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## *THE SALES INTERVIEW*

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Extracted from *What Can I See: 101 Business Ideas For Youths In Africa*- By Ojijo

*“Sales, the most hated job is also the most important, and the best paying.” Ojijo*

“How much can I earn per month? “

This is the question every employee should ask the employer, and not the other question:  
how much will they pay me per month.

How much can I earn per month is the question that will let you know whether the company you are about to work with can give you opportunity to buy the things you want to buy, to take care of your family obligations, to take a vacation, and to be financially free. After all, we do not work for charity, right? And even people who volunteer “somewhere”, must earn money “somewhere else”.

So, the next time you are looking for a job, ask the question: How much can I earn here?

And this is very important for recent graduates.

You graduate, you are looking for a job, and you are settling for a UGX. 300,000 per month job. Because it is secure. Because it is safe. Because it is guaranteed.

The only people who can determine how much they earn are salespeople. And only the smart salespeople who ask to be paid on commission.

The smart salesperson will ask:

“How much can I earn per month?”

And the boss will answer,

“you will earn 20% of all the sales you bring in.”

And the next question from any smart sales person should be,

“will you facilitate me to get the customers?”

And the smart boss will say,

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“yes, I will pay you transport allowance per day of UGX. 5,000, and lunch allowance for UGX. 5,000, and business cards, and fliers, and airtime for UGX. 50,000 per month. All these will be deducted from your sales commission when you are being paid.”

And then the smart sales person will ask,

“when can I start.”

And the smart boss will say, with a smile,

“as soon as we finish your one day orientation.”

And the sales person, the smart sales person, will ask, now relaxed,

“what does orientation cover, so I prepare for the same?” he asks that because he is proactive, and likes to take initiative,

And the smart boss, the very smart boss, will tell him,

“we will cover five topics: one, the problem that our product seeks to solve. Two, the people who have that problem, and where you are likely to find them. Three, how you approach, and propose our solution, our product, to the people. Four, how to react when they say yes. Five, how to respond when they say no.”

And the sales person asks,

“is there anything else sir that you would like me to know?”

He asks that because he does not seem to know everything, and he knows that people always say less than they should. He is showing he has an open mind, and is ready for advise. He is a cup, ready to be filled.

The boss says,

“yes, five other things my partner.”

The sales man is shocked, “partner?” Why did he call me partner?

The boss goes ahead to speak,

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“one, I am not sir, or boss, I am your business partner. We grow together. The more you sell, the more you earn. The more I earn. The more the business grows. We are in this together. Me, to grow my company. And you, to earn a living, and maybe, take the next step in your life, save enough, and go back to school marry, take a vacation, etc. we are partners.”

The sales man is taken aback. This is strange. The boss continues.

“secondly, prepare to be heartbroken, deflated, disappointed, and even confused. Some people will say they want to buy, and will give you three meetings, and the fourth meeting, they will say no. some friends will not like the product. Some will not buy simply because you are a Luo. Some will not buy because you are a man. Others will not buy because you are black. Others will not buy for reason they cannot say in daylight. Still, others will say no just so you can persist. Remember, out of every 10 people you approach, only one will say yes. So, until you reach the tenth person, keep going.”

The sales man is squirming in his seat. He came with a notebook. He takes it out, and starts taking notes. He came with a notebook because he is always prepared. He believes all time is learning time. The boss, sorry, business partner, goes on to speak.

“third, you will not succeed as a team. You will succeed alone. You will plan as a team, learn as a team, get motivated and inspired as a team, and share success as a team. But you will succeed, or fail, alone. Success is very personal. Everyone determines if they succeed, or fail. The team is a good place to be when you want to be like the rest. But to succeed, to win through sales, you must depend on your own strengths. You must know that you are the only one who will make things happen. Others can help, support, advise, but you alone will make things happen.”

The sales man, is writing, and listening, and thinking, and already setting targets in his mind.

“fourth, from my experience, success is achieved when you do two things. You set a goal, in this case, a financial target to meet, every day, every week, and every month. And then, you do EVERYTHING you need to do, to meet that goal. This means, you set a goal, and then you be RESOURCEFUL. If you need to meet the CEO, and you don't have his contacts, who has them? If you need to meet the manager, and you do not know where he sits, who knows? If you need to attend the meeting, and you do not have entrance fees, who has? The great speaker, Tony Robbins, once said that people are poor and broke, not because they lack resources, but because they lack resourcefulness.”

The sales man now has even more respect for his boss-business partner. The boss reads. So it is true, leaders are readers. The salesman makes a mental note to go and read a book a

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week, like Mark Zuckerberg, The billionaire read 52 books last year, 2015. That is, one book per week.

The boss interrupts his thoughts.

“Fifth, this job you are taking is the most important job in the whole company, in the whole economy, and in the whole world. If doctors fail to go to work, the nurses, or traditional doctors, will cure us. If teachers fail to teach, the parents will take over. If engineers do not work, technical assistants can take over. But if sales people are not working, the world will come to a standstill. There will be nothing to buy. What the farmers produce will remain in the farm, until sold. What companies produce will remain in the company, until sold. The knowledge we consultants have will remain in our heads, until sold. We need sales people. We must have sales people. This is why sales people earn the most. In fact, sales people can earn more than the CEOs, so long as they sell. The salary of a salesperson is not limited. Unless they are being paid a basic salary irrespective of the sales.”

The boss leans back, and looks at the salesman, daring him to ask a stupid question, hoping he will ask a smart question. He likes him already.

“then why do most of my friends fear sales jobs?” the young man asks, an empty cup, seeking to be filled.

The boss is excited. He has always respected young people who can engage him with clear questions, smart questions.

“Because they fear rejection. They fear to be told no. They fear to be told we do not need what you are selling. They think that when someone rejects the product, the person is rejecting the seller. They forget that they are not the product. They are salesmen and women. They bring a solution. When someone rejects the solution, they do not reject the person who proposed the solution. Most sales people think people reject them when people reject the product. So, they get demotivated, and low, and feel disappointed. Remember as you go out there, you are not the product. You are selling the product.”

“What will I sell?” the sales man asks.

Then the boss smiles radiantly.

“The following are the things you will sell for us. Ask me questions about them.”

He hands him a printed document with things to be sold.

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“ask me the demographic characteristics of the buyers, so you know where to meet them.”

The boss says, while opening the door for the salesman to leave.

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