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REPORT ON MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT
PROGRAMME FOR EXECUTIVE ASSISTANTS II,
[ADVANCED] DURBAN, SOUTH AFRICA
15TH NOVEMBER, - 10TH DECEMBER, 2004

PRESENTED BY:

PETER JOHN WATATHI

TO

THE CLERK
KENYA NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
NAIROBI

COURSE DURATION:
VENUE:

15TH NOV – 10TH DEC, 2004
PROTEA HOTEL, DURBAN

Clerk's Chambers
National Assembly
Parliament Buildings
NAIROBI

FEBRUARY, 2005

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am thankful to the Parliamentary Service Commission for giving me the chance to attend Executive Assistants II [Advanced] Management Course, pertaining to my career. Special thanks to Mr. Samuel W. Ndindiri, the Clerk of the National Assembly, for nominating, providing Per Diem, and time off to attend this important course. Mr. P.C. Owino Omolo, Deputy Clerk/Administrative Services and In-Charge of Training, Mr. P.G. Gichohi, Deputy Clerk, Legislative and Procedural Services, Mr. G.N. Okolla, Senior Principal Personnel Officer for encouraging words and fatherly advice they offered before our departure to Durban.

I cannot forget to thank Mr. Lucas W. Turuka, the Course Director, Chief Consultant for his immense efforts and lectures and also the Resource Persons who taught us during this Course.

INTRODUCTION

We were nine course participants nominated by the Kenya National Assembly to attend the Executive Assistants II (Advanced) Course conducted by Eastern and Southern African Management Institute (ESAMI), in Durban, South Africa. The course commenced on 15th November, to 10th December, 2004, at Protea Hotel, Durban.

The Course Participants were (55) in number drawn from 9 countries of Eastern and Southern parts of Africa as follows:-

(i)	Tanzania	16
(ii)	Kenya	14
(iii)	Zimbabwe	12
(iv)	Malawi	4
(v)	Uganda	3
(vi)	Lesotho	2
(vii)	Zambia	2
(viii)	Namibia	1 and
(ix)	Mozambique	1

TOTAL PARTICIPANTS = 55

Our Course Programme Director was Mr. Lucas W. Turuka, Chief Consultant in Human Resource Management of ESAMI. On our first day we made introductions and were issued with stationery, ready to start off on the following day.

The course started off well on 16 November, 2004. I was elected as the class Chairman. Below are the topics covered during those four weeks:-

1. Registration and Administrative Matters.
2. Learning Norms and Programme Introduction.
3. Management Functions and Processes Revisited
4. The Employment Contract and Conditions of Service.
5. Effective Supervision. – by Mr. Lucas W. Turuka
6. Banking/Payment of Fees/Accommodation Arrangements.
7. Executive Assistant Knowledge and Skills Revisited.
8. Private Study.
9. The Rights and Obligations of Employers and Managers.
10. Gender and Development – By Ms. Bongsi Gombela
11. Decision Making and Problem Solving.
12. Money, Finance and Banking. – by Mrs. Heleen Groiebellar.
13. Managing Discipline.
14. Effective Organizational Leadership; - by Mr. Batchu Bandali;
15. Managing Stress at Work. – by Dr. Ramdial.
16. Information Systems & Management.
17. HIV/aids Education.
18. Conflict Management
19. Educational Tour visits.
20. Ethics in Management and Business.
21. Crisis Management.
22. Affirmative Action.
23. Empowerment.
24. Total Quality Management.
25. Developing Individual Action Plans.

2. PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES:

The objective of the Course was:-

- (i) To improve our current level of management knowledge and skills, attitude; further improving our management, employers, the work place, colleagues and towards work performance skills.
- (ii) To understand better one's attitude in order to improve his/her work behaviour.
- (iii) Enhance one's esteem, self confidence and goal determination.
- (iv) To develop vision, i.e. 10 – 30 years to come hence understanding of one's future in the career.
- (v) Improve career prospects through enhanced capacity. (empowering)
- (vi) Improve one's work performance, knowledge skills, behaviour towards work, as an Executive Assistant. Become a better performer, more confident and ready to shoulder more responsibilities and become an asset of the Organization.
- (vii) Justification for the training is that the Executives need more time to think and plan as part of their work. Therefore, he has to delegate some work to an effective and efficient Executive Assistant.
- (viii) Corporate/Organization challenges are on the increase, requiring more attention of the Executives.
- (ix) Modern management demands team work, hence staff participation in decision making. Executive Assistants are part of the team.
- (x) Executive Assistants play a big role in implementation of plans and decisions. They, therefore, need the "technical know-how" through attending courses.

Modern Executive Assistants are, therefore, more than just secretaries.

They are:

- Executives Assistants to the bosses.
- silent members of Management.
- part of the administration process.
- Pillars of office business and operations.
- thinking plan employees.
- “eyes and ears” of the boss.
- human resource operations assistants.
- information Managers.
- Public Relations and Practical Practitioners.
- Resource Managers assistants.

The Programme content was chosen/selected, delivered in a way that enabled the above objectives to be achieved. Lots of gratitude to the Programme Director for his dedication and his unique manner of passing down the knowledge to course participants. We were thankful to all the Resource Persons who lectured us on this course and to ESAMI for the hand-outs.

We revisited the Executive Assistants knowledge and skill requirements. It became clear for one to be effective he/she must possess not only secretarial knowledge and skills, but also most importantly have, a positive attitude towards work. Work is part of life, that earns us a living. It is a privilege to be employed. Hence we must safeguard our jobs by working harder and be making a contribution of ideas when necessary.

We further discussed the organization – the place where management takes place. We looked at the preoccupation of organizations (Companies, Ministries

etc.) which produce goods and render services. We discussed their roles and contributions to society. We need organisations more than they needed us.

Later, we covered different management topics. These made us learn what Executives (or bosses) do in offices. I now greatly appreciate the importance of their position and our roles in making them succeed.

We learnt the importance of people and other resources and the role of Executive Assistants in safeguarding effectively and efficiently utilizing them.

I have no doubt that the benefits accrued from this Programme constitute something to be proud of by all participants and is a step forward towards better performance.

4. PROGRAMME METHODOLOGY

Facilitators used adult learning methods, which allow interaction between trainers and trainees. This interaction permitted us to learn from each other as well. All in all, we had lectures, discussions, case studies, and classroom exercises. We liked the exercises as they greatly helped us to acquire the necessary material. We requested that next time they also show films/videos so that one can see the reality or truth and compare with the current situation.

FIELD VISITS

The classroom study was complemented by study visits. We toured/visited Pavilion Shopping Mole, Hifi Corporation/Marko, Pietermaritzburg and Shakaland which gave us an opportunity to see the countryside, appreciate the

infrastructure, learn the culture of the people compare and contrast with our states/counties.

OPPORTUNITIES

Apart from class learning, we made friends, we interacted, we have known what the local environment offers, prices, exchange rates, hotels, and business opportunities there in Durban.

CLASS ADMINISTRATION

As the Chairman of the class, we teamed up well with the Deputy Chairperson Ms. Anna Julia, and Advisor to the Programme Director Ms. Mabel to manage and administer the affairs of the class. We were privileged to have a disciplined class, who behaved well, dedicated themselves to the programme which made our work easy.

5. PROGRAMME BENEFITS

This programme is a must for every Executive Assistant. It is an asset for knowledge and skills development as well as for attitude building. It is good for total Executive Assistant Development. The international composition of students allowed one to learn a lot about the profession and the situation in other counties.

6. GOALS AND VALUES OF TRAINING

- To strive to better organisation's output/profits.
- Participants are highly up-dated .
- Employee morale is boosted.
- Continuously increased employees skills/knowledge.
- Opens ways for promotion.
- Makes a direct contribution to the society.
- The employee may be the centre of focus.
- The employee will offer the best value/quality services affordable.
- The employee will be self-driven, enjoy job and have no boundaries.
- Employee will be able to communicate freely across levels.
- Trust and respect will be cultivated and will work together as a team, encouraging and demanding performance from each other.
- Appreciating each other's contributions and making use of the tremendous opportunities for personal growth.
- We believe in constant feedback in order to improve.
- The participants will practice what they have learnt from the course.
- Last but not least, believe in being an equal opportunity to the employer.

Personally, I have benefited promptly from the course.

- ❖ I have increased my level of management knowledge.
- ❖ To render the kind of support service demanded by the bosses thereby releasing them to non-technical tasks.
- ❖ To serve internal and external customers of the Organization.
- ❖ To comply and up-date with ministerial/organizational rules and regulations as published.
- ❖ To erase all temptations towards corruption

- ❖ To meet deadlines, and
- ❖ Make the bosses feel they have the support of Executive Assistants who is committed to his job.

7. **SOUTH AFRICA**

South Africa is a very beautiful country. It is very advanced and the roads are very good. There is no traffic jam and roads are very well maintained. The country uses Rand currency as their legal tender, which is very strong. One rand is equivalent to 13.2 Kenya shilling. The nights are very short as 3.00 a.m. is like 7.00 a.m. in Nairobi. The Residents are very hard working and you may even find them working at 3.00 a.m. It is a good country. The economy is in the hands of whites but is gradually being taken over by the Africans.

8. **VOTE OF THANKS**

I once again wish to thank the Clerk of the National Assembly for sponsoring me to attend the programme. My immediate boss for the encouragement, support and release. Thanks also go to my colleagues who sat in for me during the course.

9. **CONCLUSION**

As a result of this training, I expect to perform my work effectively and Efficiently since I am well equipped with a lot of knowledge as an Executive Assistant.

I wholeheartedly promise to utilize the knowledge I have gained to the best of my ability, for the betterment of my organization.

I am also ready to join and share this knowledge with my colleagues for achievement of best results.

9. **RECOMMENDATION:**

1. More funds be made available for all cadres to attend courses for the effective and efficient performance by all workers in the National Assembly.
2. This is a very educative course in as far as Executive Assistants career is concerned. My request is for us to be considered for Stage III so that we can do the final exams.
3. All officers should be computer literate to:-
 - Quickly access the information on the internet.
 - Be more effective on internal and external communications.
 - Be efficient and fast in front office management.
4. Such courses should be offered frequently so as to have efficient and up-to-date workers.
5. Employees should be attached to other Parliaments on exchange basis so as to be more knowledgeable.
6. After these courses, the staff should be promoted so as to feel motivated.

APPENDIX "A"

Eastern and Southern African Management Institute
Arusha, Tanzania



This is to certify that:

.....
Peter John Watahi.....

has attended
MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME
FOR EXECUTIVE ASSISTANTS II (ADVANCED)
conducted by the Eastern and Southern African
Management Institute

at Durban, South Africa

From 15th November, 2004 *To* 10th December, 2004

.....

.....
DIRECTOR - GENERAL

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANTS II, [ADVANCED]

Copy to:- Mr. P.C. Owino Omolo
Deputy Clerk/Admin. Services &
i/c Committees
National Assembly
Parliament Buildings
NAIROBI

Mr. P.G. Gichohi
Deputy Clerk, Legislative &
Procedural Services
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Mr. G.N. Okola ✓
Senior Principal Personnel Officer
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