Duty Vehicles (HDV) and ensure the removal of the topsoil is completed tomorrow. The de-grubbed materials should be dumped at site 2 not site 1.

Eric: Ok Sir, we will discuss more tomorrow. My regards.

The investigation also revealed accident that happened in Adonye's previous company. According to the report, a worker fell from height while having phone conversation with Adonye during scaffolding job. During the fall, one of the metal scaffolding accessories fell, hit an object, flew like a projectile, and landed on a passerby, 5 meters away from the barricaded area. Adonye should not have encouraged use of mobile phone on platform of about 20 meters high.

The accident resulted in litigation, the company and Adonye were indicted, and the company lost reputation, huge financial and materials resources. The company never survived this ugly development; members of staff including Adonye were sacked.

If we fail to comply with HSE processes, our business may face increased risk of personnel ill health and injury, decrease in productivity, continual increase in staff turnover, and avoidable fatality.



The Need to Maintain Work-Life Balance

By: Ayobami Abdullahi

In an era defined by constant connectivity and demanding work schedules, the pursuit of work-life balance has become a modern-day challenge. Striking the right equilibrium between professional commitments and personal well-being is not only an aspiration but a necessity. As we delve into the depths of this issue, we uncover the profound impact that work-life balance has on our physical and mental health.

The Toll of Overwork

The 21st century's relentless work culture, often characterized by long hours and high stress, takes a toll on individuals' health. Prolonged periods of overwork can lead to burnout, increased risk of heart disease, and mental health issues such as anxiety and depression. The imbalance between work and personal life exacerbates these concerns, creating a pressing need for change.

The Quest for Balance

Despite the challenges, more individuals are actively seeking work-life balance. They're reevaluating their priorities, embracing remote work, and advocating for flexible schedules. Employers are also realizing the importance of fostering a healthy work environment to boost employee satisfaction and retention.

Physical Well-Being

Achieving work-life balance is not just about reducing stress; it also significantly impacts our physical health. Engaging in regular exercise and maintaining a balanced diet are more feasible when there's time and energy outside of the office. This, in turn, leads to a healthier, more active lifestyle.

Mental Health Matters

Our mental well-being is intrinsically linked to our work-life balance. Finding time for relaxation and pursuing personal interests reduces the risk of burnout and supports positive mental health. Employees who prioritize mental wellness report higher job satisfaction and productivity.

Success Stories

In this journey toward balance, stories of individuals who've successfully achieved harmony between their personal and professional lives inspire us. These real-life examples demonstrate that it's possible to have a thriving career while nurturing one's health and happiness.

The Road Ahead

As society continues to evolve, the importance of work-life balance and its impact on health is increasingly recognized. The road ahead includes a collective effort to redefine the boundaries of work and personal life, adopting policies that support well-being, and embracing the idea that a healthy, balanced life is not only attainable but essential for the future.

In conclusion, work-life balance should not be a mere aspiration for NNPC Ltd. but a fundamental component of a healthy and fulfilling life. Recognizing its significance and making the necessary adjustments can lead to better physical and mental health, ultimately fostering a happier and more productive society.

“Prolonged periods of overwork can lead to burnout, increased risk of heart disease...”

For Those Who Hug The Fence

By Magnus Nkwocha

The fence has always been a comfort zone. On several issues, many people love to sit on the fence. In that niche there are no enemies, no conflicts, no responsibilities, and a lot of people of the same ilk to justify the attitude. But one must take responsibilities and contribute positively to the immediate society.

In the social media, there are those who deliberately delete or ignore all the messages that invade their phones daily. Not even a cursory glance. I mean, how can one explain the inability to comment in a social media platform since inception, not even birthday greetings.

There is another category who may share birthday wishes and climb back onto their beloved perch. They may again jump into the fray once their interest is at stake, especially all things money. Like the previous category they are united under that sometimes-skewed banner: Silence is Golden.

In the larger society, the fence warmers are unwilling to lead either from the front or the back. They are also laid-back followers. They always look before they jump; in a world where if you keep looking you will never jump.

For example, there is power outage in the community for weeks. The bench warmers want every community member to know that they have soundproof generators. They watch the resident association members from the high perch, getting soundbites from informants about how efforts have been made by others to resolve the problem.

They are silent in the workplace when a solution is needed for a problem. For example, a 'connected' contractor decides to

veer off from one item on the Scope of Works; they pretend not to notice and allow the long-suffering subordinate to slug it out with the contractor.

They love the fence more when it comes to voting on election days. They espouse all the ideas that can turn the country around during private conversations but decide not to vote. Nothing will change, they claim.

In their workplace Union elections, they refuse to get into the fray. They prefer to sit on the beloved fence and lash out at union executives when they fail to perform. When groups are formed for professional engagements that could be beneficial to their growth in the office, they are quick to join but revert to type. They allow the busy-body members to come up with something useful they can tap into.

If you want to know part of the reasons why progress is walking on eggshells, just take a long appraising look at the inaction of fence huggers.

They can be found everywhere. Government Agencies. Organized Private Sector. Family Units. Academia. Etc.

By denying us of your expertise and failing to get involved, you, the fence lover, have deprived us of ideas, progress, and decorum. You have rather given a free rein to the blockers to throw spanners in the works.

May you receive this kick in the butt with a positive reaction.

“
...the fence warmers are unwilling to lead either from the front or the back.”



Mental Health: A Hoax or Workplace Reality

In today's fast-paced and highly competitive world, mental health is often overlooked, and the same applies to workplaces. Employees are expected to meet strict deadlines, achieve targets, and deliver results, regardless of stress and pressure. *But does this mean mental health is a hoax, or is it a workplace reality?*

Mental health is not a hoax but a critical aspect of well-being. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), mental health is defined as a state of well-being in which an individual can cope with daily life stressors, work productively, and contribute positively to their community. The WHO reports that globally, one in four people experiences a mental health condition in their lifetime.

Mental health conditions can range from anxiety, depression, and bipolar disorder to more severe illnesses like schizophrenia. The symptoms can manifest in various ways, including feeling sad or irritable, experiencing changes in appetite or sleep patterns, and losing interest in activities one once enjoyed. In severe cases, individuals may experience hallucinations, delusions, or suicidal thoughts.

Workplaces have a significant positive and negative impact on employees' mental health. High job demand, low job control, lack of support, and poor working relationships are just a few of the factors that can contribute to poor workplace mental health. Furthermore, these factors can contribute to job-related stress, which can negatively impact

employees' physical and mental health, leading to burnout and other illnesses.

Many companies recognize the importance of mental health and support employees' well-being. These initiatives can include providing employee assistance programs (EAPs), which offer counseling and support services, implementing flexible work arrangements, and promoting work-life balance. Some companies even have mental health first-aid programs that train employees to identify and respond to mental health concerns at work.

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However, despite the growing recognition of mental health in the workplace, many stigmas still surround mental health conditions. Employees may fear disclosing their mental health status may lead to discrimination or job loss. Moreover, managers and supervisors may lack the knowledge or skills to identify and support employees struggling with mental health conditions.

It is essential to raise awareness about mental health in the workplace and break down the stigma surrounding mental health conditions. Employees should feel comfortable disclosing their mental health status and have access to the support needed. Managers and supervisors should receive training on how to identify and support employees with mental health conditions.

Furthermore, it is crucial to implement policies that promote mental health in the workplace. This can include creating a positive work environment, providing employee support and

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EnServ moves to its new office Complex... Renews commitment to better service delivery.

By Goodness W. Willie (NNPC Energy Services (EnServ))



In its bid to enhance creativity and innovation as well as comfort and job satisfaction of its staff, NNPC Energy Services (EnServ), a subsidiary of NNPC Limited and one of the leading energy servicing companies in Nigeria has moved to a new, self-owned office building located at Plot 248 Diplomatic Drive, Central Business District 900103, Abuja, Federal Capital Territory.

This move, according to the Managing Director of EnServ, Mrs Sophia Mbakwe, underscores the company's commitment to delivering a conducive work environment for its staff, while positioning the company for profitability and sustainability.

Speaking at a function to mark the relocation, Mrs. Mbakwe disclose that the decision to move into the office space even before its 100% completion was based on financial foresight.

“This move is expected to result in

substantial cost savings, eliminating the need for rent payments for an extended period. EnServ's leadership's dedication to optimizing resources effectively and channeling funds towards core objectives and initiatives is evident in this strategic choice,” she said.

The MD commended members of staff for their invaluable contributions to the relocation and the overall growth of EnServ and acknowledged that ***“while the office is still a work in progress, taking ownership of the property was crucial for the company's future as the move underscores the significance of creating a conducive work environment to achieve global brand status.”***

On the interior design and general aesthetic of the new office space, the MD said it reflects EnServ's commitment to the NNPC Ltd brand as it ***“incorporates color schemes, symbols, and logos for a visually cohesive and recognizable corporate identity.”***

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Mrs. Mbakwe emphasized the importance of this deliberate branding strategy, noting its role in creating an aesthetically pleasing workspace aligned with the company's identity.

Speaking further on the interior design of the new office, the EnServe helmsman emphasized that there was a deliberate attempt to create an office, **“where the marriage of aesthetics and functionality creates a sensory symphony for every occupant. The colours are chill, with pops of bright ones here and there, and big windows letting in lots of sunlight. The furniture is simple but fanciful, and there’s greenery around that makes everything feel calm. Cool pictures on the walls add a touch of creativity.”**

On her part, the Executive Director, Business Services, Mrs. Martina Atuchi, applauded the company's transformational leadership and emphasized the need for continuity.

“The relocation is expected to bring several benefits to EnServ, including enhanced focus and concentration, stress reduction, increased creativity and innovation, improved communication, and team building, as well as enhanced job satisfaction and retention. These advantages contribute to fostering a positive work culture in alignment with the company's global aspirations,” Mrs Atuchi said.

Mental Health: A Hoax or Workplace Reality

resources, and promoting work-life balance. Companies should also consider investing in mental health benefits, such as mental health coverage and access to mental health professionals.

To summarize, mental health is not a hoax, but rather a workplace reality that must be addressed. Poor mental health in the workplace can lead to decreased employee

productivity, increased absenteeism, and high turnover rates. Prioritizing mental health in the workplace is in both employees' and employers' best interests. We can create a workplace culture that supports employees' mental health and well-being by promoting a positive work environment, offering support and resources, and breaking down stigmas



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