



VOICE

Keeping Abreast with
Human Resource Management



COVID-19 Lessons for the Youth

VF INC'S VOICE: Issue # 10

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We thank you for your comments on Issue #9, "Celebrating our Little Heroes of COVID-19." It appears that from the look of things, we will have to do another issue featuring our Little Heroes. This week, we have a slight change and will feature excerpts from the address I delivered to the St. Mary's Academy (SMA) graduating Class of 2020, Farewell Ceremony.

Thirty-nine years ago, I graduated from the Convent High School, and to this day, I remember every song sang and every detail of that day. That day was so joyous. I was happy, joyful, excited and ready to embrace the future...my future. I did not know what the future held but I knew who held the future. I did not have a name yet for my career choice, but I knew I wanted to own my own business and help companies and individuals to be more effective in meeting their goals. In those thirty-nine years, there have been so much joy, experiences beyond my wildest expectations, visited places of many of the books I read as a child. There have also been some heartaches, heartbreaks, disappointments and betrayal of love and trust. That notwithstanding, I would change very little, even if I had the opportunity to do so. I will tell you over the years, and especially during the stormy periods, one thing has remained steadfast; my faith: faith in God, faith in

me and more importantly, my faith in my purpose.

We saw from Issue #9, that the children and youth have adapted well to COVID-19, and so drew three lessons for the youth:

1. Resilience
2. Adaptability
3. Transformation

I sometimes hear people talking about going back to pre-COVID-19. There is no going back. It is no longer business as we knew it. We must take the lessons of the past and move on in crafting and creating our future.

According to the Oxford Dictionary, **Resilience** is the ability to spring back into shape after bending, stretching or being compressed; the ability to withstand or recover quickly from difficult situations/conditions.

Adaptability is the ability to adjust to or be altered for new conditions or uses.

Transformation the ability to change or be changed in nature, form or appearance. An overhaul, revolution.

Anyone who has experienced Hurricane Maria, Irma or Dorian understands the word resilience, for they have lived it. These hurricanes and definitely COVID-19 have highlighted the importance of being adaptable and flexible, as they have

changed what we know as normal. And this adaptation has led to transformation.

What is COVID-19 saying to our youth, our young men and young women as they graduate from high school; a time when they are at the cusp of their greatness? The answers include:

1. You will encounter difficulties; Face them; do not run away. Meet them head on. In facing the difficulties, try to determine the causes and then come up with a plan to mitigate them. Above all, focus on your desired goals, dreams and purpose; and what is needed to achieve them. In confronting difficulties, Think, Research, Strategise, Act.
2. Step out into the Unknown with Faith. Fear is one of the key reasons people do not fulfill their purpose and are afraid to move forward. Fear is really "false evidence appearing real," so don't let fear stand in your way to your dreams and purpose. Take baby steps, if you must, but step you must.
3. Strive always to be a Better Version of You. You can only be your best self. Don't ever envy

anyone. Don't envy anyone who you think is more successful than you or if you think they are moving forward, and you appear stuck in time. Don't compete with others. If you are to compete, compete with you, to be a better version of you; to make yourself worthy for God. I was once given a bookmark by a friend which read, "Who you are is God's gift to you; what you make of yourself is your gift to God."

People often speak about "thinking outside of the box." The box connotes constraints and so being outside of the box means thinking outside the constraints, however, since the box is still in your front view, it remains as a measure of comparison.

I tell you COVID-19 is saying, "Get rid of the box, there is no box to your greatness." What are your heart's desires? What is your best version of you? What is your purpose? It is okay if you are unaware about your true purpose at this stage, however, I exhort you to pray for the gift of discernment to help you discern your purpose. I challenge you to think without limits and step out in faith. Don't place obstacles in your path. Don't think that you are from a small island in the Caribbean; Don't think of the fact that your family doesn't have money. Focus your energies instead on your dreams. Visualise them, Step into them, so that when they come to pass, you will feel like you have already experienced them. I can think of a number of instances, where I feel like I have been in the situation before, however, I haven't. I have dreamt and visualized the situation so much, so that when it comes to pass, it feels like I have been there before.

Reflect on the story of the leper in Mathew 8:1-4. Did he make leprosy prevent him from approaching Jesus to fulfill his burning heart's desire to be healed? Think of the lady suffering from the hemorrhage in Mathew 9:20-22. Did she make the fact that, in her time, menstruating women were deemed unclean, prevent her from touching the hem of Jesus' cloak to be healed? Ponder upon the lady caught in adultery in John 8:1-11, who stood there when all her accusers had gone away. Did she allow her shame from remaining to be forgiven by Jesus? Meditate upon the story of the Samaritan woman in John 4:4-26, did she make guilt prevent her from asking Jesus for the living water? Did she make the rumours and whisperings of her villagers prevent her from going to them to say, 'Come see a man, who has told me everything I have done'?

The lesson here is that you should not make shame, guilt, embarrassment, sin prevent you from approaching God, or the Higher Being in consecrating your purpose, dreams and goals. Every religion acknowledges a being that is omnipotent. What can stop you from achieving your goals? The answer is, "**Only You.**" Would you stand in the way of your purpose and greatness? I know you would not and will not.

You require you to Dream and Dream Big. You require you to Plan/Think/Strategise on what is needed to achieve your Purpose and Dreams. You require you to have Faith in God and Faith in you. You require you to Believe. You require you to Act. A quote from a friend is so apt: "Allow your Faith to Roar so loud that you cannot hear what doubt is saying." Yes, Let your faith Roar so loudly, you cannot hear the whimpers of doubt.

St. Mary's Academy Class of 2020 and all graduating Class of 2020, Congratulations! I pray for God's Abundant Blessings upon you. I pray God grants you Faith to Believe and Act. I pray for His Peace to Keep your Hearts steadfast to your purpose, especially amidst the storms and difficulties you will encounter. I pray God makes your heart's desires aligned to your Purpose and that He grants you your Heart's Desires. SMA Class of 2020 and all graduating Class of 2020, God's Speed. Amen.

We have moved to 78, Independence Street, Roseau, Commonwealth of Dominica

We will feature an "Interview with Mr. Kihmo Astaphan, Managing Director of Platinum Security," in Issue # 11.

We look forward to hearing from you with comments on this article, suggestions for topics to be covered and sharing of your HR experience.

Please feel free to share this Newsletter with your contacts. We also welcome guest authors and look forward to receiving your articles for publication.

We, at VF Inc, stand ready to serve and be of service to our clients and prospective clients, "with Integrity and Excellence," in keeping with our Motto.

Until next week, May God continue to Keep us in the Palm of His Hands. Please send us your questions, comments and share your experience managing in the COVID-19- era at info@vfinc.org. You may also reach us by telephone: 1 767 275 0566/617 0566.

