

'A Good Lawyer Must Always be Confident'

My name is Adefolake Adewusi. I was called to the Nigerian Bar in 2010. I am a graduate of University of Lagos, where I obtained both my first and master's degrees, graduating with Second Class Upper Division in both categories. I am currently a Commercial Lawyer with AELEX, with a practice focus and professional certifications in taxation, dispute resolution including arbitration, labour and employment; and company secretarial practice. I am a member of the Editorial Team of AELEX.

I am a member of the International Bar Association (IBA); International Project Finance Association (IPFA); Chartered Institute of Arbitrators, UK (CIARB); Chartered Institute of Taxation of Nigeria (CITN); Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators of Nigeria (ICSAN); and Chartered Institute of Personnel Management of Nigeria (CIPM). I am currently undergoing coursework, to become an International Tax Affiliate of the Chartered Institute of Taxation, UK (CIOT). I have also completed a Special Executive Masters Programme in Business Administration (SEMP MBA) administered by the Metropolitan School of Business and Management.

Have you had any challenges in your career as a Lawyer, and if so, what were your main challenges?

Yes. My main career challenge was the fear of the unknown, when I was still a teething Lawyer. My LL.M degree was obtained fresh out of school, without any real prior practical working experience even during my NYSC days. Thus, when I got into AELEX, I felt somewhat uneasy that I was light-years behind my peers, and might be unable to meet up with the required standards.

However, this challenge also spurred me



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on to make extra efforts to bridge the existing gaps. Thus, I ensured that I enrolled for courses leading to professional certifications in my practice areas, to smoothen my rough edges. AELEX greatly assisted in this regard, by bankrolling the induction for all the courses, and in more than one instance, footing the bill for the entire course.

What was your worst day as a Lawyer?

My first day at AELEX, was my worst day as a Lawyer. I wrote my very first email in which our then Managing Partner was copied, and made a typographical error in the recipient's name. I did not even notice the error, until the Managing Partner drew my attention to it. Strike One!

I also wrote my first opinion, and did a very

shoddy job. I was under the impression that 'something light' would suffice, and I thought I was complying with the specifications, only to discover it was pure rubbish that I delivered. Strike Two!

What was your most memorable experience as a Lawyer?

My most memorable experience was sitting on my bed during my vacation period, mentally willing myself to grapple with some research work I was doing at the time, when I received a call from our immediate past Managing Partner at AELEX, that I had been selected in my absence to resume a secondment assignment with a foremost international oil and gas company, SNEPCo. It reminded me of the biblical promise that, "so shalt thou find favour...in the sight of man." I felt truly valued to have been selected as an AELEX brand ambassador.

Who has been most influential in your life?

My family. They were my rock during my final year at UNILAG and Law School days, when my aspirations of becoming a Lawyer were threatened by a serious illness.

In my career life, our current Managing Partner, Mr. Theophilus Emuwa, and our immediate past Managing Partner, Mr. Soji Awogbade, have been the most influential because they were the ones who opened the doors of AELEX to me. They were my interviewers who saw something in me worth trying out, at a time that I was totally green behind the ears and unsure of myself.

At SNEPCo, my career life has been greatly influenced by Mr. Olawale Animashauri, my Line Manager, who possesses impeccable

work ethics; as well as my other colleagues in the Legal department. Together, they have lovingly provided the right steers for me to work effectively and efficiently.

My fiancé has also been influential in my life, providing incisive and mathematical insights in our dealings, given his scientific background, which have helped to hone my legal and analytical skills, enabling me present arguments and opinions with more precision and brevity.

Why did you become a Lawyer?

I became a Lawyer, because I enjoyed and had a natural flair for the subject combinations that tend towards the study of law.

What would be your advice to anyone wanting a career in Law?

Be confident, know where to find the law, be a fast learner and be a superb writer. With confidence, no matter the stumbling blocks you encounter, you will easily bounce back like a spring.

Confidence will also give you that adrenaline drive to build strategic networks, take on the most challenging of tasks and implement same successfully. When you know where to find the law that is relevant to your current research/brief, unravelling knotty issues becomes infinitely easier. Know the right questions to ask.

If you had not become a Lawyer, what career would you have chosen?

Probably medicine, since I was also good in science related subjects.

Where do you see yourself in ten years?

I see myself, being a formidable brand in ten years.